



# COVENANT

presbyterian church

# News

## BE A PART OF THE TEAM, HOME OR AWAY

Join us for the 2012 Mission Festival and Auction  
February 26

Covenant teams are already beginning to travel to serve neighbors and new friends who live in difficult conditions both near and far from home. In late January, our first 2012 journey took more than a dozen adults to a mountainous area of Jonesville, Virginia. Serving with the Appalachia Service Project, these mission pioneers embraced a new understanding of the deep poverty in our own nation. This trip is the beginning of a year in which we demonstrate our commitment to share tangible love with others.

In addition to Appalachia, Covenant teams of adults and high school youth will travel to Yucatan, Mexico, El Salvador, Heifer International in Arkansas and our nation's capital to experience change in their own lives and those of others.

You, too, can be a part of making a difference! While not everyone can travel on mission trips, all of our congregation plays a part in seeing lives changed in the reaches of the world and in our own church.

What's your role on the team?

Join us for the Mission Festival and Auction (formerly Fiesta).

In addition to being a festive and fun day for all ages, this day is crucial to supporting the church's work and making mission trips affordable for those who hear God's call to participate in grace in these places.

At the festival, you can enjoy brunch or lunch by making a reservation for a 10:15 or noon meal. Delicious baked goods will be for sale, as well as toys and sports equipment, artwork and services.

Fiesta veterans will notice a few changes this year, which are meant to offer a great experience for all:

- Two live auctions will be held, from 10:30 to 11 a.m. and from noon to 1 p.m.
- Two seatings for dining, 10:15 a.m. and noon.
  - New menu: chicken salad and assorted turkey wraps; seasoned kettle chips; orzo, rice, or quinoa salad; pod of grapes; and water, tea or coffee.
  - New arrangement of items, leaving more room to browse and expedited bidding.

### Here's what to do:

1. Make your reservations today online or by calling the church office. Meals are \$6; please indicate what time you'd like to eat. You don't have to eat to bid. Child care is available.
2. Watch for auction previews in Windows on Covenant and on the [website](#), with lists of the fabulous items for the two live auctions, including vacation homes, tickets to cultural and sports events and more.
3. Gather up a group of friends and bid on a great night together.
4. Consider volunteering as a host or runner at the festival. Contact LeAnne Stipp ([lmstipp@gmail.com](mailto:lmstipp@gmail.com)) to learn how you can help.

## Mission Festival



Sunday,  
February 26

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February, 2012  
Vol. XXIV  
No. 2

Dear Friends:

We're grateful for the vitality and commitment we see across the congregation. Participation in our education/nurture efforts, especially, is burgeoning among young children and youth. I've long thought, however, that Christian faith is more caught than taught and that the family is the primary teaching environment. Therefore, let me invite you to consider taking a tangible step to nurture your own faith.

I hear a pretty regular drumbeat – both here at Covenant and across our country – calling for a sense of personal connection, spiritual growth, and learning. In fact, one seminar leader told me recently, "People are dying for a sense of home, place, and belonging." I agree. We all need a place of friendship, a

small community of friends with whom we can share and care and pray. In fact, I think we want nothing more.

After pondering this for a while, I looked across the life of our church and saw the most amazing site: numerous small groups on various days of the week, more than 20 women's circles, Sunday school classes, men's Bible studies, men's fellowship, centering prayer, Lenten devotionals and book studies. I've intentionally visited quite a number of them recently and have news: each one has an empty seat.

Is it yours?

Peace,

*Bob Henderson*

## WORSHIP AND MUSIC

### Youth Sunday February 5

High school youth lead in worship, bringing music and message. Middle school youth will collect offering for the [Souper Bowl of Caring](#). These donations will benefit homeless neighbors who seek help at Urban Ministry Center.



### The Annual Richard and Betty Peek Masterclass and Recital Masterclass Saturday, February 18, 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.

Recital: Sunday, February 19 at 3 p.m.

Internationally acclaimed Canadian organist Isabelle Demers is featured. An offering will be accepted at the recital.

