

COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Cedar Bluff, Virginia

A Congregation in the Presbyterian Church in America



Welcome

Dear applicant,

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ! As we embark on this journey together, we recognize the significance of finding a pastor who not only shepherds the flock with wisdom and grace but also becomes an integral part of our Covenant family and the community of Cedar Bluff. We believe that God's providence has led us to this moment, and we are prayerfully seeking a servant leader who will guide us in our commitment to faith, worship, and service.

Covenant Presbyterian Church has a rich history rooted in a faithful response to God's Word. Our commitment to the Reformed faith and the authority of Scripture has shaped our identity since our inception in 1973. As we look to the future, we are excited about the prospect of a pastor who will join us in fulfilling the threefold ministry of the Church - ministering to God through worship, reaching out to the world through evangelism, and building up believers in Christlike maturity.

Cedar Bluff, nestled in the embrace of Tazewell County, offers a unique backdrop for ministry. Our community, marked by its small-town charm and a blend of mature Christians and young families, presents both opportunities and challenges. We are a people seeking to live out our covenant with God, and we are eager to welcome a pastor who will help guide us on this journey.

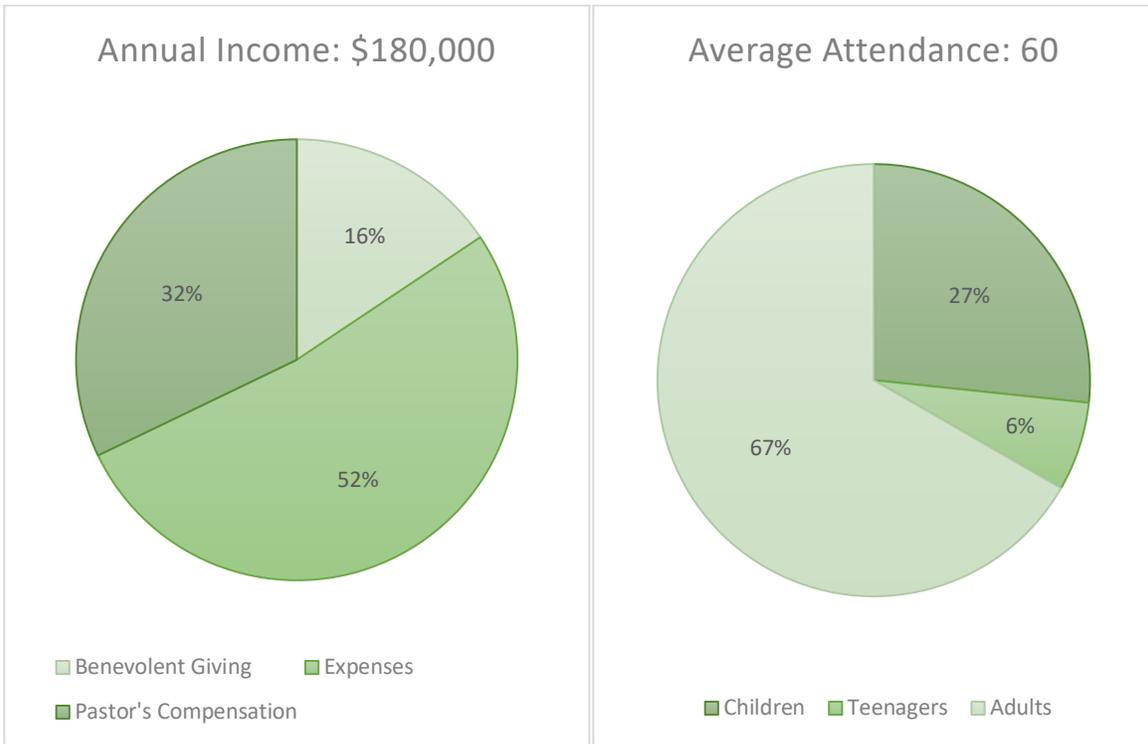
May God's grace and wisdom accompany you as you prayerfully consider this call. We eagerly await the opportunity to learn more about you and, God willing, welcome you into the enduring story of Covenant Presbyterian Church.

