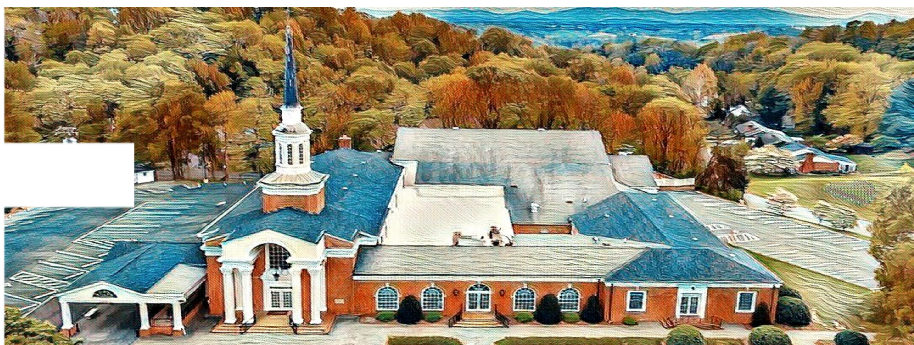


DECEMBER 1, 2025
STAUNTON, VA



COVENANT CONNECTION

A PUBLICATION OF COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



From the Pastor's Desk

Each Advent we take a stroll down memory lane as we prepare our house for Christmas. We unpack decorations with ties to long gone family members and hang ornaments that mark special occasions in our lives over the years – childhood memories, our first Christmas together, the birth of our kids, our arrival in Staunton, another Steeler Super Bowl victory (some are old ornaments). We pull out favorite movies – White Christmas, Elf, Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer – to be viewed yet again with memories of those folks with whom we watched them in the past. We read Christmas cards from friends, some of whom we have had no contact with since last Christmas, but still remember fondly. We listen to familiar Christmas songs and carols that warm our hearts with their words and familiar tunes, and we hear again the familiar Scriptures that herald the coming of Emmanuel, God with us, in the baby born in Bethlehem.

The danger in all that nostalgia is that we are so focused on the past that we forget that the good news of Jesus' coming is not just about then, but also about now and the future. It is not just remembering what happened in Bethlehem 2,000 years ago, but also daring to believe that Jesus' birth is significant for us today too. It is good news that gives us hope with which to live today in a world in which the news is so often not good, a world in which there is too much violence, hate, and conflict – as it was in Jesus' day. The tidings of great joy for all people are tidings of great joy for us too, encouraging us to live with

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VISIT US ONLINE AT
WWW.COVENANTPRESSTAUNTON.ORG

Serving
GOD
Together



GREETERS

DECEMBER 7 -

8:30 AM....Cindy Bowman,
Sharon Zaccaria

10:30 AM....Melissa Druff, Jane Wimmer

DECEMBER 14 -

8:30 AM....Jeanne & Mick Lambert

10:30 AM....Sally Griffith

FLOWER COORDINATORS

Susan Polly and Christy Davis

CHURCH OPENING and CLOSING

DECEMBER — Randy Smith

With Sympathy

Please keep in your prayers Shenandoah
Presbytery's General Presbyter
Rev. Bronwen Boswell and her family
on the death of Bronwen's husband,
Howard on November 17. Howard
was the pastor at
Buena Vista Presbyterian Church.



Sanctuary
flowers
SIGN-UP

Provide flowers in memory or in honor
of someone, or just to decorate the
sanctuary. Directions are given on
the sign-up form. Please sign up at
<https://bit.ly/3MD9wX0> at least two
weeks before your desired date.

Questions? Contact Susan Polly or
Christy Davis.

**Ushers/Greeters
Needed**



Help is always needed!
If you are available at the
8:30 or 10:30 service,
please sign-up at
<http://bit.ly/3KPmamT>



There is still time to order "Glorious
Gifts." You may do so by visiting the
table in the Breezeway on Sunday, De-
cember 7th. Or by ordering online at
<https://bit.ly/gloriousgifts2025>

**NOTE TO OUR
VISITORS!**

If you have been visiting in person or online
and are interested in learning
more about Covenant, our ministries,
or membership, please give John Peterson
a call at 540-885-2138.

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK (cont'd)

that joy throughout this season but also into a new year after we've packed the decorations away.