### Chamber Music in the Chapel Sunday, February 12 at 3 p.m.

The Hodges Taylor String Quartet plays Antonin Dvorak's Quartet No. 13 in G Major. Laurel Talley and Judy Meister, violin; Leigh Marsh, viola; and Elizabeth Burns, 'cello. Admission is free; a reception follows in the church parlor.



### Ash Wednesday

February 22, noon (chapel) and 6:30 p.m. (sanctuary)

Noon, in the chapel: Healing & Wholeness service with imposition of ashes  
6:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary: Worship service with imposition of ashes.

## TRAVEL, LEARN, CONNECT

February events

For Men Only

Monday, February 6

Dr. Russ Greenfield discusses how men can improve their health and overall well being. Dinner (\$6) begins at 5:30, followed by the program at 6:15. Reservations are needed for dinner only.



### How to Choose a Retirement Home

Wednesday, February 8, 10 a.m.

Cynthia McCullough, director of marketing at Sharon Towers, and Judy Beard, marketing assistant, will present a generic program on "How to Choose A Retirement Home." Hear about what to look for in making this major decision. Ask questions, and receive answers to help you plan ahead.

### Trip to Carolinas Aviation Museum Tuesday, February 28

See the Miracle on the Hudson plane and other exhibits at the museum. Cost is \$9, plus lunch on your own at Cracker Barrel. Leave from the church parking lot at 9:30. Reservations required by check to Judy White (704-804-7561; [judy.white@covenantpresby.org](mailto:judy.white@covenantpresby.org)) by February 21.

*All adults are welcome to any or all TLC programs. Contact Judy White to learn more about this fellowship group.*

## TREAD LIGHTLY FOR LENT

*(Adapted from Presbyterian Church (USA))*

Lent is a time to reflect on what it means to live by Christ's example. As part of this reflection we repent, often giving up an item or two that we consider a treat. We can take this spiritual discipline a step further and refrain from some practices that damage God's earth, taking action that will honor Christ's teachings about caring for creation.

There are many ways we can alter our habits to save energy and reduce waste. Changing habits is not easy! Focusing on one thing at a time helps, as well as repetition over a period of at least 21 days. The period of Lent gives us an opportunity to do both,



and perhaps we will then continue our new habit after Easter! Here are just a few ideas to choose from:

- Hang your laundry. Try not to use the dryer during lent, or reduce the use of your dryer by one load each week.
- Stop drinking bottled water. You can take a Bottled Water Pledge at <http://presbyearthcare.org/advocacy-h20.html>.
- Carry reusable bags to shop. Help reduce the number of single use plastic bags used each year in the U.S.

To find a Lenten calendar with a suggested activity for each day in lent, look for the 2012 Tread Lightly for Lent calendar at [www.pcusa.org](http://www.pcusa.org).

## RECREATION AND HEALTH

If you're looking to keep up that New Year's resolution to be healthier in 2012, take advantage of the Recreation Wing's offerings for winter and spring:

Pick-up Basketball  
6 a.m., Monday, Wednesday, Friday

Functional Fitness  
(ages 60+)  
9:30 a.m., Monday, Wednesday,  
Friday

Personal Training, Yoga and Zumba  
for adults.

Funky Teen Yoga  
Saturdays at 3 p.m.

Amazing Athletes  
for kids 2 1/2 to 6 years

Coming soon: Youth Tennis for  
10 and under

### Dates to remember:

**February 19: Bloodmobile. Donations will be taken in Fellowship Hall from 8 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. For appointments: Contact Nora Kuester, 704-365-1172 [thekuesters@bellsouth.net](mailto:thekuesters@bellsouth.net)**  
Walk-ins welcome; bring photo ID

**February 22: Prayer Shawl Knitters**  
10:30 a.m. - 12 p.m.; EW 212.  
Knitters of all interests, ages and skill levels welcome. In this ministry, Covenant members and friends knit prayer shawls that are shared with people experiencing illness, grief or other difficult circumstances.

## MIDDLE SCHOOL (BASE) LOCK-IN

February 18-19

Sixth- and seventh-graders are invited to come and encouraged to bring a friend to this night of fellowship on campus. Contact Claire Tomkinson for details (704-804-7569; [claire.tomkinson@covenantpresby.org](mailto:claire.tomkinson@covenantpresby.org)).

