

Please click here to view Covenants Worship Service, Sunday, May 02:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCCkRp1t3MnecoYXnds4X03A>

THE COVENANTER

May 02, 2021

Member NE GEORGIA Presbytery,
Synod of the South Atlantic, General
Assembly of the Presbyterian Church
(USA)

Stewardship Campaign for 2021-2022: *To Breathe Again!*

Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you. When he said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit" (John 20:21-22).

After more than a year of living behind locked doors and sheltering in place and feeling like a boulder is sitting on our collective chests, we need to breathe again. We need this promise that, through the gift of the Holy Spirit, God will enable us to go into our neighborhood and world as instruments of His holy peace.

We hope that you will continue your amazing and faithful support of our mission to be an outpost of the Beloved Community through your generous financial offering for this coming fiscal year. With your giving packet that you should receive in the mail this week, you will find a proposed budget and pledge card. It would be most helpful to our stewardship team if you return your pledge commitment by May 12th. In the meantime, let us remember that God is with us and that every breath we take is a gift from Him.

Process for the Election of Elders Begins!

The session approved Kay Brooks (Chair), Tim Foutz (Co-chair), and Chris Wilson as this year's team. While normally the congregation would elect the third member of the nominating committee, the session decided that since we are still unable to regather due to the pandemic, they would perform that function just as they did last year. What you as the congregation CAN DO is help the nominating committee create a pool of possible candidates for the office of elder. If you have suggestions and have received permission from the person you are recommending, or if you would like to recommend yourself, please send those names by email to Kay Brooks at kbrooks1471@charter.net. Thank you for helping us discern who God's Spirit is calling to serve our community of faith in this essential role.

Present Members of the Session:

Class of 2021—Rich Reaves, Sarah Shannon, Paige Campbell, Steve Rathbun

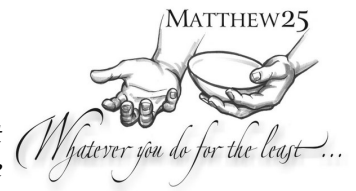
Class of 2022—Don Bower, Kay Brooks, Brian Striggow, Chris Wilson

Class of 2023—Linda Koehler, Clayton Adams, Kathy Boardman, Jennifer Frey

Luanne Rigsby, Clerk of the Session

Covenant Presbyterian Church, A Matthew 25 Church

"When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. Then the king will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.' Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?'



And the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.' Then he will say to those at his left hand, 'You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.' Then they also will answer, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?' Then he will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.' And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life." — Matthew 25:31–46 (NRSV)

What is a Matthew 25 Church? Matthew 25 calls all of us to actively engage in the world around us, so our faith comes alive and we wake up to new possibilities. Convicted by this passage, both the 222nd and 223rd General Assemblies (2016 and 2018) encouraged the PC(USA) to act boldly and compassionately to see our neighbors through Jesus' eyes and serve those who are marginalized or in need — people who are hungry, thirsty, naked, sick, imprisoned, strangers, poor or oppressed in other ways and in need of welcoming. In response to this invitation, our session voted to become a Matthew 25 congregation and, through creative, collaborative acts of ministry, share God's love with our neighbors in east Athens.

The themes of the Matthew 25 invitation are grounded in the gospel. Jesus calls us to serve with and for "the least of these" so that together we may grow in our understanding of what it means to be people who are deeply loved by Jesus. Alongside other PC(USA) congregations identifying themselves as Matthew 25 churches, our session committed to multiplying this loving commitment to radical and fearless discipleship by focusing on ministries that:

1. *build congregational vitality by deepening and energizing a faith that calls us to share the gospel of Jesus Christ in word and deed and thus grow as joyful leaders and disciples actively engaged with our community,*
2. *dismantling structural racism by fearlessly applying our faith to advocate and break down the systems, practices and thinking that underlie discrimination, bias, prejudice and oppression of people of color, and*
3. *eradicate systemic poverty by acting on our beliefs and working to change laws, policies, plans and structures in our society that perpetuate economic exploitation of people who are poor.*

We believe that this work is a direct response to the good news of Jesus and a courageous and faithful expression of what it means to be Christ's disciples in this time and place. By accepting the Matthew 25 invitation, we work with other Presbyterians to become a more relevant presence in the world by making visible in exciting, tangible ways, the connectional nature of our PC(USA) churches. We believe that our participation as a Matthew 25 church will show our understanding as Presbyterian Christians that we are "saved to serve" those who need God and the radical love of Jesus, and therein reveal glimmers of the kingdom of God in our community.

