

The Lord's Day in Worship

COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Christmastide
December 30, 2018

“He was created of a mother whom He created. He was carried by hands that He formed. He cried in the manger in wordless infancy, He the Word, without whom all human eloquence is mute.”

—Augustine

“Jesus was God spelling Himself out in language humanity could understand.”

—S.D. Gordon

“He who loves with purity considers not the gift of the lover, but the love of the giver.”

—Thomas á Kempis

“When we were children we were grateful to those who filled our stockings at Christmas time. Why are we not grateful to God for filling our stockings with legs?”

—G.K. Chesterton

CALL TO WORSHIP

Dan Edwards

☒ READING FROM THE PROPHETS

Micah 5:2-5a

But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah,
 who are too little to be among the clans of Judah,
from you shall come forth for me
 one who is to be ruler in Israel,
whose coming forth is from of old,
 from ancient days.

³Therefore he shall give them up until the time
 when she who is in labor has given birth;
then the rest of his brothers shall return
 to the people of Israel.

⁴And he shall stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the Lord,
 in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God.
And they shall dwell secure, for now he shall be great
 to the ends of the earth.

⁵And he shall be their peace.
When the Assyrian comes into our land
 and treads in our palaces,
then we will raise against him seven shepherds
 and eight princes of men;

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God

☒ *Congregation stand as able.*

☒ HYMN OF CHRISTMASTIDE

"O Little Town of Bethlehem"

O little town of Bethlehem, How still we see thee lie.
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep The silent stars go by;
Yet in thy dark streets shineth The everlasting Light.
The hopes and fears of all the years Are met in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary, And gathered all above.
While mortals sleep the angels keep Their watch of wondering love.
O morning stars together Proclaim the holy birth.
And praises sing to God the King, And peace to men on earth.

How silently, how silently The wondrous gift is giv'n.
So God imparts to human hearts The blessings of His heaven;
No ear may hear His coming, But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive Him still, The dear Christ enters in.

O holy child of Bethlehem, Descend to us we pray.
Cast out our sin and enter in, Be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels, The great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us, Our Lord Emmanuel.

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☒ PRAYER OF ADORATION

FIRST READING FROM THE GOSPELS

Paul Loyless

Luke 2:8-20

And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. ¹⁰And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. ¹¹For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹²And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." ¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

¹⁴"Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!"

¹⁵When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." ¹⁶And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. ¹⁷And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. ¹⁸And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. ²⁰And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

☒ HYMN OF WORSHIP

"Angels from the Realms of Glory"

Angels from the realms of glory,
Wing your flight o'er all the earth;
Ye who sang creation's story,
Now proclaim Messiah's birth;
Come and worship, come and worship,
Worship Christ the newborn King!

Shepherds in the fields abiding,
Watching o'er your flocks by night.
God with man is now residing,
Yonder shines the infant Light.
Come and worship, come and worship.
Worship Christ the newborn King!

Sages, leave your contemplations,
Brighter visions beam afar;
Seek the great Desire of nations,
Ye have seen his natal star:
Come and worship, come and worship,
Worship Christ, the newborn King!

Saints before the altar bending,
Watching long in hope and fear;
Suddenly the Lord descending
In His temple shall appear.
Come and worship, come and worship,
Worship Christ the newborn King!

Come and worship, come and worship,
Worship Christ the newborn King!

Words: James Montgomery, 1816. Music: Henry T. Smart, 1867.

READING FROM THE EPISTLES

Hebrews 1:1-4

Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, ²but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. ³He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, ⁴having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

☒ HYMN OF INVITATION

"O Come All Ye Faithful"

O come all ye faithful,
Joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold Him,
Born the King of angels;
O come let us adore Him,
O come let us adore Him,
O come let us adore Him,
Christ the Lord!

Sing choirs of angels,
Sing in exultation,
O sing all ye citizens of heav'n above;
Glory to God,
All glory in the highest;
O come let us adore Him,
O come let us adore Him,
O come let us adore Him,
Christ the Lord!

Yea, Lord we greet Thee,
Born this happy morning;
Jesus, to Thee be all glory giv'n;
Word of the Father
Now in flesh appearing;
O come let us adore Him,
O come let us adore Him,
O come let us adore Him,
Christ the Lord!

Words: attr. John F. Wade (1711-1786); tr. Frederick Oakeley (1802-1880). Music: John F. Wade's Cantus Diversi, 1751.

GIVING OF FIRST FRUITS

"All is Well"

Rachel Barlotta and Rick Barnes

All is well, all is well,
Angels and men rejoice.
For tonight, darkness fell
Into the dawn of love's light.
Sing a-le, sing alleluia!