Advent not only looks back to Jesus' birth but also looks ahead to his return in glory. It affirms that just as God was with us then, so God is with us now and into the future. It declares that just as Jesus came to earth in an unexpected place at an unexpected time, so it will be when he returns. Our responsibility as we await that return at a time unknown is to live faithfully day by day, sharing God's love, joy, and peace with a world desperately seeking each of those good gifts.

This Advent, I encourage you to take time to walk down memory lane with those old friends and family from your past, but take time also to turn your eyes to the present and to the future to Jesus' promised return. For, his coming – then in Bethlehem and in days to come – is the source of our hope, joy, and peace, with which to live today, come what may!



Dear Covenant Church:

We want to thank you for hosting the 207th Stated Meeting of Shenandoah Presbytery. It was a successful meeting. The church members were very pleasant and helpful. Let's do it again soon!

— Shenandoah Presbytery Staff

The family of Lou Dolive thanks the Covenant family for all the love and support they have shown us during Lou's recent illness and death.

— Ruth Arnold,
Carrie Dolive and
Will Dolive



Gender Gap in Agricultural Production: Women typically invest more of what they earn back into their families and communities, yet most women smallholder farmers realize lower yields than their male counterparts, due to a lack of access to the same trainings and agricultural inputs that men have. If women had the same access to these resources as men, they could increase food production by 30% and reduce world hunger by 15%. This is why Decapolis focuses on teaching the women in communities how to produce their own organic fertilizers and practice faithful stewardship of the land. However, men were trained, too, to ensure that they felt included in these new methods and will not discourage the women from practicing what they have learned.

Items for the next newsletter are due by **9:00 AM on Friday, December 12th.**

Please email Martha at: covenantpcusastaunton@gmail.com





WINTER CLOTHING DRIVE



GET THEM HOME WARM

Help us **WARM UP** those being released
from Middle River Regional Jail...

It is that time of year when we turn from the warm weather of Summer to Fall, to the chills of Late Fall to Winter. As you go about your shopping or as you change out your seasonal clothing, please look to see if you might have something to pass along.

Those leaving the MRRJ facility need items of clothing just to get them home.






**LONG-SLEEVE T-SHIRTS, SWEATSHIRTS,
AND SWEATPANTS L-XXL
(VERY FEW XXXL, PLEASE),
GENTLY USED CASUAL SHOES (MOSTLY
SNEAKERS), GLOVES, AND SKI CAPS**



Please place your donations
in the collection bins by the
church library and in the
vestibule area by the
church office.

