

Please click here to view Covenant's Worship Service on YouTube for
Sunday, August 30, 2026 at 11am: <https://www.youtube.com/cpcathens>
Link to the bulletin: <https://www.covpresathens.org/bulletin/>

THE COVENANTER August 30, 2026

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



COVENANT YOUTH POOL PARTY!

SUNDAY, AUGUST 30 | 5:00 P.M. - 7:00 P.M.

LOCATION: 110 DUNWOODY DRIVE, ATHENS
(Donny and Dell Whitehead's home in Cedar Creek)

BRING YOUR FRIENDS!

BRING A SWIMSUIT & TOWEL

BRING YOUR APPETITE!

PIZZA DINNER PROVIDED!

PARENTS WELCOME!
Learn about our exciting
Fall activities!



**Congregational
Meeting**
Congregational
Meeting on August 30
following worship to elect
the 2026-2027
Nominating Committee.

LET'S RECONNECT

Midstream - Let's Reconnect

Join us if you can for a Brown Bag Lunch after worship on **August 30th**. It will be a chance to catch up and talk about getting together regularly going forward. Our plan is to have a monthly event and we would love your input. We will meet in the Fellowship Hall at 12:15pm. Drinks & cookies will be provided.



LUNCH BUNCH—
Tuesday, Sept. 1
at 11:30am
at DePalma's
(eastside).

Come for lunch & good conversation. *Separate checks!*

Retirees Covered Dish Luncheon

Tuesday, September 8 at 12:30pm



Join us for a delicious covered dish luncheon, and an engaging program presented by Rebecca Silver & Steve Rathbun on their trip to Patagonia. Bring your favorite dish to share. Beverages are provided.

You can find the Covenant Programs & Events Brochure on the table in the in front of the offices or at this link: [Covenant's Programs & Events 2026-2027](#)



This fall, our worship will feature a sermon series called *A Strange New World: Another Story to Live By*. The theologian Karl Barth once wrote that “within the Bible there is a strange, new world, the world of God.” Scripture does more than offer familiar religious ideas or helpful lessons for the lives we are already living.

Again and again, it opens a door into a world that can enlarge and unsettle our own – a world where strangers become teachers, abundance is measured by whether all have enough, power takes the shape of self-giving love, and God is found in places we might never have thought to look. From Rally Day through Christ the King Sunday, we will enter that strange biblical world together, listening for the ways its stories and visions might help us see our own lives, our church, and our common life with fresh eyes – and discover another story by which to live.



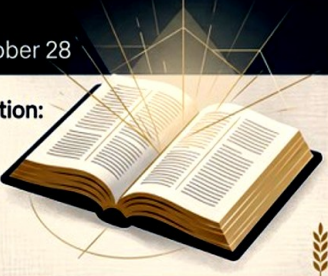
**Wednesday,
September 2, 2026
at 5:30pm**

5:30pm Covenant Connection family meal

6:00pm Handbell Rehearsal

6:15pm Adult Bible Study with Pastor Tom (*see below*)

7:15pm Adult Choir Rehearsal



How to Read the Bible Well:
Engaging Scripture with Depth & Understanding
with Pastor Tom Buchanan
Wednesdays - September 2 to October 28

Wednesday Night Covenant Connection:
Dinner 5:30 – 6:15 PM
Program 6:15 – 7:15 PM

@ Covenant Presbyterian Church
1065 Gaines School Road, Athens

Join us as we learn to approach the Bible with greater clarity, confidence, and appreciation! Together we will explore what the Bible is, how it's structured, how its many literary genres work, and how its writings emerged from the worlds of ancient Israel, Second Temple Judaism, and the wider Greco-Roman Mediterranean. We will also consider why Bible translations differ, how to choose a good study Bible, and how to use tools such as commentaries, Bible dictionaries, atlases, and other helps. Along the way, we will model careful study of selected biblical passages, learning how historical context, literary attention, and interpretive humility can open these ancient texts in fresh and meaningful ways.

