

Please click here to view Covenants Worship Service, Sunday, May 16:

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

THE COVENANTER

May 16, 2021

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



The world certainly looks different than it did this time last year. In addition to the coronavirus pandemic, we have been reminded of the harmful realities of the pandemic of racism, one that has plagued our country since its founding. In Matthew 25, we are called to address the inequities we see in the world, including

confronting deeply ingrained racist systems and structures. (see page 2)

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

Stewardship Campaign for 2021-2022: To Breathe Again!

Please see page three for a letter from Church Treasurer, Pam Knox and a link to the newly revised proposed budget for 2021-2022.

(Continued from page 1)

PENTECOST OFFERING



In response to the denomination's Matthew 25 invitation and with support from the Pentecost Offering, we will begin taking action to dismantle structural racism in our community by using the local portion of this denominational offering to help underwrite the costs of our 8-week summer camp where children from our surrounding neighborhoods as well as children active in the life of Covenant will be challenged to work together to learn more about how we can care for creation and build a more environmentally sustainable future. Travis Williams, Covenant's Neighborhood Ministries Coordinator, in collaboration with the leadership of UGA's Grow It Know It program, promises a unique and transformative outdoor camp experience filled with creative activities for young people.

The Pentecost Offering is one of five denominational offerings designed to nurture the faith of those who are the "church to come" - children, youth, and young adults. Psalm 71 testifies that a foundation of faith established during childhood helps ensure lifelong faith and service. The patterns and lessons established during these formative years continue to bear fruit throughout a person's life. Forty percent of the funds received in this offering remain with Covenant for the purpose of addressing the spiritual formation needs of young people. The remainder, 60%, will be sent to the Presbyterian Mission Agency to address the global needs of children, youth, and young adults. Please give prayerful consideration about how you may wish to fulfill our commitment to be a Matthew 25 church by giving to the Pentecost Offering. *Please mark the memo portion of your check "Pentecost Offering". Thank you!*

Dear Covenant congregation,

As promised, here is my description of the proposed 2021-2022 budget for the church. You received a proposed budget in the packet you got by mail, but it has since been updated to include an additional recommendation from Personnel, so a revised version will be emailed, available online, or through regular mail by request for you to look at as you consider your pledge to support Covenant financially. If you have already sent in a pledge based on the old budget and wish to reconsider your pledge in light of the updated information, please let Karen know.

You will notice that the jump from last year's budget to this year's budget is quite large. Some of that is artificial, since we revised the 2020-2021 budget to reflect the reality of the pandemic shuttering several of our programs. Our pledges for last year were also lower than expected due to our uncertainty with what we would be able to give. Last year's revised budget was cut down to remove several items like support for Montreat, the summer mission trip, two music interns, the Pastor's contingency fund, and the Long-term Maintenance contribution. I have put all of those back into next year's budget to fully account for all our normal (non-pandemic) expenditures. That alone raised the proposed budget by \$35,000. Since our pledged income in the current fiscal year (2020-21) has been higher than expected, we may be able to do some similar adjustments to the next year's budget based on giving beyond the pledged amounts this year. We have also used some of the additional income this year to work on refurbishing the Worship Center and other parts of the property while it is not being used based on guidance from Session.

The other large changes to the budget are a proposed expenditure of \$25,000 for HVAC maintenance and improvement of ventilation, the hire of a music coordinator to replace Jacob, and Personnel-recommended salary raises of 1.5% for all staff members, including our contracted custodial care, which has not been increased in several years. Travis Williams' salary was adjusted to reflect his full year of work instead of the partial year he worked in 2020-21. The latest recommendation from Personnel, added to the budget after your mailed copy was sent out, includes a change to hire a full-time Technical Director at \$45,000 (plus FICA and \$11,000 for health care) to replace Asher Hill's part-time pay of \$24,000 per year. Other changes recommended by the ministry teams were relatively small and reflect a return to more normal operating conditions as we return to in-person worship next fiscal year.

If you have any questions about the proposed budget, you are welcome to ask me by email at pnknox@yahoo.com or by phone at home at 706-543-9560.

Thank you all for your faithful, generous, and continuing support of Covenant financially as well as in the many other ways you contribute to the ministry of our congregation! We are blessed to have so many people who are involved in the life of the church and its outreach to the community, especially in this very unusual and challenging time. Please return your pledges as soon as possible.

Pam Knox, Treasurer

Please click this link to access the 2021-2022 Revised Proposed Budget:

<https://www.covpresathens.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Revised-Proposed-Budget-2021-2022.pdf>

If you did not receive a packet or need a pledge envelope please contact Karen at kwetherington@covpresathens.org or call 706-548-2756.

Time Phases for “Going Solar” at Cov Presby

Implementing the solar panel system proposed for Cov Presby would encompass four essential timeframes. Yet to be determined is the initial period, that needed to secure financial pledges sufficient to execute the plan.