In Christ's love,

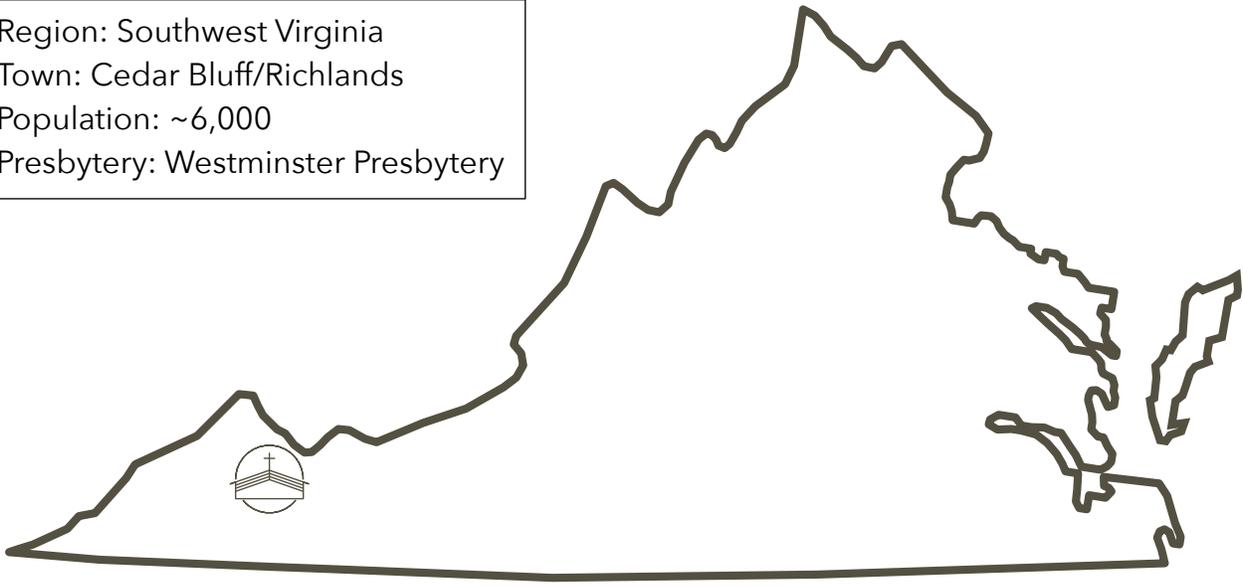
Dan Hankins (Chairman)

The Covenant Presbyterian Church Search Committee

Quick Information



Region: Southwest Virginia
Town: Cedar Bluff/Richlands
Population: ~6,000
Presbytery: Westminster Presbytery



History of Covenant Presbyterian Church

Covenant Presbyterian Church, nestled in the heart of Cedar Bluff, Virginia, boasts a profound history shaped by a commitment to unwavering truth. In the crucible of controversy over doctrinal fidelity, a pivotal moment unfolded in May of 1973. Under the visionary leadership of Pastor John Sartelle and Ruling Elders Earl Fletcher and Thurman Raines, a resolute majority of 68 members from Cedar Bluff Presbyterian Church chose to sever ties with their denominational affiliation—the Presbyterian Church in the United States.

Driven by deep convictions and a desire to uphold the doctrinal standards, these believers found themselves at a crossroads where their understanding of Scripture clashed with prevailing views within the denomination. Central to their concerns was the erosion of the Bible's significance—the very Word they believed to be God's infallible guide, sufficient to instruct humanity in matters of faith and duty.

The congregation found a new home within the folds of the newly established Presbyterian Church in America (PCA) in July 1973. The PCA, guided by a commitment to being "true to the Scriptures, and the Reformed faith, and obedient to the Great Commission of Jesus Christ," provided a fitting sanctuary for those seeking fidelity to their foundational beliefs.

Initially known as the Cedar Bluff Church, the congregation, on a significant Sunday—June 21, 1975, decided to embrace a new name: Covenant Presbyterian Church. This name encapsulated the essence of their collective journey—a covenant with God and each other, a visible body of Christ committed to obeying His Word. Each member publicly vowed to believe in Jesus Christ as the sole Lord and Savior, and to support the church in its worship, work, and communal life.