IN OUR PRAYERS: Lois Settles and family in the passing of Bob on Wed. Aug 26; Joelle Dunham and family in the passing of her husband, Rich Dunham in Virginia; Robyn Malone and family in the passing of her former father in law; Sharon Edwards with ongoing medical issues; Erin Stoneburner recovering from surgery from complications from a broken ankle; Joe & June Meyers' niece, Wendy Karrisch, age 55 years, has decided to receive Hospice Care for metastatic breast cancer; Kathy McGill, a friend of Deb Millwood & Pam Butts, in rehab for a broken hip; Missy Green's son, Jason, recovering from a serious dog attack in Cleveland, Ohio; Lisa Buchanan's friend's husband, Terry Shannon, suffering from stage 4 cancer; friends of Paige Cummings, Steve & Beverly Poitrat, as Steve has serious health issues & diagnosed with chronic CML Leukemia; John Wilkin's sister, Sarah Goodrich diagnosed with cancer; Bruce & Cathi Lancaster's daughter, Emily Gaither, undergoing chemo for breast cancer; Paige Cummings brother, Stephen Mercer with complications after bladder cancer surgery; Margaret Lee, a friend of Tom Buchanan, for ongoing medical issues; Pam & Bruce Butts grandchildren's mother, Ginger Butts, approved for a kidney transplant; Ellie McMinn's brother, Mike Marshall recovering from a stroke; Bob Placek in skilled nursing at PVA; our country and our world.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS:
Exodus 12: 1-14, Psalm 149,
Ezekial 33: 7-11, Psalm 119: 33-40,
Romans 13: 3-14, Matthew 18: 15-20

Financial Summary for Week #7

Anticipated Pledges – \$ 66,138.96

Pledges Received – \$ 64,252.98

Thank you Covenant for your faithful giving!



Chess Anyone??

Jack Pannecoucke has just bought a chess set and a copy of *Chess for Dummies* (4th edition!), and would like to start a Chess Club for members and friends of Covenant! If you'd like to become a member—whether you're a beginner or an experienced player—please email Jack at jep@uga.edu. He'll compile a list with the names and contact information those interested.



To give to covenant online scan the QR code or click on this link: <https://www.covpresathens.org/online-giving>

The Presbyterian Foundation (Vanco Online) has issued a new QR code. See above.



OLOMOUC -- Please mark your calendar for dates focusing on fellowship with our sister church in Olomouc, Czech Republic. On Sunday, September 13 our worship service will focus on the partnership between our churches. After the service, please stay to enjoy a few Czech treats. On Wednesday, September 16 at 5:30 PM during the Covenant Connection dinner, we'll have a trip planning meeting for those interested in learning about the 2027 group trip. (Please RSVP to valeriefreystone@gmail.com for the Wednesday meeting so we can notify the kitchen

crew.) The group trip to Olomouc is planned for July 15 – 27, 2027. Our sister church will provide lodging and travel help, so the trip is limited to ten travelers.

Sunday Schedule

9:30am Nursery
9:30am Sunday School
for all ages
11:00am Worship

SUNDAY, August 30, 2026

LITURGIST: Jim Newland

GREETERS/USHERS: Sandy Whitney, Katy Terry, Judy Capie, Jim Newland

Sunday, September 06, 2026

LITURGIST: Kirche Rogers

GREETERS/USHERS: Susan & Randy Parish, Bill & Luanne Rigsby

Congregational Care Coordinator for September: Susan Parish

NURSERY MINISTRY 2026

Sunday, August 30, 2026
Nancy Alila, Susan Parish,
Luanne Rigsby

Sunday, September 6, 2026
Nancy Alila, Pam Knox,
Wyatt Herndon

If you would like to volunteer for the
Nursery or just like more information
contact Ellen Stoneburner at
ellenstoneburner@gmail.com

KNITTERS & KNOTTERS—

Sept. 3, 2026

*Join us in the library every Thursday at
2pm. We Knit & Knot and have lots of
laughs. No experience necessary.*

**Presbyterian Women's Bible
Study** books are now available
in the copy room. *First meeting
is Thursday, Sept. 17 at
9:30am.* Regular print is \$16.00
each and Large print is \$20.00
each.

Please make your check out to
Covenant with *PW Book* in the
memo portion of the
check.

Athens Area Emergency Food Bank is
still in need of brown paper bags.
Please put them on the table as you
enter the gathering room. (please no
egg cartons) Thank you!



OPEN AND CLOSE THE BUILDING

Chris Wilson 1st Sunday **Judy Capie 2nd Sunday**
Pam Knox 3rd Sunday **Tim Foutz 4th Sunday**
Brian Striggow 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 Stoneburner

Green Dream Team News

September 19, Covenant Road Clean Up 9:00am at
Covenant

All are welcome to join us! Please bring a water bottle,
work gloves, and sunglasses.
RSVP to Jennifer Frey at jenofrey@gmail.com or sign
up on the Covenant bulletin board.

October 05 Earth Care Fair at St. Gregory's—tentative
time 12pm—3pm

Oct/Nov (TBD) Youth Art Activity & Dinner with
Green Dream Team (GDT) 5:00pm

GDT members will join them for the meal and lead our
youth in painting bird feeders.

Future Events:

Date to be determined Nature Walk in Athens with GDT
members.

November 7 at 10:00am Field Trip ACC Water Recla-
mation Facility

Join the GDT on a tour of one of the ACC Water Recla-
mation Facilities. Please RSVP to Heather Jarboe at
jarboeh@gmail.com to join this tour.