How will we live out our commitment to be a Matthew 25 church? As a Matthew 25 church, we are very excited about the possibilities of sharing with our sister churches around the world our work with the children of our community as we host an innovative summer camp. Inspired by the vision of the Social Justice Action Group, Eagle Scout Wyatt Herndon, and the ongoing efforts of our Green Team to educate us about ways we may care for all of creation, our Neighborhood Ministries Coordinator, Travis Williams, will work with volunteers to engage our neighborhood children in meaningful activities that challenge them to grow in their understanding of how they can contribute to a more just, sustainable environment. If you would like to be a part of this outreach project, contact Travis! Our hope is to capture the excitement of this summer ministry on video filmed by our Technical Director, Asher Hill, to share with our sister churches on our denomination's Matthew 25 website and other publications.



Our young people, preschoolers - high schoolers, have received in the mail this week, new spiritual formation resources for use at home. Families with children, preschool - fifth grade, will receive Illustrated Ministry's *An Invitation for Families*. This spiritual formation resource contains Bible stories, activities for families to engage in together, and coloring pages. Each week families will be invited to explore together one biblical story, and these stories will be listed on our church website. Middle schoolers and high schoolers will receive Illustrated Ministry's *Psalms Devotional* and each week our young people will be encouraged to reflect on a psalm through readings, music links, and activities designed to deepen understanding of the psalm. The "psalm of the week" will be listed on the church's website.

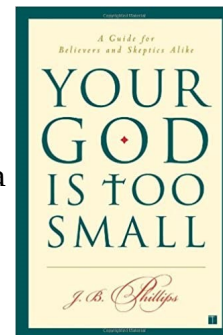
WEEK DAY BOOK STUDIES

TUESDAY MORNING BOOK STUDY—

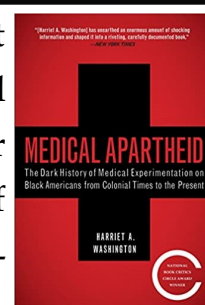
Next Zoom Book Study, Tuesday, May 4 at 10am

Join us as we look at the book, *Your God is Too Small!*. A groundbreaking work of faith which challenges the constraints of traditional religion. In his discussion of God author J.B. Phillips encourages Christians to redefine their understanding of a creator without labels or earthly constraints and instead search for a meaningful concept of God. Facilitated by Mark Harper.

Please email Karen at karenwetherington@covpresathens.org for a zoom invitation.



Join the Covenant Social Justice Book Club as we explore Harriet Washington's, *Medical Apartheid*. This book details the ways both slaves and freedmen were used in hospitals for experiments conducted without their knowledge and tackles modern issues, revealing the root causes of many of the disparities that we see today with COVID-19. No one concerned with issues of public health and racial justice can afford not to read this eye-opening book. Next meeting is **Monday, May 3 @ 7 PM.** Send Karen an email if you would like to receive a ZOOM invitation for this book study, kwetherington@covpresathens.org.



Volunteers needed for a "Weed 'n clean-up" work hour, 4-5 pm., on Thursday, May 6, 2021.



Target In-Circle has designated the Athens Nurses Clinic for their Community Support Non-Profits this quarter. Purchases on-line, in-person or via the app give the shopper points; in the Community Support drop-down, the shopper can designate those points to the Clinic. No extra cost to the shopper, just a few minutes time. So please shop Target and help support the Clinic!

CONGRATULATIONS! William Jackie Hammond III (Jack) was born on April 16, 2021. He is the son of Will and Laura (Baird) Hammond of Fitzgerald Georgia, grandson of Joan and Robert Baird and Mike and Jan DeVane of Fitzgerald Georgia and the late Dr. Bill Hammond of Fitzgerald Georgia. He is the nephew of proud Aunt Hannah Baird. Laura was baptized and married at Covenant and active in the youth group and choirs.