**COLLECTION DATES
ARE NOW
UNTIL JANUARY 1ST**

DECEMBER

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<div><div><div>Joy</div><div>The Joy of the LORD is your strength and gladness all day long.</div></div><div><div><div>7 — PEANUT BUTTER SUNDAY</div><div>PRESBYTERIAN COFFEE PROJECT</div><div>GLORIOUS GIFTS</div><div>8:30 AM Worship Service</div><div>9:30 AM Christian Formation Hour</div><div>10:30 AM Worship Service and via Live Stream</div><div>11:45 AM Outreach Team</div><div>11:45 AM Caroling</div><div>12:00 PM Confirmation Class</div></div></div></div>	<div><div><div>DEC. 1</div><div>Covenant Connection Published</div><div>10:30 AM Monday Morning Bible Study</div><div><div>MORNING Bible Study</div><div>MONDAY</div></div><div>5:30 PM Congregational Care Team</div><div>7:00 PM Facilities Team</div></div></div>	<div><div><div>2</div><div>7:00 PM Elder Training</div></div></div>	<div><div><div>3</div><div>9:30 AM Yoga Class</div><div>6:00 PM TOW—Together on Wednesday</div><div>6:30 PM Gingerbread House Construction</div><div><div></div></div></div></div>	<div><div><div>4</div><div>5:45 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal</div><div>7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal</div></div></div>	<div><div><div>5</div><div>10:30 AM Act III Bible Study</div><div><div>ACT III</div><div></div><div>ACT III BIBLE STUDY FOR THE GLORIOUS ADVENT YEAR</div></div></div></div>	<div><div><div>6</div><div>9:30 AM Hanging of the Greens</div><div></div></div></div>
<div><div><div>7 — PEANUT BUTTER SUNDAY</div><div>PRESBYTERIAN COFFEE PROJECT</div><div>GLORIOUS GIFTS</div><div>8:30 AM Worship Service</div><div>9:30 AM Christian Formation Hour</div><div>10:30 AM Worship Service and via Live Stream</div><div>11:45 AM Outreach Team</div><div>11:45 AM Caroling</div><div>12:00 PM Confirmation Class</div></div></div>	<div><div><div>8</div><div>10:30 AM Monday Morning Bible Study</div><div><div>MORNING Bible Study</div><div>MONDAY</div></div><div>10:30 AM PW Coordinating Team</div><div>10:30 AM Presbyterian Women</div><div><div></div><div>PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN</div></div><div>7:00 PM Personnel Team</div></div></div>	<div><div><div>9</div><div>9:30 AM Yoga Class</div></div></div>	<div><div><div>10</div><div>9:30 AM Yoga Class</div></div></div>	<div><div><div>11</div><div>10:00 AM PW Christmas Basket Assembly</div><div>5:45 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal</div><div>7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal</div></div></div>	<div><div><div>12</div><div>9:00 AM Newsletter Submission Deadline</div><div>10:00 AM Novel & Needles Book Group</div><div>10:30 AM Act III Bible Study</div><div>6:30 PM Faith Explorers (grades 3-5)</div></div></div>	<div><div><div>13</div></div></div>
<div><div><div>14</div><div>8:30 AM Worship Service</div><div>9:30 AM Christian Formation Hour</div><div>10:30 AM Worship Service and via Live Stream</div><div>11:45 AM Christian Formation Team</div><div>12:00 PM Confirmation Class</div><div>4:00 PM Technology Team via Zoom</div></div></div>	<div><div><div>15</div><div>Covenant Connection Published</div><div>10:30 AM Monday Morning Bible Study</div><div><div>MORNING Bible Study</div><div>MONDAY</div></div></div></div>	<div><div><div>16</div><div>7:00 PM Stewardship & Finance Team</div></div></div>	<div><div><div>17</div><div>9:30 AM Yoga Class</div><div>7:00 PM Longest Night Service</div><div><div></div></div></div></div>	<div><div><div>18</div><div>12:00 PM Preschool Christmas Program</div><div>5:45 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal</div><div>7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal</div></div></div>	<div><div><div>19</div><div>9:00 AM Executive Team</div><div>10:30 AM Act III Bible Study</div><div>6:30 PM Middle School Manna</div></div></div>	<div><div><div>20</div><div>9:00 AM Youth Baking</div></div></div>

Christmas CAROLING

DECEMBER

7

@11:45AM

Join us as we spread holiday cheer to our Covenant family & friends in various locations.

We will gather in the Great Hall to enjoy a pizza lunch before boarding the bus at 12:15 pm.

Sign up at <https://bit.ly/CovenantCaroling>



We will be visiting Baldwin Park, Brookdale, Staunton Post Acute & Rehab



Hanging OF THE Greens

DECEMBER 6 | 9:30AM

Join us as we decorate
the church.

WORSHIP WITH US THIS Christmas

Sunday, Dec. 14th

@ 10:30 am

Lessons & Carols

Wednesday, Dec. 17th

@ 7:00PM

LONGEST NIGHT SERVICE

Wednesday, Dec. 24th,
Christmas Eve

4:00PM — Family Service

7:30PM — Candlelight Service



Join us Mondays
at 10:30 AM
IN ROOM 6
OR VIA ZOOM

We look at the text for the next Sunday's sermon. Come dive a little deeper into God's word, share your insights, and get a head start on the next sermon.

A link to the Zoom meeting is sent out via opt-ins each Sunday.

ACT III



FAITH FORMATION
FOR THE OLDER ADULT YEARS

Join us Fridays
at 10:30 AM
at Baldwin Park

Act III is a ministry geared for older adults who are navigating the blessings and challenges that come with age. In this group, we study scriptures through the lens of aging and explore our vocation and discipleship in this particular stage of life.



The next **Equal Exchange** Sale
is **Sunday, December 7th.**

Available are:

- ♦ regular coffee for \$10
- ♦ decaf coffee for \$10
- ♦ tea for \$4
- ♦ dark chocolate for \$4

Make your purchase between the 8:30 AM and 10:30 AM worship services and after the 10:30 service.