THE UPPER ROOM 9:30am, August 30, 2026 James Malone hosts, with different members facilitating the discussion of the weekly chapter in *The Present Word*. To participate via Zoom, please contact James at giillbillvolume1@yahoo.com.

The “JOURNEY” August 30, 2026, 9:30am Join us Sunday for coffee, concerns and celebrations, and discussion. We will discuss the movie, *Downsizing*.

THE GOD BOTHERERS CLASS - Sundays, August 30 through October 4 at 9:30am - Covenant Library
 The Fifth Gospel? The Gospel of Thomas in Conversation with The Canonical Gospels” Facilitated by Pastor Tom
 The *Gospel of Thomas* is one of the most intriguing non-canonical writings to survive from early Christianity. Over six weeks, we will read it alongside the biblical Gospels and explore what these texts together reveal about Jesus, the transmission of early Christian traditions, and the different ways early Christians understood discipleship and salvation. Our format will be informal and discussion-oriented. Bibles and paper copies of the Gospel of Thomas will be available. If you would like a copy of the Participant Packet (not “required,” but gives an overview of the series, plus a translation of Thomas), contact Pastor Tom.



KINDERGARTENERS – FIFTH GRADERS AUGUST 30 AT 9:30AM

The designated downstairs Church School space is painted with murals inviting young people into the world of sacred story. Within these walls, songs and stories of faith shaping the lives of young disciples are shared in creative ways by a team of talented volunteers. The curriculum includes the “Growing in God’s Love, a story Bible. The children grouped as K -2nd graders and 3rd – 5th graders, are shepherded each month.

Teachers: Betsy Burmeister, Katy McGill

Shepherds: Kay Millar, Jere Bowden, & Shari Cobb Substitute: Kay Brooks

Oasis Theatre – the Story through drama Temple Courtyard – the Story through creative games

Loaves and Fishes – the snack time and fellowship

Pottery Workshop – the Story through crafts.





Please look through these volunteer opportunities at Covenant in and sign up if you can help!
Thank you Covenant volunteers!

Athens Free Clinic @ Covenant—Volunteers are needed to welcome the medical team into the church building and to sit at the front desk to greet clients as they arrive for their appointments. Sign up here to volunteer: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/409084AA5AA22A20-athens#/>
Volunteers are especially needed to help with setting up the space ahead of the clinic's start and ensuring all visitors feel welcome and supported. No prior experience is necessary—just a friendly attitude and a willingness to lend a hand.

Every First Tuesday of the month!

Make a difference—One Meal at a time. Sept. 1, Oct. 6, Nov. 3, Dec. 1

Sign up to volunteer here: *The TABLE signups will begin again in the fall* <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/409084AA5AA22A20-44868340-serving#/> Please don't forget to submit your receipts to the office for reimbursement.

Covenant Food Pantry (Every Thursday)

Volunteering with the Food Pantry is a great way for Covenanters to help. Sessions are from 9:30-11am where we pack grocery bags, and from 12:30pm-1:30pm, where we distribute groceries. The afternoon session is particularly important as it takes about 15 volunteers to run smoothly. Sign up: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/409084AA5AA22A20-covenant#/> **Most needed time is the 12:30pm – 1:30pm shift. Don't forget to bring you plastic grocery bags.** Thank you Covenant!

BAKERS NEEDED: Covenant Birthday Brigade

The Covenant Birthday Brigade makes birthday cakes for children with a birthday while living at the Athens Area Homeless Shelter and Project Safe. Please email Marlah Gaspard at mgaspard@helppathenshomeless.org, if you are interested in joining the Covenant Birthday Brigade and want to provide a cake for the Shelter. Emma Boardman is our contact at Project Safe. She can be contacted at ebordman@project-safe.org, if you want to add your name to our email volunteer list.

COMING IN SEPTEMBER! Athens Area Diaper Drive. All sizes and pull-ups accepted. Open packs are accepted too. More information to come...

Mission & Outreach is seeking a volunteer to serve as the Coordinator for First Tuesday at The Table at UGA from September through May. This is a wonderful opportunity to help organize and support this important outreach ministry. If you are interested or would like more information, please contact Bob Brewster at bobbrew@aol.com or Deb Millwood at debrajmillwood@gmail.com.



We are collecting for Cedar Shoals High School top priority needs:

#2 Pencils

Bic Pens

Yellow highlighters

College rule composition books

College rule notebooks

Please leave your items on the table in front of the church office.

Thank you Covenant!



Over the past eight years, the Church Partnership Network linking PC(USA) and participating Czech churches has created an Advent devotional.

