

Please click here to view Covenants Worship Service, Sunday, May 23:

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

THE
COVENANTER
May 23, 2021



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

Dear Friends,

As people trying to follow Jesus, we have lots of reasons to believe that we need to "walk by faith, not by sight." The ancient and amazing story that gives us our identity reminds us over and over that we are to trust in God to provide our daily bread and all the other resources we need to fulfill the mission of justice, peace-making, and reconciliation we've been called to.

Even so, to be good stewards of those resources, it helps to know what we're working with -- whether that's twelve eager disciples or five loaves and two fish.

In these days when many of us are focused on getting our COVID-19 vaccination cards filled out, I hope you will also be equally diligent in filling out and sending in your 2021-2022 pledge cards. While you can certainly mail in your pledges, we encourage those who are able to either email the office with your pledge or drop them off (though please call first to let us know you're coming). It will be good to see you!

Our finance team is working hard to send a budget to the session for its approval as we approach the beginning of our fiscal year on July 1st. Thank you in advance for your good and faithful participation in God's work of love and joy through Covenant Presbyterian Church. Grace and peace, *Mark*

Update from the Covenant Re-Opening Committee -

If last week's good news from the CDC caught you off guard, you are not alone! Since the CDC has lifted some restrictions for some situations our Re-opening Committee has moved the next meeting up to next Wednesday, May 26, via Zoom. At that time we will review our options for a safe return to worship. For many of us, life is slowly but surely beginning to turn a corner toward the new normal. For others, particularly those with young children, there will remain cautions until the vaccine is available. We also realize there are at least a few folks at Covenant for whom the vaccine is not recommended. Our committee will update our recommendation to the Session and to you following next week's meeting. The vaccine has proven to be our best protection as we begin to re-engage. *Julie Bower, Chair*



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!*

Numerical Dimensions of “Going Solar” at Cov Presby

The installation cost of the solar panel system proposed for Cov Presby is just under \$95,000. It is a 41 to 42 KW system, capable of producing around 58,000 Kwh in the initial year of operation; this is for a facility that historically has averaged usage of about 89,000 Kwh per year. A de-commissioning fund for the equipment is also planned, with \$5000 to be set aside and managed for growth over the next 25 to 30 years.



The proposed system presents a capability to reduce the yearly cost of electricity for the church by around 65% to 70%. A pair of comparable installation companies, Creative Solar based in Kennesaw and Solarize Athens / Alternative Energy Southeast located in Athens, have independently furnished to the church price estimates for both large and small systems. These installers each predict similar long-term savings. A recently submitted pricing estimate from yet a third local installer, Turnsol Energy, confirms these projections.

Over the standard, 30 year life of the solar panels, themselves warranted for 25 years, financial savings is conservatively calculated at \$225,000 to \$235,000. More generous estimates project 30 year savings in the range of \$270,000 to \$310,000. But, these estimates rely upon inflationary yearly increases of 1.5% to 2.5% in the price for purchased electricity from Georgia Power.

Net-metering proceeds from any surplus electricity sold back to the Georgia Power grid are not factored into the projected earnings from savings on electricity purchases.

It is difficult to quantify the financial benefit from reducing the carbon/greenhouse gas footprint of the Cov Presby portion of the Georgia Power grid's regular electricity production. Similarly, it is difficult to quantify the financial benefit from reducing the carbon / greenhouse gas impacts of renovating heating systems at the church to change from natural gas to electricity. Despite this inability to place a specific financial number on such environmental benefits, they represent an embraceable value, and not merely a speculation easily overlooked.

Rich Reaves, B&G Co-Chair



Church School Classes via ZOOM!

Emmaus Road Class

Sunday, May 23, 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

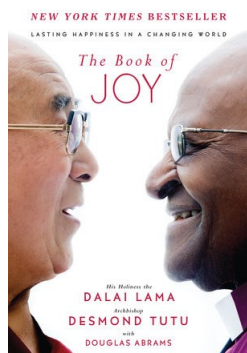
Sunday, May 23, 9:45 - 10:45 a.m., James Malone hosts and different class members facilitate the discussion of the weekly chapter in *The Present Word*. If you would like to participate, please contact James at gillbillvolume1@yahoo.com, to receive your ZOOM invitation.

Journey Class

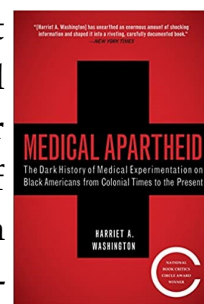
Sunday, May 23 9:45 - 10:45 a.m., Steve Rathbun hosts and different class volunteers facilitate discussion using Brian McLaren's book, *Why Did Jesus, Moses, the Buddha, and Mohammed Cross the Road? Christian Identity in a Multi-Faith World*. If you would like to participate, please contact Steve at rathbun@uga.edu, to receive your ZOOM invitation.

WEEK DAY BOOK STUDIES

NEW BOOK STUDY—Tuesday, June 1 at 10am—Join us as we delve into the “**The Book of Joy: Lasting Happiness in a Changing World!**” The **Book Of Joy** is the result of a 7-day meeting between the Dalai Lama and Desmond Tutu, two of the world's most influential spiritual leaders, during which they discussed one of life's most important questions: how do we find **joy** despite suffering? This book offers us a rare opportunity to experience their astonishing and unprecedented week together, from the first embrace to the final good-bye. We get to listen as they explore the Nature of True Joy and confront each of the Obstacles of Joy—from fear, stress, and anger to grief, illness, and death. They then offer us the Eight Pillars of Joy, which provide the foundation for lasting happiness. Throughout, they include stories, wisdom, and science. Finally, they share their daily Joy Practices that anchor their own emotional and spiritual lives. Mark Harper will facilitate this class! *Please send an email to kwetherington@covpresathens.org if you would like 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 24 @ 7 PM**. Send Karen an email if you would like to receive a ZOOM invitation for this book study, kwetherington@covpresathens.org.



PRAYER CONCERNS: Covenant's High School Graduates; Dot Handley at home; Anna Holshouser at home; Anne Page in hospice care at Avery Place; Pauline Marshall at Highland Hills #112; our nation.

Daily Bible Readings—May 24-30

Monday - John 1:1,5
Tuesday - Psalm 40
Wednesday - Psalm 41
Thursday - Psalm 29
Friday - Romans 8:12-17
Saturday - Isaiah 6:1-8
Sunday - John 3:1-21



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 #46
Anticipated Pledges \$398,077.10
Actual Pledges— \$405,146.00
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

EGG CARTONS! EGG CARTONS! Our wonderful Elsie Bothwell delivers these much needed egg cartons to the Athens Area Emergency Food Bank. **AND 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.
