

Please click here to view Covenants Worship Service on You Tube for **Sunday, December 18 at 11am:** <https://www.youtube.com/cpcathens>  
Link to the bulletin: <https://www.covpresathens.org/bulletin/>

## THE COVENANTER December 18, 2022

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

**Meals on Wheels** - to be received in the month of December and at the Christmas Eve service sponsor persons who receive a daily meal through the "Meals on Wheels" program. The annual cost (including food & expenses) to provide meals for one person is \$2,000.00. Last year's offering enabled Covenant to support 6 older Athenians for this year. The congregation is encouraged to give generously. You will find an envelope on the table in the narthex. Please mark in the memo portion of your check MOW. **Consider making a special gift in honor or in memory of a loved one.**



### OPPORTUNITY TO REACH OUT AT CHRISTMAS!

As most members know, Covenant is one of several local congregations serving as hosts to families in the Family Promise of Athens program, which provides temporary shelter to a few families at a time in the Athens area. We thank all who volunteer their time during our four weeks of hosting per year at Milledge Ave. Baptist Church.

Beyond that, there is a great need to support FP families with donations during the holidays. The FP Executive Director, Madison Sanders, tells us that they will greatly appreciate any of the following donations for Christmas: Walmart gift cards, cash/check, and online donations ([familypromiseathens.org](http://familypromiseathens.org)). Some Covenant folks enjoy shopping for gifts for specific guests, and the FP staff is happy to provide a list of their needs. In that case, please call Tenaja English, the Shelter Coordinator, at 706-425-1881, or contact her via email: [serve@familypromiseathens.org](mailto:serve@familypromiseathens.org)

Depending on what and how you may wish to donate, you have the option of mail, online donations, or in-person drop-offs at the FP Day Center, 355 Pulaski St., located in the First Baptist Church of Athens.

*Thanks in advance, for your generosity to the greater Athens community during this holiday season.*



*"The good news of great joy changed the course of every silent night to come." Alicia Bruxvoort*

Saturday, December 24 at 5:30pm! As is our beautiful tradition at Covenant, we will celebrate Christmas Eve with a family friendly service. This will be a Communion and Candlelight service. All are welcome in this place and at our table.

**Game Night in January -- Doing some New Year's cleaning out?** Got a Christmas gift you can't use? On Friday, January 20 from 7pm to 9pm, Covenant's Game Night crew will be hosting Bingo. Bring a few items you don't want but that someone else might treasure and we'll use these for Bingo prizes. (And for those not interested in Bingo, you're welcome to play board or card games in another part of the Fellowship Hall. Bring your own games or enjoy some of ours.) Everyone is welcome to bring snacks to eat yourself or to share. Game nights are planned monthly for every third Friday evening from 7pm to 9pm. If you'd like to get the upcoming dates on your calendar, here they are! January 20, February 17, March 17, April 21, May 19, June 16, July 21, August 18, September 15, October 20, and November 17. (December is so busy that we skip Game Night that month.)



Sunday, Dec 18 9:30am Church School, 11:00am Worship  
 Saturday, Dec 24 at 5:30pm Candlelight Christmas Eve Worship with Communion  
 Sunday, Dec 25 11:00am Christmas Worship with carols  
 For further information please check elsewhere in the Covenanter



**FAIR TRADE COFFEE AND CHOCOLATE...**  
 Make great Christmas gifts!  
 They don't take up much space and they don't need dusting on a shelf 😊  
 Red bags of coffee are \$7.50 each  
 Chocolate bars are \$3.00 each

*The beautiful blankets on display in the hallway were lovingly made by Covenant's Knitters and Knotters. They will be given to the clients of Project Safe. Knitters and Knotters meet every Thursday to knit blankets for high school graduates, Project Safe clients, and those hospitalized, and knit caps and scarves for cancer patients.*