You can place a pre-order by contacting 540-290-1089 or bettyandcliff@comcast.net.

High School Youth
Bake Sale
Fundraiser

**SUNDAY
DECEMBER 21**

between services and
after the 10:30 service
in the Breezeway

**Pay what
you will**

*The money raised will be used to buy gifts
for children in need in Staunton.
The Youth will shop for gifts at Pufferbellies.*



ONGOING OUTREACH

Peanut Butter Sunday

First Sunday of Each Month

You can drop off your jar of peanut butter in the vestibule area outside the church office.

Fun Fact: On average Covenant donates over 80 lbs. of food per week. *That's a lot of peanut butter!*

FILL THE BUCKET - HELP RESTOCK THE VERONA FOOD PANTRY

Help feed our neighbors in need!
Donations may be dropped off
in the **RED BUCKETS** located in
the vestibule just outside
the church office or in
the Narthex.



PLASTIC BAG COLLECTION MAKES A DIFFERENCE!

THANK YOU, COVENANT! We have kept over **3720 pounds** of plastic out of the landfills. **AND** we've provided benches to the Boys and Girls Club and Covenant Preschool. **We are now working towards a sixth bench!** Keep up the good work:

- Please make sure your bags are **CLEAN, DRY** and **FREE OF FOOD RESIDUE**.
- Plastic bags need to be stretchy. Look for a #2 or #4 recycling symbol (polyethylene films).
- You don't need to cut off zip tops or remove paper labels.
- Please no cellophane (as in snack bags) or metallic films (see nextrex.com for details)

WANT TO HELP? Volunteers are always needed to do the weekly weigh-in and take bags to Food Lion. Sign up at <https://bit.ly/3CzoJTW>
Questions? Contact Robyn Sommerfield at robynsommerfield@gmail.com

LET'S
RESTOCK
THE
SHELburne
PANTRY



For December, the targets for our Shelburne giving are hair care items -- shampoos, conditioners, and anything else that might fit... to help everyone look their best over the holidays! Of course other items such as snacks, canned soup, hygiene and laundry items, are always welcome, too. It all gets used by the students and their families. Thanks to everyone for your generosity, especially at this special time of year. We have drop-off boxes outside the church office and in the narthex, ready for you to drop off your donations whenever you can, and we will get them to the school.

*THANK YOU for your generosity in helping
Shelburne students and families
through this Outreach project!*

PW NEEDS GREENERY

Do you have boxwood, nandina (especially the hybrid with colorful foliage and no berries), or other small leaved evergreens around your home?



The Presbyterian Women are engaged in a project for our church members, and **we need foliage**.

If you can help, please drop off greenery in the Church fellowship hall starting on December 9. The women of the church will be working on this project **December 11 from 10 AM** until the work is done. Thank you for your help. If you have questions, please call Frances Craig at 757-355-1462.

Christmas Wrapping

The Community Child Care Center needs our help to wrap gifts for the children. We plan to have a wrap party on Tuesday, December 16 from 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM at the CCCC on 32 Park Blvd. We already have a large donation of wrapping paper to use, but bring tape, scissors, and bows to use, if you have them to use. Call Linda Tenney at 540-414-4479 with any questions. Hope to see you there!

SIGN UP AT:

<https://bit.ly/ccccwrapping>



Covenant Preschool Happenings



Covenant Preschool has been busy this fall! We had a sweet Harvest Parade at the end of October where kids wore their costumes! It had been a little damp, so it was moved indoors, but the children looked adorable!

As we move into the holiday season, the children each made a birdseed pinecone ornament to add to our holiday display at Gypsy Hill Park. This year, we asked the Confirmation class to help us build our display! They were a huge help! The display is located across from the duck pond next to the fitness course (Springhill Rd side). Please help us keep an eye on it if you walk or drive by!



It was nostalgic for me because so many of the youth were Covenant Preschool graduates! It's wonderful to see what amazing humans they are becoming!

We will return from a week off with family and friends for Thanksgiving to begin the excitement of Advent as we prepare for our Christmas program! The children will present a preschool rendition of the birth of Jesus on Thursday, December 18, at noon in the Great Hall! We would love for you to join us if you are available!

