

2011



COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

# Covenant Courier

## “So I Send You”

John 20:21

### Pentecost Offering 2011 – June 12<sup>th</sup>

At Pentecost, we celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit as a bringer of new life. Because of the Spirit's coming, we no longer need to settle for business as usual but can know the transforming and creative love of God that makes the impossible possible.

The Pentecost Offering is one of the four annual church-wide Special Offerings of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Through Pentecost Offering gifts, we bring God's transforming love to children at risk. We help guide and nurture the faith of Presbyterian young people. We call forth a new generation of church leadership through the PC(USA) Young Adult Volunteer program.

Forty percent of the Offering stays in our own congregation to support children-at-risk ministries. This year we will focus support on the children within the Johnson City Interfaith Hospitality Network (IHN). The remainder of the Offering receipts will be sent to the General Assembly Mission Council to support other programs that minister to youth and young adults and advocate for children at risk.

This year's theme, “So I Send You” (John 20:21), reminds us that as Jesus was sent by God to heal a hurting world, we, too, are called to that same task. We are called to act on the basis of faith. Through gifts to the Pentecost Offering, we act to make tangible, positive changes in our community, our church, and our world.

Thank you for your support of the Pentecost Offering on June 12<sup>th</sup>.

### *Covered Dish Social*

*Friendship Circle and Joy Circle*

*Tuesday, June 7<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 p.m.*

*Hunter's Lake Club House*

*Bring a dish to share—Beverages provided*

*Invite a friend who might be interested in Circle next September!*

### A New Opportunity to Serve

It's hard to believe, we know, but we all are growing older and may be unable to do some of the things we enjoy and are used to doing for ourselves.

A small group of ladies saw a need to initiate a program to help our members who might be able to use a little help in staying independent and, perhaps, stay in their own homes a little longer. This seems to be the ultimate goal for most of us! We have formed "Visiting Ours" and, if the ministry sounds interesting to you, we would like to invite you to participate. (Yep, this includes our gentlemen, too!)

Our goal is to begin a visitation program for our members who are in nursing homes or shut-in. It has been our observation that these precious members are simply lonely and would enjoy having a friend (or two) to spend some quality time with them. Some of the people on our list probably already have a Shepherd but wouldn't it be nice if they could look forward to visits from some of the rest of us?

We would love to have several of you volunteer to be a part of our program but only if you will be committed to sharing your friendship and love in a very special way. It will require some time (which you will determine after you have contacted your VIP.) Some will require more than others. Small things such as visits, taking your VIP to necessary appointments, going out for a meal or picnic, going for a drive, shopping trips, etc., would be so appreciated.

If this opportunity sounds like something you would be interested in or you have some suggestions or ideas other than those mentioned, please contact one of us.

It is a promise that you will gain far more than you give, and remember we all will grow older and need a little TLC from our Covenant family!

Estelle Armistead, Janet Powell, Margaret Sullenger, Jan Paveglio, and Helen Davis



## Congratulations, 2011 Graduates!



Melissa Freeman graduates from Elizabethton High School on May 28, 2011. She graduates as a member of the Academic Top Ten Percent, a recipient of the Scholarship Highest Averages Award, the Science Award, and the Scholarship and Achievement Award, and was voted Outstanding Band Senior by her peers. Melissa plans to attend the University of Tennessee in Knoxville, probably majoring in Psychology.

(726 Laurels Road, Johnson City, TN 37601)

Brent Stoner graduates from Science Hill High School on May 28, 2011. He graduates with an International Baccalaureate Certificate and will be attending the University of Tennessee in Knoxville in the fall. Brent has been accepted into the College of Engineering and will be majoring in Mechanical Engineering.

(2313 Granite Drive, Johnson City, TN 37604)

## After Church Lunch

Sunday, June 12, 2011

Join us in June for fried chicken! Please bring a side dish or a dessert to share with your church family. If your dish needs to be kept warm or even heated at the last minute, someone will be in the kitchen by 9:30 a.m. to receive your dish and your instructions. We look forward to sharing this fellowship opportunity with you! If you have any questions, please contact Andrea Sutter or Lauri Zembower.

→ **Women's Day at the Lake: June 9 at 4:30 p.m.**

→ **Men's Day at the Lake: June 16 at 4:30 p.m.**

→ **Youth Day at the Lake: June 30 at 4:00 p.m.**

→ **Worship in the Park—July 10 at Rotary Park**

Look for details in upcoming bulletins and e-mails!