## PRESCHOOL REGISTRATION

Begins February 1

Covenant's nationally accredited preschool welcomes new families and children to its classes for the 2012-2013 year. Classes are available for children ages 1-5 years. Program and enrollment information, as well as registration forms, can be accessed through the church web site ([www.covenantpresby.org](http://www.covenantpresby.org)), or picked up in the Preschool business office on weekday mornings. Tours can be arranged. Please contact director Kathleen Grabert (704-333-8658; [kathleen.grabert@covenantpresby.org](mailto:kathleen.grabert@covenantpresby.org))



## 2ND ANNUAL CONSIGNMENT SALE

Register now if you'd like to consign at Covenant Preschool's second-annual consignment sale on March 24.

The sale offers children's clothing, toys and other accessories for sale. Consignors keep 70 percent of sales and have an opportunity to shop at a pre-sale on Friday, March 23.

Keep the sale in mind as you clear out items your family no longer needs. Be sure to tell friends who may want to shop!

If you're interested in consigning, find more information on the church [website](#) and [Facebook](#) page.

## ADULT CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

### SUNDAY MORNINGS

**The Academy: Sunday mornings at 9:30**

- *Jonah: An Epiphany Message*  
February 5, 12, 19, 26

Taught by [Rodney Sadler](#) of Union Presbyterian Seminary at Charlotte. Hear how the stories of Jonah and the Magi are similar, universal, humorous, and relevant.

- *God Talk: A Primer for Presbyterians*  
"Union with Christ," February 5  
Fellowship Hall 203  
Taught by Sarah Kromer

Discuss the core concepts of the Presbyterian tradition and common points of confusion.

### Electives

**Library Drop-In (9:30 am):** For those looking for coffee and conversation around faith issues and current events shaped by Biblical insights (FH 103).

**Around the Table (10:45 am):** Elementary age children, youth, and adults join members of the Education Ministry each Sunday morning, Fellowship Hall 105, to engage in conversation about the morning's scripture and sermon theme.

### Ages and Stages: Year-round adult church school classes

**PEOPLE (ages 50s-60s):** Look at grace through the works of Frederick Buechner, Philip Yancey, Anne Lamott, and others (FH 201)

**Fellowship (ages 60+):** On February 5 & 12, Paul Pedigo talks about Covenant's stained glass windows; FH 107.

**Foundations Class** for young couples (20s & 30s). Led by Andrea and Troy King, EW 202. Speakers in February: John Baxter, Paul Pedigo



### Sunday evening support group

For those experiencing separation and/or divorce  
5-6 p.m., church parlor

[Rev. David Lytle](#), an ordained Presbyterian minister serving as chaplain at Presbyterian Hospital, leads this group to support those who are separated or divorced, focusing on God's grace in the face of challenges.

### SUNDAY EVENINGS

February 19

#### For Everyone

**A Faith of Your Own:** Men and women, 6-7 p.m., EW 202.

#### For Engaged Couples

**10 Great Dates Before You Say "I Do"** combines the best of marriage preparation research with a fun, easy to follow format. 4-5 p.m., EW 202.

#### For Parents

**The Price of Privilege:** Parents consider the effects of parental pressure and affluence on a generation of children. 6-7 p.m., EW 207.

#### 20 Something; 20 Everything

A small group for young women who may wonder why the "best years of my life" don't always seem so, and who wrestle with choices of the past and future. 7-8 p.m., EW 202.

#### For Couples

**The Five Love Languages**  
5-6 pm, EW 212

Leaders: Mary Sue and Chris Moore  
Learn how to say and how to hear "I love you" from others in our lives.

*Look for new small groups beginning in March. Childcare is available for all.*

## PERSPECTIVES ON CONFLICT AND RECONCILIATION WORKSHOP

March 2, 5-9 p.m.

Explore conflict from new angles grounded in Christ's work of reconciliation. This workshop helps participants examine their own approaches to disputes, find practical tools for working through conflict, and explore Christ's mediating gifts.

