

Please click here to view Covenant's Worship Service on You Tube for
Sunday, December 22 2024 at 11am: <https://www.youtube.com/cpcathens>
Link to the bulletin: <https://www.covpresathens.org/bulletin/>

THE COVENANTER DECEMBER 22, 2024

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



Advent @ Covenant

Sunday, December 24 at 5:30pm
*Christmas Eve Worship with carols, communion
and candlelight*

Sunday, December 29
9:30am Youth Alumni Breakfast
11:00am Youth Alumni-led Worship



Meals on Wheels Offeri ng—

to be received in the month of December and at the Christmas Eve service to 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. Please mark in the memo portion of your check MOW. Consider making a special gift in honor or memory of a loved one.

Christmas Letter from Pastor Tom

Dear Covenant Family,

Well, here we are ... nearly Christmas Eve 2024 ... my first Christmas as your pastor! Yes, troubles persist around the globe and in our country, and yet, we still speak about Christmas ... about the coming of the Christ child ... about angels singing, and shepherds making a journey to Bethlehem. We may see this old story and promise of newness as a welcome escape. Or we may see it as oddly out of place ... that an escape is *exactly* what it is. This hardly seems a time for a child to be born.

This week I was thinking about that, and was reminded of a short poem by the author Madeleine L'Engle. It speaks to this fundamental oddness at the center of our faith:

*This is no time for a child to be born,
With the earth betrayed by war & hate
And a comet slashing the sky to warn
That time runs out & the sun burns late.*

*That was no time for a child to be born,
In a land in the crushing grip of Rome;
Honor & truth were trampled to scorn—
Yet here did the Savior make His home.*

*When is the time for love to be born?
The inn is full on the planet earth,
And by a comet the sky is torn—
Yet Love still takes the risk of birth.*

That's it: Love still takes the risk of birth. And that's the good news of the gospel in a nutshell. The God who created the heavens and the earth is not remote from us, but comes to us ... inviting us to discern the great mystery of the ages in the squalor of a stable ... the divine Truth incarnated in a helpless infant lying in a manger.

And God doesn't wait for all to be right with the world before coming, but comes into the midst of the mess. *Immanuel* ... God with us.

Hold this truth in your heart in this season and always, for it is the truth that sets us free. May you and yours have a most holy and blessed Christmas.


Grateful to be on the Journey with you,

IN OUR PRAYERS: Caly DePalma and family in the passing of her mother Ruth Murden Dec 17 in New York; Marilyn Brown recovering at home from hospital stay; Arnelle Combs at home; John Wilkin's brother in law, Jim Negro in Wellsley, Mass., recovering from lung cancer surgery; Carolyn Steuer having problems with blood pressure; Wanda Minton recovering from surgery Dec. 11; Joan Baird's niece and Hannah Baird's cousin, Lindsey Haggerty at Cleveland Clinic with probable encephalitis; DeLynda Tweedell's best friends mom, Ann Mathis recovering from surgery Dec 18; Alice Rose fighting leukemia and heart condition and back pain; Rich Kimmich recovering at home from an accident; Dick Zimdars at home; Bob Placek in skilled nursing at PVA and Joyce at home; Larry Hatfield remains under treatment for stage 4 colon cancer; Juergen Wiegel in PVA memory care and Heide at home; Gene Holshouser at home; and our country.

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

 * **DAILY BIBLE READINGS:** *
 * **Micah 5: 2-5a; Psalm 80: 1-7;** *
 * **Hebrews 10: 5-10; Luke 1: 39-55** *
 * **Please read in your Advent Devotional!** *

Financial Summary for Week #24
 Anticipated Pledges—\$205,883.85
 Pledges Received—\$211,227.10
Thank Covenant for your faithful giving!
 Meals On Wheels—\$9,143.25

LUNCH BUNCH

 Each month on the first Tuesday of the month at 11:30am at DePalma's Italian Restaurant (eastside). All are welcome to join us for a good time of fellowship and food.



THANK YOU! Did you bake for the *Holiday Benevolence Market* or the *Sights & Sounds of Advent & Christmas* Worship Service Reception? If you did,

SAVE THE DATE - Sunday, December 29, 2024
THE OCCASION - The Return of Youth Alumni Sunday
TO DO - Make arrangements with your children who are Covenant Youth Alums to participate.
THE SCHEDULE - 9:30am - Pancake breakfast with all the fixings
 11:00 am - Worship led by youth alums
We're excited about our return to this signature tradition of Covenant.

you deserve a double thank you! Items remaining after those events were frozen and later taken to the Cedar Shoals PTO Teacher/Staff Appreciation Day event on December 17. The hardworking folks helping educate kids at our neighboring high school loved the array of holiday treats and had smiles on their faces going into finals week. It was the perfect end to a productive year. Many thanks go to all the people who pitched in with Fellowship Team events this year--bakers, platter-scrubbers, dish-dryers, chair-and-table haulers, shoppers, tablecloth-launderers, planners, decorators, and more. We appreciate everyone who helped make 2024 events and fun days possible! --*From the Fellowship Team*