All is well, all is well,
Let there be peace on earth.
Christ is come, go and tell
That He is in the manger.
Sing a-le! Sing alleluia!

All is well, all is well,
Lift up your voice and sing!
Born is now Emmanuel.
Born is our Lord and Savior,
Sing alleluia, sing alleluia;
All is well!

Born is now Emmanuel.
Born is our Lord and Savior,
Sing alleluia, sing alleluia;
All is well!

Words and Music: Michael W. Smith.

PASSING OF THE PEACE

The peace of the LORD be with you.

And also with you.

Greet one another with words of peace and reconciliation.

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Visitors and members, please take a moment to fill out the pew pad.
You may read all of our ministry announcements on page 19.

Kindergarteners - 2nd graders are dismissed at this time (see page 19 for details).

THE MORNING PRAYERS

Will Brooke

☒ SECOND READING FROM THE GOSPELS

John 1:15-17

(John bore witness about him, and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks before me, because he was before me.'")¹⁶For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.
¹⁷For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

All flesh is like grass,
And all its glory is like the flower of the field.
The grass withers, the flower fades,
But the word of our God stands forever.

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

All who are united in Christ Jesus by faith and are baptized, communing members of His visible Church are invited to come to the Lord's Table. If you are not communing but would like to participate, come forward and fold your hands, and you will receive a prayer of blessing from the server.

The congregation will read aloud the portions that are *italicized*.

Prayer of Confession

Dan Edwards

*Almighty God, our heavenly Father,
You have sent Your Son to us
that we might live in truth and grace,
but we confess with deep sorrow
that we have too often followed the devices and desires of our fallen nature
and have failed to embrace and express the fullness of Your gospel.
Please forgive us,
and make of us a people who receive truth and grace,
who display truth and grace,
and who share truth and grace with others;
all for the glory of Jesus Christ,
in Whose blessed Name we pray. Amen.*

Assurance of Pardon

But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins."

—Matthew 1:20, 21

The almighty and merciful Lord grant you forgiveness of all your sins, true repentance, amendment of life, and the grace and consolation of His Holy Spirit.

☒ **Apostles' Creed**

*I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.
And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord;
who was conceived by the Holy Ghost,
born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell;
the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty;
from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic Church;
the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins;
the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.*

☒ **Gloria Patri**

Glory be to the Father,
And to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning,
Is now, and ever shall be,
World without end.
Amen, amen.

Words of Institution

from 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

Prayer of Humble Access

*We do not presume to come to this your Table, O merciful Lord,
trusting in our own righteousness, but in your manifold and great mercies.
We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under your Table,
but you are the same Lord whose property is always to have mercy.
Grant us therefore, gracious Lord,
so to commemorate in this breaking of bread
the death of your dear son Jesus Christ,
that we may feed on him in our hearts by faith,
and that we may evermore dwell in Him,
and He in us. Amen.*

Prayer of Consecration and the Lord's Prayer

Gracious God, pour out your Holy Spirit upon us and upon these your gifts of bread and wine, that the bread we break and the cup we bless may be the communion of the body and blood of Christ. By your Spirit make us one with Christ, that we may be one with all who share this feast and united in ministry with your people in every place.

This we pray in the name of the One who taught us to pray, saying:

*Our Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy Name.
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.
Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil,
for Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever, Amen.*

*If you desire gluten free bread, please walk down the center aisle, either upstairs or down,
and the server will provide it accordingly.*

HYMNS FOR THE EUCHARIST

Congregation, please sing the Hymns for the Eucharist during Communion.

“Joy Has Dawned”

Joy has dawned upon the world,
Promised from creation;
God’s salvation now unfurled,
Hope for every nation.
Not with fanfares from above,
Not with scenes of glory,
But a humble gift of love:
Jesus, born of Mary.

Sounds of wonder fill the sky
With the songs of angels,
As the mighty Prince of Life
Shelters in a stable.
Hands that set each star in place,
Shaped the earth in darkness,
Cling now to a mother’s breast,
Vuln’rable and helpless.

Shepherds bow before the Lamb,
Gazing at the glory;
Gifts of men from distant lands
Prophesy a story.
Gold, a King is born today,
Incense, God is with us;
Myrrh, His death will make a way
And by His blood He’ll win us.

Son of Adam, Son of Heav’n,
Given as a ransom,
Reconciling God and man—
Christ our mighty Champion!
What a Savior, what a Friend,
What a glorious mystery;
Once a babe in Bethlehem,
Now the Lord of hist’ry.

Words and Music: Keith Getty and Stuart Townend.

“God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen”

God rest ye merry, gentlemen,
Let nothing you dismay,
Remember Christ our Savior
Was born on Christmas day,
To save us all from Satan’s pow’r
When we were gone astray.