Whether you are focused on a specific dispute or simply want to learn more about conflict resolution, this workshop offers fresh

perspectives. Check-in and dinner begins at 5 p.m. in Fellowship Hall; program begins at 6 in FH 205. \$30 per person, including dinner, with assistance available upon request. Registrations are requested by February 24, 2012. Call 704-554-2490 and speak with Lindsey Stout to register or to [Sarah Kromer](#) with any questions.

**In Christ**   
SUPPORTING MINISTRIES

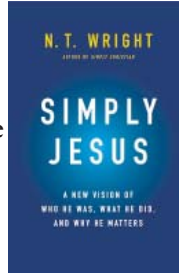
## SIMPLY JESUS

### A Lenten Pilgrimage

Any day and every day, we are invited to interact with God. Particularly during Lent, many offerings allow adults and children to take a closer look at who Jesus was and is, and why his life and love matter in ours.

The sermon series for Lent will focus on this theme, and accompanying educational classes and groups will offer time to discuss and further explore these ideas, using N.T. Wright's book *Simply Jesus: A New Vision of Who He Was, What He Did, and Why He Matters*.

Take advantage of many of the ways to journey together through this season, deepening understanding and strengthening relationships:



Worship Ash Wednesday, February 22 at noon (chapel) or 6:30 p.m. (sanctuary)



Learn at the Lenten Convocation, February 29, at 6:30 p.m. "Finding Simplicity and Spirituality in a Busy, Material World," with Diane Lipsett, professor at Wake Forest University Divinity School

Reflect and pray, led by daily online devotions. Look for an e-mail and link to register.

Walk and pray across Covenant's campus with a guided on-campus Prayer Walk. Begin on the green at Covenant and follow the pilgrimage guide located in the box there.

Try a Sunday School class at 8:30, 9:30, or 10:45 - Check out the digital monitors for times and locations.

Share a Meal with the Covenant community and join a book discussion on Wednesdays. Dinner begins in Fellowship Hall at 5:30. Book talks for adults and youth will be held in the evenings as a companion study to the sermon series. (March 7-28, led by Education Ministry staff)

Enhance your journey using a labyrinth, designed for reflection and prayer. The labyrinth will be set up in RW3A on Wednesday evenings.

## HOLY WEEK SERVICES

**Maundy Thursday**  
**April 5**  
A dramatic interpretation, "The Good Friday Women."

**Good Friday**  
**April 6**  
The Covenant Choir and orchestra present Handel's "Pasion According to Saint John."

**Children's service**  
**April 7**  
This Saturday morning features an Easter drama by children and a zoo of baby animals.

**Easter services**  
**April 8**  
Celebrate our risen Savior at any of three worship services in the sanctuary.

## COVENANT CONNECTION

Weekly Wednesday night dinner and programming for all ages begins with dinner at 5:30 and continues with programs at 6:30. Adult programs in February:

- *Tempered by Fire: Growing in the Aftermath of Suffering*. Psychologist and UNC Charlotte professor Lawrence Calhoun leads a three-week series on how we cope with trying times in our lives. (February 1-15)
- *Adult Bible Study*. Education ministry staff lead a study of the Lectionary readings in Epiphany. (through February 15) FH 205
- *Young Adults*. Inger Manchester leads a study of Christian denominations. EW 202.
- *Speaking of Faith* meets in the library. The group discusses Krista Tippett's book each week.
- *Pathfinders*: Single or married adults, mostly in their 30s and 40s, enjoy mission trips, hiking or biking, movies and Bible and book studies (FH, lower level)
- *Grief and Loss Support Group* (through February 15 in the church parlor)

## NEW!

### YOUNG SCHOLARS FOR ELEMENTARY CHILDREN

Anne Lowrance leads elementary children in Bible lessons and play.

Children will learn to use their Bibles, understand its meaning and apply God's word to daily living.

There also will be time to play!

(Meets in the Upper Room, EW 207, on Wednesday evenings during Covenant Connection programs.)

