



The Heartline

Covenant Presbyterian Church "Loving God by Serving Others"
1001 NW 98th Street, Gainesville, FL 32606-5503
Church Office: (352) 332-0400 covenantpresb580@bellsouth.net
FAX: (352) 332-5802 covenantpresbyterianchurch.org



"Where Hearts are Warmed"

July 2012

What is an Acolyte? Ephesians 5:8: *Walk as children of light.*

Churches have had acolytes since ancient times. The earliest record of acolytes we have is that in A.D. 251 there were forty-two of them helping in churches in the city of Rome.



The word *acolyte* is taken from an ancient Greek word that meant *companion, attendant, or helper*. In some churches today, acolytes are called *servers*. [\[Continued on page 4\]](#)

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Serving Communion

As we prepare to serve communion to those who cannot attend worship, we need to know if you have someone who needs our service. Please provide Pastor Laura, or one of the Ruling Elders, the names of those individuals. We will be using church attendance as one indicator ... so, it is important that we have an accurate tally of attendance each Sunday. Don't forget to let us know of those in need!



Are you an Elder who would like to serve home communion? The opportunity for this ministry is here.

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This month has been *hectic* with all that's been going on in the church family. AND I feel so blessed that things are moving forward, although with some grinding of the gears. Praise God, Who works for Good for those who work for God's Good Purpose and praise God's Name.

Since our last newsletter, here are items to report for your information:

- The congregation “partied hearty” with our graduates. The Worship & Music Committee participated, along with Elders of Covenant, in a dedication service during a Sunday service, and Study Bibles were presented.
- I got out for lunches or breakfasts with Carter Wittman, Dianne Felts and Judy Newell, John and Barbara Peters, and Sonny Ross. Carter asks for our prayers while she is gone. And, Ceara Ebbs' graduation party was *MAH-velous!*
- I have made it a weekly affair to write cards to people who are visitors. And, through a new database program that Janis Bomar developed, the administrative assistant and I

will be able to see who's missing on Sunday – so, expect a call if you go missing! Of course, *that only works if people sign the pew pads.* (Hint, Hint!)

- During the first part of the week, I am making phone calls, contacting some people to see how you're doing – just to catch up with you and hear any interesting news you may have! Last week I realized, however, that there were two people whom I did not contact. Oops! Since we have a new directory, this will help organize my phone calls.
- I counseled a family that I know outside the congregation during the dying and death of the wife-mother-sister. With the daughter and husband of the deceased, I planned the memorial service, which we held on June 23rd. The family was very appreciative, and friends of theirs from Gainesville expressed that they intend to visit Covenant sometime in the future. The daughter sent along a check to CPC, written specifically for “the Youth Group.”

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[PASTOR'S CORNER. continued from page 2]

- I continue to meet with two ministerial groups and one small group:
 - On Tuesdays, now once a month over the summer, for book discussions and lectionary/sermon discussions
 - On Wednesdays, for book and theological discussions
 - On Thursdays, with the Agape group
- The CRT has met with the congregation twice now for the program “Healthy Congregations.” In the second session, there was lots of engagement. The difficult thing is to practice what we’ve watched about healthy and unhealthy congregations. Many Native American tribes end all prayers with the phrase, “All my relations. Aho!” Are we blessings in all of our relationships? How so? If not, why?
- The most exciting committee meeting that I participated in was the new Youth Group’s first *meeting on June 24th*. Ask the youth about *their great plans and upcoming events*. Double *wow!*
- Council approved my vacation from July 28th through August 3rd. I will be back in the pulpit on August 5th. You have Janis Bomar to look forward to as leader of our worship service on July 29th. *Yay, Janis!*
- And our grandson from Missouri arrives on the 20th to stay for a couple of weeks. It’s **so** exciting – we get to watch him practice and play baseball in the Gatorball program in Jonesville! Cool beans!!

And that’s all the news that’s “fit to print.” Be well and love one another. Blessed be in His Name,



West Gainesville Church of Christ

The West Gainesville Church of Christ has given our Council a letter of notice to end their rental of our building at the end of August. They have found a building that they can rent full time and make more their own than they ever could in a shared facility. They have been good neighbors, and a few of us can remember when Covenant was in shared space with no place to hang a poster or leave song books out and ready for worship. We wish our friends of WGCoC well as they grow to the next phase of their place in the Kingdom.

Covenant will be looking for other congregations that may need a worship space. John Tucker will lead this effort and will appreciate your contribution of any leads or contacts.