Refrain:

*O tidings of comfort and joy,
Comfort and joy,
O tidings of comfort and joy.*

From God our heav’nly Father,
A blessed angel came;
And unto certain shepherds
Brought tidings of the same;
How that in Bethlehem was born
The Son of God by name.

(Refrain)

“Fear not, then,” said the angel,
“Let nothing you affright:
This day is born a Savior
Of a pure virgin bright,
To free all those who trust in him
From Satan’s pow’r and might.”

(Refrain)

The shepherds at those tidings
Rejoiced much in mind,
And left their flocks a feeding,
In tempest, storm, and wind:
And went to Bethlehem straight-way,
The Son of God to find.

(Refrain)

Words and Music: Traditional English carol.

☒ PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

☒ HYMN OF ANGELS

Gloria
In excelsis Deo,
Gloria
In excelsis Deo.

☒ BENEDICTION

THIS WEEK AT COVENANT: December 30 - January 5, 2018

SUNDAY, December 30

- 8:45 a.m. Coffee Fellowship (Commons)
- 9:15 a.m. Sunday School for all ages and stages (see page 20)
- 10:30 a.m. Gathered Worship (Sanctuary)
Children's Worship | 3K through 2nd grade

MONDAY, December 31

Church Office open until 5:00 p.m.

TUESDAY, January 1

Happy New Year!
(Church offices closed)

Should you need pastoral assistance after our regular office hours, please contact our pastor on call at 205-874-3559 (Josh Johnson, December 31-January 5).

MINISTRIES AND SPECIAL EVENTS

Children's Worship Information. Following the Sunday morning worship service, parents will find their children attending Children's Worship in the following rooms:

3K & 4K - C221 (available for the entire worship hour)

Kindergarten - C221 (dismissed during the Passing of the Peace)

1st - 2nd Grade - C316 (dismissed during the Passing of the Peace)

Wednesdays@Covenant. Our Wednesday night activities will resume on January 9 with dinner at 5:30 p.m., choir rehearsal at 6:00, and youth activities and adult Bible studies at 6:15. Children's dinner and activities are from 5:30-7:15 on the third floor. Our adult study time will be broken down into three, three-to-four week sections: Scripture, Worship, and Prayer. We will answer questions such as:

- What is Scripture? How do we read it?
- What is Christian Worship? What do the elements/order of our worship mean?
- What is prayer? How do we put prayer into practice?

Gospel Manhood. Our next Gospel Manhood lunch is Tuesday, January 15 at 11:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Our guest speaker will be Harry Reeder, Senior Pastor, Briarwood Presbyterian Church.

New Members' Class. Covenant's next New Members' class is January 25-27. Please contact Victoria Williams at vwilliams@covpres.com for the schedule and to register. Childcare is available for each session.

Established Conference. The PCA Children's Ministry Established Conference is coming to Birmingham January 25-26, 2019. This conference is for parents, grandparents, volunteers, and anyone who has a desire to love, teach, and disciple children. You can find out about the available workshops and register at pcacdm.org/established-birmingham.

2019 Missions Festival. Covenant's annual Missions Festival is February 9-13! Mark your calendar, and check out our sign up at covpres.com/missions-festival to find out about how you can help.

Sacred Studio. Ladies, you can still sign up for Sacred Studio at sacredstudio.org. February 22-23 will be filled with worship, music, and creativity...you don't want to miss it.

SUNDAY SCHOOL COMMUNITIES

9:15 a.m.

Maps and directional signs are located around the church.

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| COLLEGE DINING ROOM* | <i>College students</i> |
| COMMUNITY E305 | <i>All ages and life stages</i> |
| CORNERSTONE S104 | <i>30s and 40s</i> |
| CROSSPOINTE S100 | <i>20s and 30s</i> |
| FOUNDATIONS E304 | <i>30s and 40s</i> |
| LIGHTHOUSE E301 | <i>30s and 40s</i> |
| LIVING STONES E303 | <i>40s and 50s</i> |
| KINGDOM BUILDERS E201 | <i>50s and 60s</i> |
| OPEN DOORS S105 | <i>70s and above</i> |
| UPPER ROOM S101 | <i>60s and 70s</i> |
| THRESHOLD DINING ROOM | <i>Singles and young marrieds; 20s and 30s</i> |
| YOUTH YOUTH AREA | <i>Students grades 7-12</i> |

**The college class meets at 12:00 p.m. and includes lunch.*

STAFF CONTACT INFORMATION

EXECUTIVE STAFF

| | |
|--|------------------------|
| Marty Crawford, Church Administrator | mrcrawford@covpres.com |
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| Dan Edwards, Pastor to Children and Families | dedwards@covpres.com |
| Ingram Link, Director of Women's Ministries | ilink@covpres.com |
| Sandy Willson, Interim Senior Pastor | swillson@covpres.com |