Thank you to everyone for all of the support you give the preschool!
Happy Holidays! — Mitzi White, Covenant Preschool Director



GROUPS MEETING MONTHLY



PRESBYTERIAN
WOMEN

***Presbyterian Women meet the
Second Tuesday of the Month
10:30AM in the Breezeway***

Next meeting is December 9

Basket Making is December 11 at 10:00AM

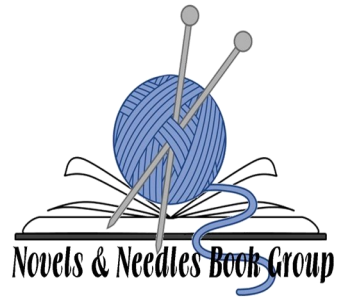
***Novels & Needles Book Club meet the
Second Friday of the Month
10:00AM in the Breezeway***

Next meeting is December 12

Potpourri!

(sharing favorite selections or new reads)

*Want to get a headstart? The book for discussion January
is The Correspondent by Virginia Evans*



***CareGivers meet the
Third Sunday of the Month
immediately after the 10:30 service in Room 5***

Next meeting is November 16

*This group is for anyone caring for a loved one who
would like to talk with others in similar situations.*

***Grief Support Group meet the
Fourth Sunday of the Month
11:45AM in Room 5***

Next meeting is November 23

*With the holidays fast approaching, November and
December can be a prolonged period of pain and
remembrance. We hope to explore and share specific
coping strategies for managing grief during the holiday
season. Our group is open to all and offers a welcoming
and safe space to share, connect, and support each
other. Contact Eileen Cooper for more information.*



A decorative border surrounds the page, featuring various colored crayons (blue, red, yellow, green, orange, purple, grey) and a vine with leaves. The text is centered within this border.

THANKFUL
GRATEFUL
AND
Blessed



Children's Corner

Christmas Benefit Concert
for
SACRA

Memorial Baptist Church

224 Taylor Street, Staunton

540-885-8033

Monday, December 8

7:00 pm

Doors open at 6:30

Come join us for a time
of music, fellowship and
an offering to SACRA
(Staunton Augusta
Church Relief Association)

A "Meet and Greet the Artists"
time with refreshments
will follow the concert

*Featuring Local
Musical Artists*

Marie Masincup
Organist

The Boogie Kings
(Ragtime, Boogie & Rockabilly Trio)

The Faithful Men
Male Vocal Ensemble

The Harringtons
with special guest,
Rya Martin
Family Harmony and Fun

**COVENANT
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

Mailing Address:

PO Box 2948, Staunton, VA 24402

Physical Address:

2001 N. Coalter Street, Staunton

Office — 540-885-2138

Fax — 540-885-4399

Office Hours:

Mon - Thurs, 8:15AM - 3:15PM

Fri, 8:15AM - 12:15PM



MINISTERIAL & PROGRAM STAFF

John C. Peterson
Pastor

Rachel Watson
Associate Pastor

Jeffrey Ryman
Minister of Music

Christopher Wszalek
Organist

Alan Cameron
Interim Handbell Director

Mitzi White
Developmental Preschool Director

Martha Pierce
Administrative Assistant

Debby Bibens
Financial Secretary

Paul Sorrell
Treasurer

Kathy Henderson
Covenant Nurse

Cleo Holly
Custodian

**The Mission of
Covenant Presbyterian Church is
"Striving to be Faithful Disciples
of Christ: Worshiping with Joy,
Growing in Faith, Serving in Love."**

Covenant Connection
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The Connection newsletter is online at
www.covenantpresstaunton.org.

COVENANT



Presbyterian
Church

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Staunton, VA 24402

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



MATTHEW 25

***Striving to be Faithful Disciples of Christ:
Worshiping with Joy, Growing in Faith, Serving in Love***



***The weather outside is frightful!
Are church services or events canceled?
Want to know the answer?***

Information is available:

1. via an opt-in
2. email, through the Covenant Facebook page (www.facebook.com/CovenantPresStaunton#),
3. on the home page of the church website (covenantpresstaunton.org),
4. and on WHSV-TV.

If you are not on the opt-in email list and would like to be, please contact Martha in the church office at 540-885-2138.