**SAVE THE DATES!!** →

## Message from the Pastor

As you have undoubtedly heard by now, Amendment A-10 was passed by the 87<sup>th</sup> Presbytery earlier in May, and will become effective later this summer. And maybe you don't know Amendment A-10 by 'name,' but surely you know it by 'reputation.' Here is what you have heard in the press: Presbyterians Approve Ordination of Gays. That is what everyone is talking about, that after 30 years of debate, discussion, rancor and, hopefully, prayerfulness, our denomination has constitutionally opened the door for gay, lesbian and trans-gendered persons to be ordained as elders, deacons, and ministers.

News of this has, and will continue to be met with a range of responses, of course. As the leadership of our denomination so aptly put it in an open pastoral letter to the church, "Some will rejoice, while others will weep." In the eyes of some this amendment's passage is an indication that the Presbyterian Church has compromised its stand on the authority of scripture. To others this vote means that they will finally be able to be obedient to the call of God, and faithfully use the gifts God has given them in service to the Church.

I would like to offer a third possible response. At its heart, this constitutional amendment is not about ordaining gay and lesbian Christians. It is about ordination standards. Here is the exact text of the new paragraph that will become a part of our constitution in July:

Standards for ordained service reflect the church's desire to submit joyfully to the Lordship of Jesus Christ in all aspects of life (G-1.0000). The governing body responsible for ordination and/or installation (G.14.0240; G-14.0450) shall examine each candidate's calling, gifts, preparation, and suitability for the responsibilities of office. The examination shall include, but not be limited to, a determination of the candidate's ability and commitment to fulfill all requirements as expressed in the constitutional questions for ordination and installation (W-4.4003). Governing bodies shall be guided by Scripture and the confessions in applying standards to individual candidates.

Nowhere in that paragraph does it make reference to gay and lesbian persons; and if we think about this amendment only in those narrow terms, we are making a grave mistake. It is about the standards that pertain to ALL of us who allow ourselves to be nominated as an elder or a deacon, or who boldly claim that we believe God has called us to ministry of Word and Sacrament.

My hope is that this new statement about ordination standards will cause all of us to stop for a moment, a long moment, and think about two truly remarkable things. First, that God calls any of us into service. No matter what you think of the issues around human sexuality, the fact remains that none of us is perfect. None of us. The moment any of us say that it is right and fitting for God to call us into ministry of any kind, that we are well-suited to serve God, we ought to take a step back and take a second look at ourselves.

And yet, God calls us. Each and every one of us. Remarkable, isn't it? We are all given gifts by the Spirit to serve God and build up the body of Christ. Your gifts for church service are no less important than mine are, or those of our elders.

Awe and humility. Those ought to be the responses that come out of this new amendment to our Book of Order. God has called US - gluttons and liars and money-worshippers and worriers and doubters and lazy Christians alike. Not one of us is perfect, and hardly a one of us cares to give up many (if any) of the ways we have hurt God or bumped God out of the driver's seat of our lives. Can any of us live up to those ordination standards?

*Sharon*

# Highlights from the Called Meeting of the Congregation/Corporation

by Christian Zembower (for Evelyn Kemp)

Elder and Stewardship Committee member, Hal Hunter, discussed the reason for the called meeting which regarded a modification to the current church mortgage. The modification is in consideration of establishing a Line of Credit to the existing mortgage. Elder Hunter explained that in the past, the Stewardship Committee has been able to have at least 10 percent of the annual budget in reserve, which currently runs about 6 percent (\$17,000). This amount would pay for the essential expenses of Covenant Presbyterian Church for one month.

State of Franklin Bank has offered to modify Covenant's current mortgage with a current balance of approximately \$54,700 to a Line of Credit in the amount of \$80,000. The outstanding balance of the mortgage at the time of the modification will be transferred to the Line of Credit. This will leave approximately \$25,000 available as a reserve. The Line of Credit will require a minimum of interest payments monthly on any balance withdrawn and any amount paid above that would be applied to the principal. The Line of Credit would be renewable each year at no charge with a variable interest rate at Wall Street Journal Prime. However, the rate shall not go below 5.25 percent. This is a reduction from Covenant's current rate of 6 percent.