Boy, Oh Boy!

it's a boy, it's a boy!

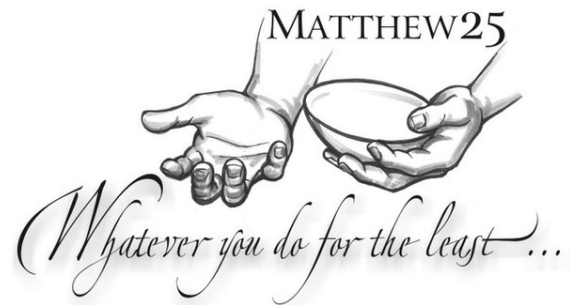


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|-------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| 1 Ann Anderson | 12 Marcia Verbrugge | 23 Ruby Basham |
| Arnelle Combs | 13 Catharine Tyson | 24 Dick Zimdars |
| Karen Wetherington | 14 Louie Boyd | Ntumwa Kisaalita |
| 2 Hannah Baird | Teresa Mauldin | 25 Carol Calbos |
| Elsie Bothwell | 15 David Boardman | 26 Tim Bemisderfer |
| Linda VanSickle | Brandon Doughty | Luke Shannon |
| 3 Al (Sandy, Alexander) Clark | 16 Steve Rathbun | 27 Joan Prittie |
| Wesley Whitehead | 19 Michelle Cram | 28 Emily Bower |
| 4 Anna Hocking | Sue Loegel | Spencer Baird |
| 6 Evan Knox | Annie Meyers | Eric Zimdars |
| 10 Caren Snook | Ansley Tweedell | Isaac Carpenter |
| 12 Abby Horvath | 22 Kent Silver | 31 Ssempe Kisaalita |
| | 23 Tim Simpson | |

PRAYER CONCERNS: Chuck Rosenberger struggling with neuropathy; Alice Rose searching for a cardiologist; Gloria Pylant's friend Jack Carter, recovering at home following a successful leg amputation; Ed Loring, Open Door Community friend, hospitalized in Baltimore with chest pain; Calvin Kimbrough, another Open Door friend recovering in Nashville after successful heart surgery; Anne Page in hospice care at Avery Place; Pauline Marshall at Highland Hills #112.

Daily Bible Readings—May 3—9

Monday	Psalm 98
Tuesday	Psalm 99
Wednesday	Matthew 25: 1-13
Thursday	Matthew 25: 14-19
Friday	Matthew 25: 20-30
Saturday	Matthew 25: 31-40
Sunday	Matthew 25: 41-46



Little Food Pantry— We encourage you to help us keep our Little Food Pantry stocked with pop-top single serve canned goods that do not require cooking, peanut butter, packaged crackers, healthy snack items. Small individual personal hygiene items (ie: soap, deodorant, toothbrush and toothpaste, and shampoos) in a zip lock bag with a granola bar of some kind is also needed. Please remember everything must be sealed (air tight) to prevent ant infestations...*Please no raisins. Thank you to all that help keep the Little Food Pantry stocked.*

HOW TO GIVE. There is a new online giving option through the Presbyterian Foundation at this link <http://covpresathens.org/wp/contributions/> . Or you can click on this link www.covpresathens.org and click on online giving. And as always you can mail your check to the church office. Thank you for your faithful giving!

FINANCIAL REPORT
FISCAL YEAR TO DATE - Week #43
Anticipated Pledges \$ \$372,115.55
Actual Pledges— \$ 376,444.47
Thank you for your faithful giving!
OGHS—\$2,150.00



Thank you to all who have provided floral arrangements in the past. We especially appreciate the amazing talent of Juergen Wiegel, who has contributed his time and skill to provide beautiful arrangements and to coordinating the floral schedule for many years. If you would be willing to provide a flower arrangement for weekly virtual worship services, please check the dates below. We are now hoping to provide arrangements for Mar 21 through June 27. It is important to note that the services are actually recorded on Fridays, every week. This means that the flowers need to be placed in the worship center on Friday morning, by 10 AM. Please use the following link to view the available dates and to sign up. <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/409084AA5AA22A20-provide> . For further information please contact Julie Bower (bower.julie@gmail.com) or Karen Wetherington (kwetherington@covpresathens.org) The Worship Ministry Team appreciates each one who contributes to the beauty of our worship services in this way. *Thank you!*



ITEMS NEEDED! Yes! Covenant is still collecting these items for families in need. They will be distributed during the food pantry distribution.