## HEARTS FOR HIGHLAND

Highland Renaissance Staff Visit Covenant  
February 5, 11 a.m. worship

Join us in welcoming the hard-working staff of our partner school, [Highland Renaissance Academy](#) at worship. The Highland staff is especially excited to attend this youth Sunday worship service. These adults also will be our guests for the Amen and Then lunch afterwards. If you are interested in acting as a "host" to meet, greet, worship, and eat with these great teachers, please meet them in the circle at 10:45 a.m.



### Summer Camp Ministry

Each year Covenant sends 30 kids that otherwise would not have the opportunity to Summer Camp at [YMCA Camp Harrison](#). Students learn social skills and build self-esteem while playing in God's beautiful creation. Of equal importance to what they will experience during their week at camp is what they may avoid experiencing during that week at home. Many of the campers come from homes in which parents must work full-time jobs or multiple jobs during the summer. Without extra funds to sign children up for summer enrichment programs, many students are left alone at home or in the neighborhood for long stretches of the day. Here are five ways you can help this meaningful ministry:

1. Be a Camp Parent. Build a relationship with a child and his/her family. Attend Camp Night (May 10, 6-7:15 p.m.). Bring the child to Covenant the Sunday of departure. Write letters to the child, pick him/her up at Covenant on Saturday when the van returns with campers, and take him/her home.
2. Drive a van. Drive the children from Covenant to Camp Harrison and back on the weekends that camp begins and ends.
3. Join the lunch crew. Provide bag lunches for the campers on the Sunday that they leave for camp.
4. Create an activity bag. Provide a bag of things for campers to do on their way to camp.
5. Contribute to support financially a child attending camp. Checks should be made payable to Covenant Presbyterian with Highland Summer Camp in the memo.

If you are interested in helping in any of the above areas or would like more info please contact Henry Owen, Community Outreach Coordinator, (704-804-7574; [henry.owen@covenantpresby.org](mailto:henry.owen@covenantpresby.org))

## GLOBAL MISSION

Lessons on El Salvador

Covenant Connection, March

Covenant's mission team is excited about working with [Habitat International](#) and the people of El Salvador.

Though not everyone can travel there, all of the congregation is invited to learn more about the culture, landscape and lives of our neighbors in this land.

During Covenant Connection in March, John Baxter and Beth Van Gorp will present two classes on Habitat International and their work and the people we will encounter. Another class will be presented by Carla Leaf and Anne Lowrance on short-term mission trips and their influence on us and our world.

## PEOPLE IN MISSION SCHOLARSHIPS

Think a summer won't change your life? Just ask Rosie Strawn, Rob McAlister or Abbie Henderson.

For more than 12 years, Covenant has engaged its college students in mission opportunities, both with mission trips with the congregation and with our People in Mission Scholarship program. We have sent students to many Third-World countries such as Thailand, Africa, Egypt and Mexico, where these students have been immersed in areas of poverty while listening and learning about how God calls them to serve in our world.

Last year Rosie, Rob and Abbie worked in local outreach, working 35 hours a week in non profits in our city such as Urban Ministry, A Child's Place and Freedom Schools. Here they engaged with people in our community who face the day-to-day challenges of being homeless or living in poverty. Each week they met with church staff to talk about their work and to see how their faith played a part.

We will offer one global opportunity to be determined by the student and three local internships. The dates for the local internship will be May 22 through the end of July. The stipend is up to \$3,000.

If you know of a student who might be interested in this global or local summer program, please have them contact Carla Leaf (704.804.7578; [carla.leaf@covenantpresby.org](mailto:carla.leaf@covenantpresby.org)). The application is [online](#) and due March 15.

## OPERATING BUDGET, 2012

As approved by the Session on January 18, 2012

<b>Total Income 2012</b>	<b>Total Expenses 2012</b>
\$3,374,700	\$3,374,700
<b>Expenses</b>	
<b>Administration Ministry</b>	<b>Food Service</b>
\$570,380	\$69,816
<b>Congregational Care Ministry</b>	<b>Personnel</b>
\$24,680	\$1,894,377
<b>Education Ministry</b>	<b>Preschool</b>
\$79,750	\$238,564
<b>Mission &amp; Outreach Ministry</b>	<b>Recreation Ministry</b>
\$359,416	\$49,880
<b>Worship Ministry</b>	<b>Engagement Ministry</b>
\$81,237	\$6,600