The 2026 theme is "*The Light Shines in the Darkness.*"

We need writers from our congregation to share their thoughts on one of the year's selected Bible verses listed in the sign up sheet:

<https://bit.ly/4zxRE7Y> . Devotionals can be up to 1,500 characters

and you may include a picture if you wish. **The deadline is**

Friday, September 18. Please submit your devotional in the

Microsoft Word .docx format as an email attachment to David

Hancock (dhancock@pobox.com). For local help or questions, please contact Covenant member

Valerie Stone ([valeriefreystone at gmail](mailto:valeriefreystone@gmail.com)).

2025-2026 Treasurer's report

The 2025-2026 fiscal year for Covenant Presbyterian ended on June 30, 2026. The following is a summary of income and expenses for the year.

Pledges were received in the previous year's pledge drive for \$446,318. The actual donations received from individuals participating in pledging was \$469,318, an excess of \$23,290. The budget had anticipated unpledged gifts of \$20,000, while \$40,494 was received, an excess of \$20,494.

Interest income of \$4,400 on savings was anticipated in the budget while \$7124 was received. Rent collections were \$2040 from building users, exceeding the budget by \$40.

Expenditures were less than budgeted by \$16,181. The primary savings were in the departure of the Outreach Coordinator prior to year end and unrealized projects in Christian Education. Significant areas exceeding budget were utilities and various Buildings and Grounds Projects.

In summary:

2025—2026	ANTICIPATED	ACTUAL	SURPLUS
PLEDGES	\$ 446,318.00	\$ 469,607.85	\$ 23,289.85
NON-PLEDGED OFFERINGS	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 40,493.79	\$ 20,493.79
RENT & SAVINGS & INVESTMENTS	\$ 6,400.00	\$ 9,124.40	\$ 2,724.40
GEN OPERATING SURPLUS	\$ 4,905.00	\$ 4,905.00	
TOTALS	\$ 477,623.00	\$ 524,171.04	\$ 46,548.04
EXPENSES	\$ 477,623.00	\$ 461,441.63	\$ 16,181.37
		TOTAL SURPLUS	\$ 62,729.41

Yes, the year ended with \$62,729.41 of excess funds.

Note that in the 2026-2027 budget, \$25,000 excess funds from this year was anticipated and budgeted to be used. The budget also planned a drawdown of Fund Principal of \$3,747, which is offset by excess funds.

At the close of the fiscal year, the church held \$226,587 in restricted funds (restricted funds are designated for a particular purpose by either the donor or the Session). The year ended with an operating fund balance was \$219,780. It is fair to say the church is well positioned for continued operations and to embark on projects supporting our mission.

Respectfully, *Brian Striggow*, Treasurer

Covenant by the Week!

August 30, 2026

SUNDAY -

9:30am Sunday School for all ages
11:00am Worship
Congregational Meeting following Worship
12:30pm Midstream Meeting (bring your lunch)
3pm CE Search Team Meeting (via Zoom)
5pm—7pm Covenant Youth Pool Party
6:30 pm Campus Kitchen

MONDAY OFFICE CLOSED

11:30am New Horizons Band Rehearsal
7:00pm Handbells of NEGA rehearsal
7:00pm 12 Step Group in Journey Classroom

TUESDAY OFFICE OPEN 10am—4pm

11:30am Lunch Bunch at DePalma's Eastside
6:00pm 12 Step Group Meeting in FH

WEDNESDAY OFFICE OPEN 10am—4pm

11:30am New Horizons Band
5:30pm Covenant Connection Dinner
6:00pm Handbell Rehearsal
6:15pm Adult Bible Study with Pastor Tom
7:15pm Adult Choir Rehearsal
7:00pm 12 Step Group—downstairs

THURSDAY— OFFICE OPEN 10am-4pm

9:30am preparing bags for food distribution
1:00pm Covenant Food Distribution
2pm Knitters and Knotters
2:30pm Athens Women's Singing Group
7:00pm 12 Step Meeting

FRIDAY— OFFICE OPEN 10am—4pm

8:30am Fellowship Hall Cleaned

SATURDAY 10:30am 12 Step Group

10:30am 12 Step Group

September 06, 2026

SUNDAY -

9:30am Sunday School for all ages
11:00am Worship
5pm—7pm Covenant Youth Group
6:30pm Campus Kitchen

MONDAY OFFICE CLOSED

11:30am New Horizons Band Rehearsal
7:00pm Handbells of NEGA rehearsal
7:00pm 12 Step Group in Journey Classroom

TUESDAY OFFICE CLOSED for Labor Day

12:30pm Retirees Covered Dish Luncheon
6:00pm 12 Step Group Meeting in FH

WEDNESDAY OFFICE OPEN 10am—4pm

11:30am New Horizons Band
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