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An important part of the acolyte's job is to light and extinguish the candles on or near the special table we call the Lord's Table, Communion table, or altar. We call it the Lord's table because it is the Lord Jesus Christ's Table. We are the family of Christ. We gather as a family for the holy meal with Him, Communion. When an acolyte approaches the Lord's Table reverently, they are reminding everyone to be reverent.

The large cross on the Lord's Table reminds us that Jesus died on a cross but has been raised from the dead and is with us here and now. Because it is a symbol of Christ's presence, it is the custom in many churches to stop and face the cross before lighting the candles, and perhaps bowing of heads to recognize Christ's presence and worship Him.

Since ancient times, light and fire have reminded people that God is here with us. When the acolyte

brings the light (fire) to light the candles to the place where people are gathering to worship, they are reminding the people that God is with us at home, at school, and at work, as well as in the worship service. When we look at the lighted candles, we more easily think about God and feel God's presence.

When an acolyte lights their candle lighter again before extinguishing the candles and then walks reverently out with their lighted candle lighter, they remind us that when we scatter out into the world, God will be there with us.

Lighted candles also remind us that Jesus Christ is the Light of the world. Many persons like to think of the two candles on the Lord's table as reminders that Christ is both human and divine.

from *The Acolyte's Book*, Hoyt L. Hickman,
Abington Press, 1985.

More Sessions for Healthy Congregations

Mark your calendars now and plan on attending two more sessions presented by the Healthy Congregations CRT right here at Covenant. The next sessions will be held on Saturdays from 9 to 11:15 AM in Fellowship Hall:

“Relationships” – on September 8th

“Stewardship” – on Saturday, October 13th

The Healthy Congregations sessions we've had have been well received and very valuable. This is a wonderful time for CommUnity within our church. All sessions are open to anyone who attends church at Covenant. Pastors Charlie Landreth and Alisun Donovan will continue to present the materials.

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Meet Your Ruling Elders and Council Members

[Ed. note: This is the second of a series profiling our congregation's leaders. As space allows in the issues of coming months we will feature two or three of these dedicated servants.]

Ceara Ebbs, Class of 2012. Ceara was elected for a one-year term as the Youth Advisor to provide the Council with the voice of the youth in our congregation. She could not become a Ruling Elder, as she had not reached the age of 18. Ceara joined the church in 2006, inspired by her grandmother Maybelle Waid. Ceara has Co-chaired the Fellowship Committee along with Ruling Elder Debbi Alessi. Ceara has been a proven voice in the church, serving on the Pastor Nominating Committee. I'm sure you all remember her statement in the Congregational meeting voting on the call of Pastor Laura when asked how she felt about the choice. Ceara shared her thoughts and ended with "I fell in love with her and know she belongs here." Ceara heads off to Florida State University this next year to study History. We have been blessed for her service to CPC. Her term on Council ends this December.



member of the CPC Praise Choir for several years and is now one of the "Three Supremes." In her short tenure as Elder, Kay has made substantial changes to Worship and Music: Developing a manual of weekly, monthly, bi-annual and annual responsibilities; getting music, scripture readings and sermon titles one month in advance; setting a schedule for communion servers, ushers, and greeters; and cataloging of all banners and paraments. Kay's term on Council ends December, 2013.

Debbi Alessi, Class of 2013. Debbi has been a member of CPC since 1990. She was recently re-elected as an Elder for a two-year term, serving as Co-chair of the Fellowship Committee along with Ceara Ebbs, Youth Advisor. Debbi has been a mainstay for our youth, going to Montreat every year, cooking, and acting as House Mother. As Fellowship Chair, she has brought frugality as a new-found CPC word – she is the queen of BOGO – "buy one, get one free." Debbi was one of the initiators of Koininia (small group whose name means *fellowship*). Debbi's term on Council ends in December, 2013.



Kay Waid-Ebbs, Class of 2013. A member of CPC since 2008, Kay recently was elected to a two-year term, serving as Chair of Worship and Music Committee. How fitting, as Kay has been a



[SERVING COMMUNION, continued from page 1]

An orientation, facilitated by Pastor Laura and Elder Garnet Brenner, will be held on July 8th, immediately following worship in the Library. Please don't hesitate to join us. All you need to bring is your enthusiasm and commitment to this ministry. See you there!

Fellowship Committee News

It has been a very busy and exciting month of June inside of the church and the Fellowship Hall. We have been truly blessed with the number of members and guests staying to break bread and share their blessings with one another.

June 3rd was filled with excitement as we celebrated our new graduates and a enjoyed a CommUnity dinner consisting of a full salad bar with lots of love. June 10th was a beautiful spread hosted by Garnet Brenner and Janis Bomar, followed by June 17th (Father's Day) and a wonderful meal provided by Larry & Beth Herrington. All the food was extremely delicious as always, and we are truly thankful for all the hard work that goes into the preparation of these offers of giving.