## MEMBERSHIP 2011 Statistical Report

Total active members, December 31, 2010	1,797
Gains	
Profession of faith (7 and under) 22	
Profession of faith (18 and over) 13	
Certified 31	
Other 7	
<i>Total Gains</i> 73	
Losses	
Dismissed by certificate 12	
Deaths 30	
Other 5	
<i>Total Losses</i> 56	
Total active members, December 31, 2011	1,823
Baptized members 387	
(25 child baptisms, 1 adult baptism in 2011)	
Total adherents	2,210
Age distribution	
25 and under 215	
Age 26-45 575	
Age 46-55 269	
Age 56-65 245	
Age 66 and over 416	
Age not reported 103	

### ASSOCIATE PASTOR NOMINATING COMMITTEE

A nominating committee for the associate pastor for Christian education was elected by the congregation on January 22. Members of the committee are Heyward Bouknight, chair; Doug Bacon; Herb Bonkovsky; Mary Lou Daly; Ariel Gritter; Cynthia Haldenby Tyson; and Amy Wright.

### STAFF NEWS

*Sally Graves*, who has been the church's publisher and newsletter editor for more than 20 years, is retiring at the end of April. A celebration of her time with us will be held in the spring. Watch for details in the weeks ahead.



*Martha Isaacs*, director of new member and women's ministry, will focus on women's ministry beginning April 1 and will work part-time.



### NEW TRANSEPT LIGHTING

Covenant has received a generous gift from Mrs. Jean C. Boggs for lighting to illuminate the transept windows during evening worship services. The West Transept lights (pulpit side of the sanctuary) containing the Prayer and Service Windows are in memory of her late husband, Dr. Lawrence Kennedy Boggs. The East Transept lights (lectern side of the Sanctuary) containing the Psalm and History Windows are given in honor of Mrs. Elizabeth L. 'Betty' Peek and Mrs. Rita Adams Simpson. The project should be completed by mid-February and our evening worship services will be greatly enhanced by the lighting.

Covenant Staff and  
direct dial phone numbers  
704-804-\*\*\*\*

Libby Bierbaum ..... 7570  
Steve Carriker ..... 7592  
Cindy Friday ..... 704-333-9071  
Kathleen Grabert ..... 7568  
Sally Graves ..... 7564  
Daniel Heath ..... 7584  
Bob Henderson ..... 704-333-9071  
Martha Isaacs ..... 7577  
Bill Keith ..... 7575  
Neeley Lane ..... 7563  
Carla Leaf ..... 7578  
Anne Lowrance ..... 7593  
Inger Manchester ..... 7573  
Henry Owen ..... 7574  
Jessica Patchett ..... 7572  
Virginia Rumbley ..... 7576  
Courtney St. Onge..... 7565  
Stephen Talley ..... 7581  
Susan Talley ..... 7582  
Claire Tomkinson ..... 7569  
Debbie Tyson ..... 704-333-9071  
Kelly Vass ..... 7590  
Joan Watson ..... 7580  
Judy White, RN..... 7561  
Michelle Williamson ..... 7560

All numbers are (704)

Front desk ..... 333-9071  
Preschool ..... 333-8658  
Recreation Center ..... 334-7491

**Fax Numbers**

Main office ..... 333-0386  
Education Wing ..... 334-7496  
firstname.lastname@  
covenantpresby.org

**COVENANT NEWS**

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**Congregational Notes**

The congregation expresses its sincere sympathy and love to  
Linda Barnett and her family on the death of her brother, Earl Bert Lycan,  
of Fort Gay, West Virginia on January 6; and to  
Ray Owens and Sally Higgins and their family on the death of his daughter,  
Sydney Elizabeth Owens of Denver, Colorado on January 14; and to  
Jane Deason and her family on the death of her mother, Ruth Dansby  
Deason, on January 17;  
and rejoices with them in the assurance of the resurrection.

**In Memoriam**

Ruth Dansby Deason  
*Charter Member*  
January 17, 2012

**Celebrations**

**Birth**

Mia Lilliana Moore, daughter of Olivia and Bob Moore, on January 8