THE SUNDAY MORNING CHORAL WORSHIP PROGRAM WAS A JOYFUL EXPERIENCE. HANDBELLS, INSTRUMENTALISTS, ADULT CHOIR, KEYBOARD OFFERINGS, FAMILIES, CHILDREN, A FULL HOUSE, MEANINGFUL SCRIPTURE READINGS AND A BEAUTIFUL SETTING. GLORIOUS MUSIC FILLED THE AIR. AND A LOVELY RECEPTION PROVIDED FELLOWSHIP TIME TO MEET AND GREET AND EXTEND APPRECIATION TO ALL AND GOOD WISHES FOR A SAFE AND MEANINGFUL HOLIDAY SEASON. I WISH I HAD TAKEN A PICTURE OF ALL THE MUSICIANS. IT WAS A SPECTACULAR SIGHT TO SEE SO MANY OF YOU IN ROBES WITH THE CHARMING RED STOLCS GRACED BY THE CHRISMON TREE, THE POINSETTIAS, THE ADVENT WREATH, NEW PAINT, CARPET AND CUSHIONS. INDEED, IT TOOK A VILLAGE OF LOVE AND DEDICATION TO MAKE THIS HAPPEN. THANK YOU, *BETSY BURMEISTER*

**GREETINGS FROM OLOMOUC, CZECH REPUBLIC!** Dear friends, Warm greetings from Advent Olomouc covered with snow! I would like to thank you on behalf of our congregation for the very generous gift we received from you yesterday. It means a lot to us. We try to help alleviate the suffering of Ukrainians, either as refugees in the Czech Republic or through the coordinated help of NGOs that help directly in Ukraine. We keep praying for the horrible situation in Ukraine and for our new Ukrainian friends. Some of them decided to visit their families for upcoming Christmas time, but the situation in Ukraine is still very unstable, we fear for them. We are wishing you a blessed Christmas and hope to meet some of you in person here in Olomouc at the Partnership Conference next July! *Jana*

**NEW FALL  
SCHEDULE for Sunday**

9:30am – 12 noon –

NURSERY

ages birth to Kindergarten

9:30am – Worship & Arts  
(K-5th),

Journey Adult Church  
School Class,

Upper Room Adult  
Church School Class

10:30am Fellowship

11:00am Worship

Sunday, December 18

Liturgist: Luanne Rigsby

Ushers/Greeters: Bill & Luanne Rigsby, Alan Edwards, Judy Capie

Sunday, December 25

Liturgist: Warren Combs

Ushers/Greeters: Chris Wilson, Katy Terry, Catharine Tyson, Bill Barstow

OPEN & CLOSE THE BUILDING

\_\_\_\_\_\*\*\* 1st Sunday Judy Capie 2nd Sunday

Pam Knox 3rd Sunday Tim Foutz 4th Sunday

Dick Zimdars 5th Sunday

GROUNDS STEWARDS

First Monday Week—Katy Terry & Chris Wilson

Second Monday Week—Don Bower & Alex Clark

Third Monday Week—Phil Hale & Phil Koehler

Fourth Monday Week—Susan & Randy Parish

Fifth Monday Week—Ellen & Dan Stoneburner



December 18, 2022

DeLynda & Ansley Tweedell

December 25, 2022

Bring Your Child to Church day!

**Wonderful Wednesdays Resumes January 11, 2023**

5:30pm—6:30pm Dinner & Fellowship.

Donations are welcome .

*Please come a little early to help set up and/or stay to help clean up. There will be homework and activity time for kids of all ages.*

6:00pm Handbell Practice

6:30pm Adult Bible Study with Pastor Dana

7:30pm Adult Choir

**\*\*\*An Open and Shut Case\*\*\***

An opener/closer is needed for the first Sunday of the month. Just show up first, unlock, the doors, turn on the lights. Do the opposite when everyone leaves (*well, this IS covpres and nothing is ever that simple, but I promise you won't be overtasked*). Please see me or Rich Reeves if you can fill this important role.

Brian Striggow, B&G chair

**Volunteers  
Needed!**



**Looking for a way to express your God given talents and minister to our children??** Volunteers are needed for our young people, grades

k—5th grade for Sunday morning Church School.

Let Amy know at [abaer@covpresathens.org](mailto:abaer@covpresathens.org) if you are interested or just want more information.

Thanks!

For the Holidays the church office will be closed December 27 and January 3.

Pastor Dana will be on vacation on December 28—31



**PRAYER CONCERNS:** Bob Reinert is at Emory St. Joseph's Hospital in Atlanta for fluid build-up; Ellie McMinn had successful lumbar spinal surgery at St. Mary's on 12/12; she will go home on 12/16; Pam Butt's son, Chris recovering from a fall; Patrick McMaster's mother, Belle, recovering from fall; Pastor Dana's mom, Joy, undergoing treatment for glioblastoma; Asher Hill diagnosed with IgA nephropathy, an auto-immune disorder that affects the kidneys; and our nation.