SUNDAY SCHEDULE

9:30am Nursery

9:45am Church School for
all Ages

11:00am Worship

5:00pm Youth Group

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 22, 2024

USHERS/GREETERS: Hank & DeLynda Tweedell, Bill & Luanne Rigsby

LITURGIST: Stephanie Cahill, Lila McMaster

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 29, 2024

USHERS/GREETERS: Jim & Sandy Whitney, Paige Cummings, Stephanie Cahill

LITURGIST: Luanne Rigsby

CONGREGATIONAL CARE MEAL COORDINATOR

for December: Barbara Burnett

OPEN & 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

5th Monday Week—Ellen Stoneburner & June Meyers



December 22, 2024

Nancy Alila, Richard &
Marcia Page

December 29, 2024

Nancy Alila, Sandy Whitney



Covenant Connection January 08, 2024

5:30pm with a family style meal prepared by our own
Chef Patrick McMaster. (donation \$3 each)

6:00pm Handbell Choir Rehearsal

6:15pm Adult Bible Study facilitated by Pastor Tom

7:15pm Adult Choir rehearsal in Worship Center



Congratulations!

Congratulations to
Rev. Jacob Douylliez
and Catherine on the
birth of their son,
Gibson Samuel Lee
Douylliez, born Dec
12 at 12:10am weigh-
ing 8lbs10ozs. Meas-

uring 21". Everyone is happy and healthy.



Mark your calendars for the
January 11th

Rock Lobsters Game benefiting
Family Promise. Use this link to
buy your ticket to the game and \$5
will be donated to Family Promise
for every ticket sold

<https://fevo-enterprise.com/event/Familypromise5> .

In addition, during the game, Family Promise will be
selling foam pucks. At the second intermission, patrons
who buy the pucks will throw them on the ice. The puck
that gets closest to the target receives prizes such as
gift cards to local restaurants! The proceeds from the
puck sales go to Family Promise as well. Hope to see
many of you there.



The Athens Area Emergency Food Bank always needs brown paper grocery bags. (*minus the cat*)

People who are experiencing short term emergencies such as job loss, medical bills, etc., go to the ARK which is sponsored by area churches, including Covenant. Some of our members helped start this program.

The people's needs are screened and various kinds of help are available for job loss, medial needs, etc. They are provided with meals for up to two weeks if needed.

The food for each day is put into a separate brown bag. The meals are nutritionally sound. Menus and recipe's are included.

THE **Table** at UGA (*formerly Presbyterian Student Center*)

Invest In Campus Ministry

The Annual Fund serves to meet the Table's annual budgeting needs, including hospitality and weekly meal costs, conference and retreat registrations, pastoral and administrative salaries, small group and other educational materials, and so much more. Your gift—whatever the amount—is crucial to the ongoing ministry of belonging at UGA, centered in the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. Click on this link to donate: <https://www.tableuga.org/donate>



Did you receive a Christmas gift you can't use? Will you be doing some cleaning out for New Year? In January we'll be bringing back our annual Bingo game night. Please

set aside a few items you don't want but that someone else might treasure and we'll use these for Bingo prizes. Stay tuned to the Covenanter for the date.

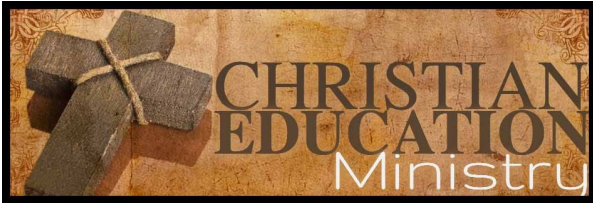


HOLY HAPPY HOUR

JOIN US!

THIRD THURSDAYS • 5 P.M.
 AUTHENTIC BREWING COMPANY
 INSIDE TAPROOM • 108 PARK AVE. ATHENS, GA

JOIN US FOR A "HOLY HAPPY HOUR:" A FUN-FILLED REFORMED THEOLOGICAL DISCUSSION!



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION CLASSES FOR ALL AGES!

The **"GOD-BOTHERERS" Class at 9:45am.** Join us in the library for this exciting class facilitated by Pastor Tom. This class is for anyone of any age who wrestles with tough questions.

The **"UPPER ROOM" at 9:45am.** Location: "Upper Room" Classroom at the top of the ramp and Via Zoom. 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.

The **"JOURNEY" at 9:45am**

Location: "Journey" Classroom Room 216. On Sunday, Nov. 2, we will begin study and discussion of our newly-selected book, *The Substance of Faith and Other Cotton Patch Sermons* by Clarence Jordan (foreword by Jimmy Carter). We share leadership with class participants volunteering to lead our discussion each week. Class facilitated by Phil Hale.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES

Juniors (K-3rd) Class at 9:45am. Taught by Katy Arora and volunteer shepherds meet each week downstairs in the "Temple Courtyard" classroom.