Gently used: COATS for ADULTS & KIDS, WARM SOCKS, WARM HATS and SCARFS.

Also needed are sweatpants, sweatshirts and socks! AND.....children's summer clothes,

Personal size shampoos and conditioners, lotions, toothpastes, etc (like you get by staying at a hotel) for distribution during the Thursday food distributions.

Please drop them off at the church during Food Pantry hours, Thursdays 1pm—4pm or Office hours, Tuesday 10am—noon, and Fridays 10am—4pm. *Thanks!*

From TerraCycle: **BIG News from Kroger**

Not long ago, the Green Dream Team signed up to collect a new type of plastic packaging: bags and wrappers from Kroger's Simple Truth (organic or not) products. That was good news, but the **BIG news** is that this program has been expanded so that **now, plastic bags and wrappers from ALL Kroger products can now be recycled with TerraCycle.** This includes Kroger Brand, Private Selection, HemisFares, Luvsome, Comforts, Abound and other Kroger brands. It's almost impossible to shop in Kroger and not buy some of their products! So start saving your Kroger packaging and look for the drawer labeled "Kroger Packaging". *Caren Snook for the Green Dream Team*

The Athens Area Emergency Food Bank is in need of Egg cartons! You can bring them by the church, Tuesdays 10am—12 noon, Thursdays, 1pm—4pm or on Fridays, 10am—4pm. **Thanks!**



ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING 2021! For more than 70 years, One Great Hour of Sharing has provided us a way to share God's love with our neighbors in need. In fact, OGHS is the single largest way Presbyterians come together every year to work toward a better world. Presbyterians have joined with millions of other Christians through One Great Hour of Sharing to share God's love with people experiencing need. Your gifts support ministries of disaster response, refugee assistance and resettlement, and community development that help people find safe refuge, start new lives and work together to strengthen their families and communities. The Presbyterian Hunger Program receives 36 percent of undesignated gifts, while Self-Development of People and Presbyterian Disaster Assistance each receives 32 percent. Please indicate on the memo portion of your check or giving envelope OGHS. *Thank you for your generous giving!*

Covenant's Emergency Food Pantry

Jesus said, "You give them something to eat." *Members, and friends of Covenant have been giving generously of their time and talents to the Emergency Food Pantry. As you can imagine, the need is great.*

Covenant's Emergency Food Pantry days and hours have changed.

It is now on THURSDAYS, 1pm—4pm.

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

STAY SAFE—If there is any reason at all that you should NOT physically volunteer—consider the following:

Make a financial donation to the Food Pantry by sending a check to Covenant and write "food pantry" in the subject line. *(You could send it in at the same time you send in your pledge).*

We can use grocery bags (paper or plastic), and small boxes to pack the food. If you call the church, someone could even come out to your car and get it.

If you are able to physically be present as a volunteer:

Click the link below for an easy sign up or call or email Betsy Pless 540-1719 bppless@gmail.com

You can also share the 3-hour time slot with 2 friends!

HOW TO SIGN UP: Please sign up for Covenant Food Pantry!

Here's how it works in 3 easy steps:

1. **Click this link** to go to our invitation page on SignUp.com: <https://signup.com/login/entry/611848298042>
2. **Enter your email address:** (You will NOT need to register an account on SignUp.com)
3. **Sign up!** Choose your spots - SignUp.com will send you an automated confirmation and reminders. Easy!

Note: *SignUp.com does not share your email address with anyone. If you prefer not to use your email address, please contact me and I can sign you up manually.*