July 1st brought a CommUnity dinner consisting of a summer BBQ with family fun time included, hosted by Covenant's youth group. It was a casual Sunday, inviting us to wear what our comfortable clothes: blue jeans, shorts, whatever. It was a great time of fellowship with one another and others to share.

Before we know it, August will be here, and with that we look forward to the CommUnity dinner fish fry with the Ebbs family as our hosts. A sign- up sheet for side items will be available on July 22nd & July 29th.

August Birthday Sunday's cake will feature a new cake called, "key lime cake." Beth Herrington gave this recipe to our own personal cake baker Wendy. This resulted in the decision that if you have a favorite cake that you would like to see featured on these special Sundays, give your recipe or suggestion to Wendy, and she will do her best to make it come to pass. (Thank you for the inspiration and suggestion, Beth!) With that in mind, we would like to remind Covenant Members that we have a sign-up sheet located in the kitchen to "Sponsor a Cake." See Debbi Alessi for details.

As always we are so blessed for the time that we share together, and look forward to seeing your smiling faces in church, followed by our time in the fellowship hall. Blessings and peace to everyone!

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Meditation Trail -Happy 4th of July!

by Mike Hein, ASLC

“And rain fell on the earth forty days and forty nights.” Luckily it wasn’t for forty days and nights, but after the dry spring, it was a relief to again get some rain the end of May and in June. It definitely helped the plants perk up back in the woods.

This month the peacock ginger plants (*Kaempferia pulchra* var. *masonii*) at each end of the bridge will still be blooming with lavender flowers. The garden montbretia (*Crocsmia crocosmiliflora*) in several places along the

trail should be blooming with 3-foot spikes of small red-orange flowers. Although some of the maroon-flowered crinum lilies near the large live oak bloomed last month, some may still be blooming this month also. Watch again for the devil’s-walkingstick plants at the end of the trail near CPC to be blooming the end of July and into August. Look for the 3-foot terminal cluster of small white flowers at the top - but beware of the sharp spines on the stems and twigs.

Our Committees

The committees of Covenant have been active this past month. Here are highlights of the actions taken by each of our committees.

Administration and Personnel (meets 3rd Sunday following worship): Janis Bomar, Chair

- Church Directory re-printed and sent out as e-mail
- Administrative Manual annual review
 - Administrative Assistant job description revised
 - Sexual misconduct policy revised
 - Assignments handed out to all committees for review/revision of Administrative Manual
- Performance reviews will be conducted for Pastor Laura and Brittany Roughton. Members of committee will be soliciting feedback from members of the congregation this summer on each.

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Building and Grounds (meets 1st Sunday following worship) : John Carver, Chair

- Waste removal has been changed to every two weeks from weekly, reducing monthly cost to \$58
- West wall of Spirit Room patched, painted and new wallpaper borders installed – Thanks to Bryan Paulin
- East wall of the Sanctuary repainted and ducts cleaned – Thanks to Beth Herrington, Bryan Paulin and John Ebbs
- Hangers installed in Sanctuary closets for maintaining banners – Thanks to Danny Alessi
- Cell Tower – Crown Castle working on proposal to extend lease. Expect to receive within two weeks
- Hired someone to maintain the Memorial Garden while Carter Wittman is in California.

Outreach (meets 2nd Tuesday of month 6 PM in Library): Larry Herrington, Chair

- Working on home Communion for members unable to attend regular communion service at church, and arranging training for Elders in home communion skills on July 8th. A communion set for home communion was donated to Covenant. We now have two sets for Elders to use, and Pastor Laura has her own home communion set.
- Susan Nimmo and Kathryn Russell are coordinating the planning for a quilt auction, with proceeds to support Fisher House.
- The ACORN offering will be on July 29th, with speaker from ACORN at worship service.
- We are planning a “National Back to Church Sunday” outreach campaign.

Christian Nurture and Education: Susan Nimmo, Chair

- In conjunction with Fellowship and Worship & Music Committees, working on fundraising for Youth program for Montreat fellowship, “Pizza and Movie” reinstitution
- Christian community activities:
 - Thursdays 4:30 PM – Agape – studying “On the Road with Jesus”
 - Thursdays 7 PM – Koinonia – Beginning a new study from the Presbyterian Women’s publication “Horizons” on the Book of Revelation. Your thirst for understanding will be quenched with the leadership of Garnet Brenner.