Middlers (4th—7th) Class at 9:45am. Betsy Burmeister facilitates this class downstairs in the "Potter's Workshop" classroom.

Covenant Youth Connection—Will resume Sunday, January 5, 2025

THE COVENANT FORUM—

In addition to its many classes and educational opportunities, Covenant is also pleased to host "The Covenant Forum."

This class will feature special speakers, panel discussions, and stimulating presentations, bringing together the at least quarterly, on weekday nights or Saturdays. *Check this spot for a new forum in the near future.*

The Art Of
SABBATH

JOIN US AS WE EXPLORE SABBATH PRACTICES THROUGH THE ARTS.
IN JANUARY WE ARE REPEATING "LIFE IS SWEET!"
LEARNING TO DECORATE WITH ROYAL ICING

TUESDAY • JANUARY 21
9:30-11:30 A.M.

LOCATION: COVENANT - LIBRARY
RSVP BY JANUARY 14 TO AMY AT
ABAER@COVPRESATHENS.ORG
ALL SUPPLIES WILL BE PROVIDED.

WAYS TO SERVE @ COVENANT



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



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED:

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. Here is the link to sign up for all of our upcoming volunteer spots: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/409084AA5AA22A20-athens#/>

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED:

Covenant Cooks "First Tuesday" Dinners

Sign up to volunteer here: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/409084AA5AA22A20-44868340-serving#/>

Adopt-A-Campus-Kitchen-Meal for our Neighbors Experiencing Homelessness

As you may know, UGA's Campus Kitchen has volunteers who come to Covenant a several days every week during the semester to prepare meals for our neighbors experiencing homelessness. They need volunteers to cover these meals during breaks while UGA students are away. When the students are away, the recipients of these meals at the Homeless Day Center and Bigger Vision often must just go without. Please sign up below if you are available to shop, cook or deliver these meals:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/409084AA5AA22A20-46944399-adoptacampuskit#/>



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED:

Covenant Food Pantry (Every Thursday) Sign-up to volunteer here: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/409084AA5AA22A20-covenant#/>

Bring the whole family ...visitors from out of town, kiddos on Christmas break...to serve at the Covenant Food Pantry for the next few weeks! Our usual UGA student volunteers are away during the holidays and we need your help. If you bring kiddos, please consider bringing them to the morning shift to pack bags. Children will need to be supervised by a family member...

Covenant by the Week!

December 22, 2024

SUNDAY - 9:30am Nursery
9:45am Sunday School for all ages
11:00am Worship
12:30pm 12 Step Group
NO Covenant Youth Connection will resume Jan 5

MONDAY Office Open 10:00am
6:00pm Scouts
7:00pm 12 Step Group

TUESDAY Office Open 10:00am
5:30pm Christmas Eve Worship
7pm 12 Step Group Meeting

WEDNESDAY
Office Closed



THURSDAY Office Closed
9:30am preparing bags for food distribution
1pm Covenant Food Distribution
NO Knitters & Knotters

FRIDAY Office Closed
7pm 12 Step Group Meeting

SATURDAY
10:30am 12 Step Group

December 29, 2024

SUNDAY - 9:30am Nursery
9:30am Youth Alumni Breakfast in Fellowship Hall
9:45am Sunday School for all ages
11:00am Worship—Youth Alumni Sunday
12:30pm 12 Step Group
NO Covenant Youth Connection will resume Jan 5

MONDAY Office Open 10:00am
6:00pm Scouts
7:00pm 12 Step Group

TUESDAY Office Open 10am
7pm 12 Step Group Meeting

WEDNESDAY
Office CLOSED



THURSDAY Office CLOSED
9:30am preparing bags for food distribution
1pm Covenant Food Distribution
NO Knitters & Knotters

FRIDAY Office CLOSED
7pm 12 Step Group Meeting

SATURDAY
10:30am 12 Step Group



The poinsettias in worship were given in memory and honor of those listed below:

In Memory of:

Debra Fagher
Dan Stoneburner
Larry & Karen Burns
Burmeister Siblings
Bob Reaves
Jake Tinga
Joyce Minor
George & Marie Zimdars
Stan & Pauline Marshall
Beth Nunnally
Margaret & Truman Terry
Katherine & Ashton Longstreet
Paul Spain

In Honor of:

William Isaac Griffin
Jarrad Pittard
Lily Harper Toledano
Fiona Brooke Toledano

Given by:

Sara Cooney
Ellen Stoneburner
Ellen Stoneburner
Betsy Burmeister
Rich Reaves
Tinga Family
Pam Butts & Deb Millwood
Dick & Paula Zimdars
Dick & Paula Zimdars
Katy Terry
Katy Terry
Chris Wilson
Chris Wilson

Given by:

Branden Douty
Branden Douty
Joe & June Meyers
Joe & June Meyers