**Bible Readings for —December 19-25**

Isaiah 62: 6-12, Psalm 97, Titus 3: 4-7;  
Luke 2: 1-7, 8-20; Isaiah 52: 7-10; Psalm 98;  
Hebrew 1: 1-4 (5-12); John 1: 1-14

*Read in your Advent Devotional...*

*Please submit prayer concerns and/or celebrations to the church office 706-548-2756 or [kwetherington@covpresathens.org](mailto:kwetherington@covpresathens.org). or before worship service fill out the Prayer Concern form and put in offering plate or give to Pastor Dana.*

**Highlights of the December 6, 2023, Stated Session Meeting**

As her devotional, Katy Arora read Acts 14:21-28, which says that in every place they visited, Paul and Barnabas would appoint leaders in each church to be elders.

Luanne Rigsby, Clerk, read a letter from the UGA Presbyterian Student Center requesting that each church in the NEGA Presbytery consider making a pledge to the Nexxt80 Campaign for renovation of their building.

The Session reviewed the Financial Summary for November, 2022, as well as the detailed financial report for the month. According to the report, everything looks to be on track for the month and year.

The Class of 2025 Elders, Kathryn Fowler, Carolyn Hatfield, Ansley Tweedell and Dick Zimdars, as well as Donny Whitehead, who is filling the unexpired term of Kathy Boardman, Class of 2023, was examined and passed with flying colors. The new elders will co-chair the following Ministry Teams: Carolyn Hatfield - Building and Grounds, Kathryn Fowler – Finance, Ansley Tweedell - Congregational Care, Donny Whitehead - Christian Education, Dick Zimdars - Worship. The Session expressed sincere gratitude to the Class of 2022, Don Bower, Kay Brooks, Brian Striggow and Chris Wilson, who are rotating off of the Session in January.

The 2023 Session Retreat will be January 27-28, 2023. Location to be determined.

The Session discussed the Mission Study Task Force report, beautifully compiled by Bert Ballard-Myer, Abby Horvath, Linda Koehler and Chris Wilson. The report was approved with suggested changes. Completion of this document is a big step towards establishing a Pastor Nominating Committee. The report will now be sent to the NEGA Presbytery Committee on Ministry for approval and then presented to the congregation in January of February during a question/answer session. The Session approved a letter drafted by the Mission Study Task Force to be sent to members who we haven't seen since Covid in an effort to establish an accurate number of active members.

There will be a volunteer recognition/ appreciation event on February 12, 2023.

Some members of St. Gregory's Episcopal Church are very willing to come and help with outreach activities such as the food bank, grounds pickup, etc.

More volunteers are needed for Covenant's host week with Family Promise, December 11-18, 2022.

Submitted by Clerk of Session, *Luanne Rigsby*

**The Keymaster Speaks:** If you have a Fellowship Hall key to the church, it will now open the front door. Keyholders are also eligible for an access card, access keyfob, or PIN Number access to the electronic front door lock. See Asher for these. *Brian Striggow, B&G Chair*

Please click on this link <https://www.covpresathens.org/documents/session-minutes/> for the session minutes. When you scroll down you will see links to earlier minutes. If you would like minutes from previous years please let me know at [kwetherington@covpresathens](mailto:kwetherington@covpresathens).

**HOW TO GIVE.** There is a new online giving option through the Presbyterian Foundation at this link <https://www.covpresathens.org/online-giving/>

Or you can click on this link [www.covpresathens.org](http://www.covpresathens.org) and click on online giving. And as always you can mail your check to the church office or give in person. Thank you for your faithful giving!

**FINANCIAL REPORT  
FISCAL YEAR TO DATE - Week #24**

Anticipated Pledges — \$177,895.38

Actual Pledges — \$184,875.64

Non-Pledged — \$16,389.00

*Thank you for your faithful giving!*

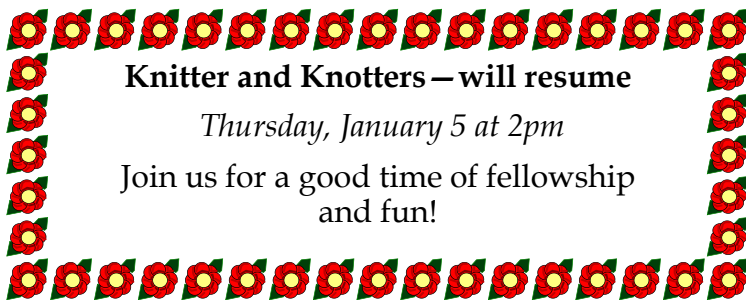
*MOW—\$5,290.00*



**Church School Classes IN PERSON & via ZOOM!**

**UPPER ROOM CLASS-** Sunday mornings at **9:30am**, James Malone hosts and different class members facilitate the discussion of the weekly chapter in *The Present Word*. If you would like to participate, via ZOOM please contact James at [gillbillvolume1@yahoo.com](mailto:gillbillvolume1@yahoo.com). Class meets in person in the upper room.