Nominating Committee (meets as needed throughout the year): Susan Nimmo, Chair

- Have met initially to consider candidates for vacant Ruling Elder position.

Worship and Music (meets 4th Sunday following worship): Kay Waid-Ebbs, Chair

- Exploring alternative times for worship and Sunday School
 - Survey of congregation to be conducted before any decisions made
- Developing Worship and Music manual for the office
- Pursuing the use of Elders for pulpit supply when Pastor Laura is not available
 - Pastor Laura's vacation approved for July 28th – August 4th
 - Janis Bomar approved for pulpit supply July 29th
- Home Communion for members unable to attend regular communion service at church
 - Training of all Elders in home communion skills on July 8th immediately following worship in the Library
- Youth will be participating during worship services once a month in the following roles: usher, acolyte, liturgist
 - Training of all youth to be completed by Beth Herrington on 7/8/12 immediately following worship in the sanctuary
- All banners inventoried, with pictures and documentation of storage areas
- Planning something special for our veterans on Veterans Day Sunday
- Pursuing the Christmas Eve service outside with a reduced cost and then having a candlelit service inside later in the evening.
- Planning for communion at Harbor Chase ministry
- Working with Youth, Fellowship, and Christian Nurture and Education, planning for a New Year's Eve festivity

Fellowship (meets 2nd Sunday following worship): Debbi Alessi & Ceara Ebbs, Co-chairs

- Weekly fellowship organized through the end of 2012, thanks to Pauline Wise and her efforts
- Planned CommUnity Dinners
 - July 1st – “Casual Sunday” with BBQ hamburgers and hot dogs, etc.
 - August 5th – Fish Fry by John Ebbs
- Birthday Sundays
 - Wendy Firman to make cakes for \$15 each
 - Campaign to sponsor a cake being developed, with four months adopted so far.
- Fellowship Hall update: Jim Traer is checking into replacing the plywood covering window into kitchen with bi-fold doors. Bryan Paulin will be painting the kitchen some time this summer.
- In conjunction with Christian Nurture and Education Committee and Worship and Music Committee, Fellowship is working on fundraising for Youth program for Montreat fellowship, “Pizza and Movie” reinstitution. We are also addressing the concept of Philadelphia Dinners

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Finance and Budget: John Peters, Chair

- Continue to meet with Cell Tower committee in efforts to negotiate a new lease with Crown Castle
- John Tucker is providing back-up to Kaite Nighthorse for weekly posting of the books and monthly tax filings
- Working with Presbytery on a program to increase Covenant's congregation and all programs that will support growth. We are meeting routinely with Clerk of Council and others as needed. At the end of June, we are in the black for the year by a little over \$2,000 – thanks to everyone's stewardship of resources.

Member Care:

With Helen River's resignation from Council, most activities considered as Member Care being picked up by other committees and people

- A&P working on database for documentation of home visits, calls, and services. The Outreach and Worship & Music Committees are working on home communion. Pastor Laura and Helen Rivers are sending out cards to members in need.
- The Prayer List is being maintained within the church office. We have asked all to set aside time each day to pray for those on the Prayer List, which is sent out weekly through e-mail.
- Visitation to those with needs being picked up by various members.
- Prayer Shawl ministry continues to be active

Youth Advisor: Ceara Ebbs

Youth had first meeting 6/24/12

- Pizza and Movie nights planned, with Pizza at 6 PM and the movie at 6:30 PM
 - July 13th "Flywheel"
 - July 27th "Facing the Giants"
 - August 10th "FireProof"
 - August 24th "Courageous"
- Youth plan to participate once a month in worship service as ushers, liturgists, and acolytes.
- Yard sale: A person in community asked the youth if they would hold a yard sale of her storage site in Jonesville and she will share the profits 50/50. Ceara Ebbs will follow up with individual to see if it is feasible. If confirmed as a "go," the event may incorporate carwash, bake sale, and jewelry sale into same day.

Next Council meeting: July 23rd at 6:30 PM in the Library.

Anyone from the congregation may attend a Council meeting with permission of the Pastor or Clerk of Council. There are guidelines to be followed which will be shared with you upon request.

2012 Session
Rev Laura Joost-Kuhn, Moderator

Debbi Alessi	Janis Bomar
John Carver	Ceara Ebbs
Kay Ebbs	Larry Herrington
Susan Nimmo	John Peters
Clerk John Tucker	

The Heartline is published monthly. You may submit articles either handwritten, typed, or on disk (saved in text or Word format) and delivered to the church office.

Deadline for the next newsletter is
July 26, 2012.

If you have a question about submitting an article for *The Heartline*, please call John Tucker.