State of Franklin Bank will not charge any fees to accommodate this loan and there is no charge to renew it each year. There may be some attorney's fees in the range of \$200, but this would be the only expense. The Stewardship Committee's plan is to continue to make the current mortgage payment plus any additional cost in order to continue to reduce the overall debt and pay off the mortgage with the currently-projected timeline of three years. As the mortgage is paid down, the Line of Credit available would then increase.

The motion to modify the current church mortgage was accepted unanimously by those in attendance.

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## Memorial Gifts

### **GIVEN IN MEMORY OF:**

**FERN KEMP**

(Evelyn's mother)

**BY**

Dave & Sharon Benner

Harry & Janet Powell

Gary & Anne Smith

### **ANTHEM GIVEN IN MEMORY OF:**

**BOB HUNTER**

(Hal's brother)

**BY**

Hal & Gwen Hunter



### **GIVEN IN MEMORY OF:**

**BERNICE BEASLEY**

**BY**

Harry & Janet Powell

Gary & Anne Smith



### **GIVEN TO THE PLAYGROUND FUND**

**IN MEMORY OF:**

**DOROTHY STANFIEL**

(Sharon Miller's mother)

**BY**

David & Sharon Miller

Ben L. Stanfiel

### **Entered into the Church Triumphant:**

Bernice Beasley — May 4, 2011

## April Treasurer's Report

### **Income to General Fund**

**April**

**Actual \$19,694.39**

**vs. Budgeted \$20,967.33**

### **Expenses from General Fund**

**April**

**Actual \$19,409.18**

**vs. Budgeted \$20,967.33**

### **Year to Date Income**

**General Fund**

**Actual \$93,934.49**

**vs. Budgeted \$83,869.33**

### **Year to Date Expenses from**

**General Fund**

**Actual \$85,939.60**

**vs. Budgeted \$83,869.33**

### **The 5-Cents a Meal Offering**

**for April was \$141.00.**

**Mortgage stands at \$54,739.94.**

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## Update—One Great Hour of Sharing Offering

On Easter Sunday the One Great Hour of Sharing Offering was received. This offering supports the Self-Development of People Program, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Program, and Presbyterian Hunger Program. This year Covenant Presbyterian Church graciously gave \$1,030.20. Thank you for your generosity!

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## After Church Summer Refreshment Hosts

Summer time is sooooo close. Longer days, warmer temperatures, AND.....cookies and lemonade on the patio on Sundays after church.

Coffee Fellowship during the summer months is especially simple. For those of you who have not had a chance to host, this is an easy way to learn the ropes. If you would like to be a host of Coffee Fellowship for one of the summer Sundays, please sign up in the Narthex as soon as possible. If you have any questions please call/e-mail Andrea (773-5602 or amsutter765@juno.com).

## COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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### Third Thursday Dinner

Join the Congregational Life Committee and your fellow Covenant friends on June 16th at 6:00 p.m. at Sonny's Marina for our monthly 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday Dinner. We'll be starting a little earlier than normal so we have time to talk before the live music begins around 7:00.

Please contact Lauri Zembower (423-620-3625 or [broncofan524@yahoo.com](mailto:broncofan524@yahoo.com)) if you think you'll be attending so we can get a count for the tables. Hope to see you there!

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### Young Adult Monthly Gathering...Lynnea Hunter

Summer fun for the Young Adults! Mark your calendars now for our upcoming events!

- **Friday, June 10** we'll meet at Dave and Maureen Knechtel's, time TBA. Bring a dinner something and your bathing suit as we'll spend the evening aboard the Ann Bonny, their "new" boat.
- **Saturday, July 2** we'll join the rest of the church at the annual Independence Day Cook-Out and city fireworks show.
- **Friday, August 12** we'll do something so great it hasn't even been decided on yet! (If you have any bright ideas or suggestions, let us know!)

As always, bring yourself and bring a friend. Check your email and Courier for more information, and if you have any questions or comments contact Lynnea Hunter at 828.266.1917 or [lynneahunter@hotmail.com](mailto:lynneahunter@hotmail.com).

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### Independence Day Celebration

We will be gathering at the Church for the July 4th celebration on Saturday, July 2nd (that's when the City will have its fireworks display).

Grills will be lit between 6:15 & 6:30. Hamburgers, hot dogs, paper plates, cups, napkins, plastic eating utensils, lemonade, sweet tea will be provided.

A sheet will be posted in the Narthex where you can sign up to bring buns, potato salad, cole slaw, chili and other side dishes and desserts!

Come and enjoy the fellowship! If you have any questions, call Andrea Sutter.