**JOURNEY CLASS**—Sunday mornings, **9:30am**, Phil and Sallie Hale host and different class volunteers facilitate discussion using the book, **How God Works**, by David DeSteno. If you would like to participate via ZOOM please contact Phil at [phale50@hotmail.com](mailto:phale50@hotmail.com). Class meet in person in the Journey Class Room.



**Knitter and Knotters – will resume**

*Thursday, January 5 at 2pm*

Join us for a good time of fellowship and fun!

**THE MUSIC SEARCH COMMITTEE** is actively seeking applicants for music director & piano accompanist. If anyone in the congregation knows someone who is interested, please give their contact information to *Katy Terry, Gloria Pylant, Betsy Burmeister, Laura Foskey, Jerry Shannon or Abby Horvath.*



**Library Corner:** *Good Enough: 40ish Devotionals for a Life of Imperfection* If you're looking for a devotional book for the upcoming year, consider this book by Kate Bowler. Bowler was a divinity-school professor and young mother when she suddenly found herself facing a Stage IV cancer diagnosis. In the years since, her health has stabilized and her popular podcast *Everything Happens* explores how "life becomes both hard and beautiful when we abandon certainty." This devotional book offers "reflections on how we can make sense of life not as a pursuit of endless progress." Although this book cannot be checked out for an entire year, our two-month check-out period is long enough for you to see if the book will be helpful as a daily guide. It can be found at Bay H, Shelf 4. -Church Librarian Valerie Stone

**Please note that the deadline for articles for the Covenanter is Thursday by 12noon. Thank you for your help. Karen**

Athens Area Emergency Food Bank is in desperate need of brown paper bags. You can bring them to the church and place on the table in the gathering room where the egg cartons go. And they still need egg cartons. *Thank you!*





## Covenant's Food Pantry

*Isaiah 58:10—Feed the hungry and help those in trouble, then your light will shine out from the darkness, and the darkness around you will be as bright as noon. **Food Pantry is Thursdays, 1pm—3pm.***

**Next food distribution is on Thursday, December 22.**

**URGENT NEED FOR FOOD PANTRY VOLUNTEERS!** We urgently need your help keeping our food pantry distribution going for the next few weeks! Our fearless leader Bert Ballard-Myer and our UGA student volunteers will all be unable to be at the pantry for the next few weeks. Please consider signing up in the next day or two so that we will know if we need to close the pantry for these dates:

**December 29, January 5 & 12**

Click the Signup Genius link below OR feel free to email Amy at [abaer@covpresathens.org](mailto:abaer@covpresathens.org) and we will sign up for you! <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/409084aa5aa22a20-covenant#/>

We need volunteers for the following two shifts and tasks for each date: 10am—noon: unpacking food boxes, setting up tables for assembly of the bags, filling food bags (activities that could be done seated; opening grocery bags for assembly, flattening boxes)

1pm—3pm: wheeling carts out to the driveway, handing out and gathering sign-in sheets from guests in their cars, loading bags into vehicles, cleanup boxes and carts. Thank you!

For the month of November Covenant served 903 food insecure folks over 3 Thursdays. That includes 384 adults, 296 children and 223 senior adults. Thank you Covenant and may we all have enough!

### *Designated Opportunities to Give 2022-2023!*

*As the Christmas season approaches with the New Year just around the corner, practicing generosity to help others brings delight to our hearts and to the holiday season. Someone said, "the best way to catch the spirit of Christmas is to give it to someone else."*

*To help us restore life-giving balance, Covenant offers alternatives, so that giving can once again become the sign of the season which celebrates the gift of God's serving love, born in a stable in Bethlehem long ago. You will find on the table in the narthex a list of benevolent opportunities to support along with a list of special offerings received during the year for your planning. Make you check payable to Covenant and designate how you want your contribution to be used.*