MINISTRY AND ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

| | |
|---|----------------------------|
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| Laura Tucker, Ministry Assistant, Children & Families | ltucker@covpres.com |
| Victoria Williams, Ministry Assistant | vwilliams@covpres.com |

RULING ELDERS

2018

AC Frese

Eric Getty

John Hamilton

Daniel Murray

Warren Norville

Jason Peevy

Ben Walker

Clay Wheeler

Charles White

2019

Ty Dedmon

Jeff Dyess

Rick Flynn

Heath Henderson

Tom McKnight

John Smith T

Richard Thompson

2020

Bill Bennett

Will Brooke

Michael Latta

Charlie Logan

Paul Loyless

Bob Schaffeld

Lee Sheppard

Steve Stigler

Mark Taylor

John Wood

DEACONS

2018

Brandon Bishop

Nathan Collums

John Harrelson

Randall Lancaster

Matt Searson

Patrick Strong

Darrell Tucker

2019

Jim Bennett

Gary Gorham

Keith Harrelson

Jeff Hayes

Steve Killgore

Steve Pfitzer

Brent Powell

John Shank

Todd Sitton

William Slappey

Billy Tapscott

2020

Tripp Alexander

Paul Darden

Jay Evans

Bryan Flores

John Gant

John David Gray

Marty Martin

Bud Miller

Tyler O'Connor

John Shults

Danny Smith

Robert Stephens

Clark Worrell

BIBLE READING PLAN

These readings are provided as a personal, family, or group worship resource. Use them along with your worship guide as resources for readings, prayers, and hymns. The scripture readings are from Ligonier Ministries and are designed around a one-year cycle that will allow you to read through the New Testament or the entire Bible in 2018.

DECEMBER READING PLAN

| | | |
|----|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| | HOSEA | REVELATION |
| 30 | <input type="checkbox"/> 10-Malachi 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 20-21 |

| | | |
|----|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| | MALACHI | |
| 31 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2-4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 22 |

JANUARY READING PLAN

| | | |
|-------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| | GENESIS | MATTHEW |
| 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 1-2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 |
| 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3-5 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 |
| 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 6-7 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3-4 |
| 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 8-11 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| 5/6 | <input type="checkbox"/> 12-14 | <input type="checkbox"/> 6 |
| 7 | <input type="checkbox"/> 15-19 | <input type="checkbox"/> 7 |
| 8 | <input type="checkbox"/> 20-22 | <input type="checkbox"/> 8 |
| 9 | <input type="checkbox"/> 23-24 | <input type="checkbox"/> 9 |
| 10 | <input type="checkbox"/> 25-26 | <input type="checkbox"/> 10:1-25 |
| 11 | <input type="checkbox"/> 27-28 | <input type="checkbox"/> 10:26-42 |
| 12/13 | <input type="checkbox"/> 29-30 | <input type="checkbox"/> 11 |
| 14 | <input type="checkbox"/> 31-35 | <input type="checkbox"/> 12 |
| 15 | <input type="checkbox"/> 36-37 | <input type="checkbox"/> 13:1-23 |
| 16 | <input type="checkbox"/> 38-40 | <input type="checkbox"/> 13:24-58 |
| 17 | <input type="checkbox"/> 41 | <input type="checkbox"/> 14:1-21 |
| 18 | <input type="checkbox"/> 42-43 | <input type="checkbox"/> 14:22-36 |
| 19/20 | <input type="checkbox"/> 44-45 | <input type="checkbox"/> 15:1-20 |
| 21 | <input type="checkbox"/> 46-Exodus 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 15:21-16:4 |

| | | |
|-------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| | EXODUS | |
| 22 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2-4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 16:5-28 |
| 23 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5-6 | <input type="checkbox"/> 17 |
| 24 | <input type="checkbox"/> 7-10 | <input type="checkbox"/> 18:1-20 |
| 25 | <input type="checkbox"/> 11-12 | <input type="checkbox"/> 18:21-35 |
| 26/27 | <input type="checkbox"/> 13-15 | <input type="checkbox"/> 19:1-15 |
| 28 | <input type="checkbox"/> 16-19 | <input type="checkbox"/> 19:16-30 |
| 29 | <input type="checkbox"/> 20-22 | <input type="checkbox"/> 20:1-16 |
| 30 | <input type="checkbox"/> 23-25 | <input type="checkbox"/> 20:17-34 |
| 31 | <input type="checkbox"/> 26-28 | <input type="checkbox"/> 21 |