This commitment extends to the responsibility of Christian nurture when children are baptized—a sacred undertaking that binds the members together as a covenant community with God at its core. The covenant with God implies a steadfast obligation to obey Him in all aspects, as revealed in His Word. Scripture takes precedence in the life of Covenant Church, guiding its members to live in accordance with God's will recorded in its sacred pages.

The mission of the Church, as illuminated in Scripture, involves ministering on three fronts simultaneously: worshiping God through service, ministering to the world through evangelism, and building itself up in Christlike maturity. This profound commission necessitates the unwavering devotion of each member to the collective journey.

Desires for our next Pastor

Covenant Presbyterian Church is seeking a Pastor who resonates with the church's enduring commitment to truth and the Reformed faith. As the spiritual shepherd of this community, the Pastor will be entrusted with leading the congregation in traditional, regulative principle of worship. The worship services at Covenant are characterized by a blend of hymns and contemporary songs, corporate confession of sin, and expository preaching. The Pastor will be at the forefront, guiding the congregation through verse-by-verse passages, with an emphasis on personal application. To complement his labors, we provide a four-bedroom manse (2 & ½ baths) with a detached study and a two-car garage.

The role of the Pastor extends beyond the pulpit, encompassing pastoral care and visitation. Covenant Presbyterian Church places a strong emphasis on the preparation of the Pastor, recognizing the critical role it plays in the spiritual nourishment of the congregation. With a commitment to diverse sermon series, usually centered around books of the Bible, the Pastor has the flexibility to navigate the depths of Scripture, allowing for a thorough exploration of God's Word.

The sacrament of the Lord's Supper is celebrated monthly, accompanied by a fellowship meal and the absence of an evening service. Regular prayer meetings every Wednesday evening provide a space for the congregation to unite in devotion and supplication.

Community engagement is integral to the Pastor's role, with opportunities for involvement in various ministries. Covenant Presbyterian Church is actively involved in a food ministry, supporting the needy within the congregation, and contributing to crisis circumstances through meal assistance. Additionally, the church engages in a Christmas Cantata, a ministry to a local prison, and supports the Abel Crisis Pregnancy Center—a pro-life ministry in Bluefield.

Community of Richlands, Virginia

Richlands, Virginia, epitomizes tranquility and history, situated along the banks of the Upper Fork of the Clinch River. Its origins trace back to a land grant in 1785, spearheaded by Patrick Henry, Virginia's Governor. Initially an agricultural community, Richlands earned its name due to the discovery of abundant natural resources and coal reserves.

The town's evolution gained momentum with the arrival of the Norfolk and Western Railroad, and by the 1890s, Richlands began flourishing, capitalizing on its accessible coal, iron, and timber. Despite facing economic challenges, particularly in response to shifts in the coal industry, Richlands has weathered these changes and stabilized, proudly claiming its status as one of Virginia's most peaceful towns.

Richlands and the town of Cedar Bluff are situated within Tazewell County, characterized by rolling hills, clear rivers, lush pastures, and scenic mountains. Recognized by The Nature Conservancy as one of the "Last Great Places" globally, the Clinch River Basin, where Richlands is nestled, adds to the county's natural allure.

Residents enjoy a hometown feel, partaking in popular dining options like Cuz's Uptown Barbeque, Italian Village, Red Flower, Fisher & Company, and El Mariachi. Community events, including the Cedar Bluff Heritage Festival and the Corn Maze at the Crab Orchard Museum, contribute to the town's vibrancy.

Recreational opportunities abound in Tazewell County's Four Seasons Country, offering activities like whitewater rafting on the New River, skiing at Winterplace Resort, and biking on VA Route 16, known as the "Back of the Dragon." The Jefferson National Forest, with over 400 miles of trails, and participation in the Virginia Birding and Wildlife Trail showcase the county's commitment to outdoor enthusiasts. The YMCA in Tazewell supports fitness and wellness, providing facilities and classes.