Next is the 2 to 3 months needed to:

(a) get on the installer’s job calendar,

(b) secure local construction permits, (c) reach accord with Georgia Power as the back-up electricity supplier, and (d) assure procurement and delivery of the system contractor’s various component installation materials.

About 1 month would be expected for on-site installation work. Modest disruption in electricity usage would be incurred.

Finally, 1 to 2 months may be required for testing-out and fine-tuning the operational status of the solar panel system.



Church School Classes via ZOOM!

Emmaus Road Class

Sunday, May 16, 9:45 - 10:45 a.m., Warren Combs hosts and different class members facilitate a discussion of the New Testament Letter of James using the resource, *Rose Visuals, The Book of James*. If you would like to participate, please contact Warren at wecombs@gmail.com.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Upper Room Class

Sunday, May 16, 9:45 - 10:45 a.m., James Malone hosts and different class members facilitate the discussion of the weekly chapter in *The Present Word*. If you would like to participate, please contact James at gillbillvolume1@yahoo.com, to receive your ZOOM invitation.

Journey Class

Sunday, May 16, 9:45 - 10:45 a.m., Steve Rathbun hosts and different class volunteers facilitate discussion using Brian McLaren's book, *Why Did Jesus, Moses, the Buddha, and Mohammed Cross the Road? Christian Identity in a Multi-Faith World*. If you would like to participate, please contact Steve at rathbun@uga.edu, to receive your ZOOM invitation.

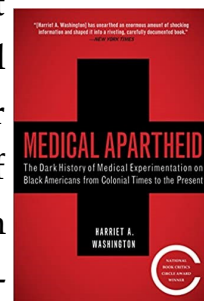
WEEK DAY BOOK STUDIES

TUESDAY MORNING BOOK STUDY AT 2PM TUESDAY, MAY 18—

Please read the following passages as the basis for this week's discussion: Matthew 27:62-66 and Matthew 28:11-15. I see this as a transitional, one week discussion before we get into our next long-term study.

Speaking of which, Gloria (who put us on the path of righteousness with her last book suggestion) has proposed that we consider *The Book of Joy*, by Desmond Tutu and the Dalai Lama. It looks fascinating! Check it out, or if there are other ideas, we can talk about them on Tuesday.

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 17 @ 7 PM**. Send Karen an email if you would like to receive a ZOOM invitation for this book study, kwetherington@covpresathens.org.



PRAYER CONCERNS: Dot Handley at home; Velie Helton, a Covenant neighbor for peace of mind; Anna Holshouser at home; Anne Page in hospice care at Avery Place; Pauline Marshall at Highland Hills #112.

Daily Bible Readings—May 17—23

Monday	Ezekiel 34: 1-14
Tuesday	Genesis 11: 1-9
Wednesday	Psalm 104: 24-34, 35b
Thursday	Romans 8: 22-27
Friday	I Corinthians 12: 3b-13
Saturday	John 15: 26-27, 16: 4b-15
Sunday	Acts 2: 1-21



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 #45
Anticipated Pledges \$ \$389,423.08
Actual Pledges— \$ 394,385.60
Thank you for your faithful giving!



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. Bottles of Water for the coming summer months.

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!*

EARTH DAY, WEEK, MONTH, YEAR CONTINUES... MORE ITEMS TO RECYCLE

7. Compostable bio-plastics: Compostable bioplastics include those cornstarch utensils and specially marked cups, which won't break down quickly in your home compost bin like your food scraps do. [Find a Composter](#) has a tool for finding municipal composters for these types of items.



8. Computers and electronics: [E-Stewards](#) has a tool for finding responsible recyclers for computing waste which can be toxic and hard to break down.

9. Exercise videos: If you've done the same workouts a million times, swap them with others at [Video Fitness](#). If you're done with them forever, contact your [closest e-waste station](#) and see if they will accept them. Policies change frequently and the magnetic tape in VHS makes them particularly difficult to recycle.

10. Eyeglasses: Your local [Lion's Club](#) or eye care chain may collect these. Lenses are reground and given to people in need. Often eye doctors' offices will collect them, or even local libraries. Glasses are most often donated as-is to someone with a similar prescription. Reading glasses and non-prescription sunglasses can often be donated as well.

BROUGHT TO YOU BY JERE BOWDEN AND THE GREEN DREAM TEAM

A BIG THANK YOU to everyone that has contributed to the collection of egg cartons for The Athens Area Emergency Food Bank. Our wonderful Elsie Bothwell delivers these much needed egg cartons to the food bank. YES! They are still needed. You can bring them by the church, Tuesdays 10am—12 noon, Thursdays, 1pm—4pm or on Fridays, 10am—4pm. Thanks!



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.*

For the month of April, 2021 Covenant served 943 food insecure neighbors, which included 353 Children, and 105 Senior Adults. Thank you Covenant staff and volunteers and those who generously support this important ministry financially.