

The Lord's Day in Worship

COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



Arise, shine, for your light has come,
 and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.
³And nations shall come to your light,
 and kings to the brightness of your rising.
⁴Lift up your eyes all around, and see;
 they all gather together, they come to you;
 your sons shall come from afar,
 and your daughters shall be carried on the hip.
⁵Then you shall see and be radiant;
 your heart shall thrill and exult,
 because the abundance of the sea shall be turned to you,
 the wealth of the nations shall come to you.
⁶A multitude of camels shall cover you,
 the young camels of Midian and Ephah;
 all those from Sheba shall come.
 They shall bring gold and frankincense,
 and shall bring good news, the praises of the LORD.

—Isaiah 60:1, 3-6

This prophecy is manifestly fulfilled by the Magi, who both announce the salvation of the Lord, born Christ the Son of God, and by their gifts proclaim Him Christ and God, and King of Man. For by gold the power of a king is signified, by frankincense the honor of God, by myrrh the burial of the body; and accordingly they offer Him gold as King, frankincense as God, myrrh as Man.

—John Chrysostom

 **CALL TO WORSHIP**

from Psalm 118

Leader: Open to me the gates of righteousness,
that I may enter through them
and give thanks to the LORD.

ALL: *This is the gate of the LORD;
the righteous shall enter through it.
I thank you that you have answered me
and have become my salvation.*

Leader: The stone that the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone.
This is the LORD'S doing;
it is marvelous in our eyes.

ALL: *This is the day that the LORD has made;
let us rejoice and be glad in it.*

 **PRAYER OF ADORATION**

 Congregation stand as able.

❏ HYMNS OF ADORATION

"Joy to the World"

Joy to the world! The Lord is come;
Let earth receive her King;
Let ev'ry heart prepare Him room,
And heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n and heav'n and nature sing.

Joy to the earth! The Savior reigns;
Let men their songs employ;
While fields and floods,
Rocks, hills, and plains,
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

No more let sins and sorrows grow,
Nor thorns infest the ground.
He comes to make His blessings flow
Far as the curse is found,
Far as the curse is found,
Far as, far as the curse is found.

He rules the world with truth and grace,
And makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness,
And wonders of His love,
And wonders of His love,
And wonders, wonders of His love.

Words: Isaac Watts. Music: George Frederick Handel, arr. B Lowell Mason.

❏ "The First Noel"

The first Noel, the angel did say,
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep,
On a cold winter's night that was so deep.
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel,
Born is the King of Israel!

They looked up and saw a star
Shining in the east, beyond them far;
And to the earth it gave great light,
And so it continued both day and night.
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel,
Born is the King of Israel!

Then entered in those wise men three,
Full rev'rently upon their knee,
And offered there, in His presence,
Their gold and myrrh and frankincense.
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel,
Born is the King of Israel

Then let us all with one accord
Sing praises to our heav'nly Lord,
That hath made heav'n and earth of naught,
And with His blood mankind hath bought.
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel,
Born is the King of Israel!

Words and Music: Traditional English carol.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

from Psalm 38

Leader: O LORD, rebuke us not in your anger,
nor discipline us in your wrath!

*ALL: For your arrows have sunk into us,
and your hand has come down on us.*

Leader: There is no soundness in our flesh
because of your indignation;
There is no health in our bones because of our sin.

*ALL: For my iniquities have gone over my head;
like a heavy burden, they are too heavy for me.
Do not forsake us, O LORD!
O our God, be not far from us!
Make haste to help us,
O Lord, our Salvation!*

SILENT PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

 **ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

Who is a God like you, pardoning iniquity
and passing over transgression
for the remnant of his inheritance?

He does not retain his anger forever,
because he delights in steadfast love.

—Micah 7:18

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.

☒ CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE

"What Child is This?"

What child is this, who, laid to rest,
On Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet,
While shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ, the King,
Whom shepherds guard and angels sing:
Haste, haste to bring him laud,
The babe, the son of Mary!

Why lies he in such mean estate,
Where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear: for sinners here
The silent Word is pleading;
Nails, spear shall pierce him through,
The cross be borne for me, for you;
Hail, hail the Word made flesh,
The babe, the son of Mary!

So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh,
Come, peasant, king to own him.
The King of kings salvation brings;
Let loving hearts enthrone him.
Raise, raise the song on high,
The virgin sings her lullaby;
Joy, joy for Christ is born,
The babe the son of Mary!

This, this is Christ, the King,
Whom shepherds guard and angels sing:
Haste, haste to bring him laud,
The babe, the son of Mary!

Words: William C. Dix (1837-1898). Music: Traditional English melody, 16th century.

READING FROM THE PROPHETS

Micah 5:1-3

Now muster your troops, O daughter of troops;
siege is laid against us;
with a rod they strike the judge of Israel
on the cheek.

²But 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.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GIVING OF FIRST FRUITS

"Go Tell It on the Mountain"
Congregational Hymn

Refrain:

Go tell it on the mountain,
Over the hills and everywhere;
Go tell it on the mountain
That Jesus Christ is born!

While shepherds kept their watching
O'er silent flocks by night,
Behold throughout the heavens
There shone a holy light,
(Refrain)

The shepherds feared and trembled
When, lo! above the earth
Rang out the angel chorus
That hailed our Savior's birth.
(Refrain)

Down in a lowly manger
The humble Christ was born,
And God sent us salvation
That blessed Christmas morn.
(Refrain)

Words: John W. Work (1872-1925). Music: African-American spiritual.

 **PASSING OF THE PEACE**

The peace of the LORD be with you.

And also with you.

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

See page 16 for all of our Ministry Announcements. Please fill out the attendance sheet provided with your worship guide and leave it in your pew or at your table.

Children's Worship. Children ages 3 years old (by 9/1/2020) through Kindergarten sitting in the Fellowship Hall are invited to Children's Worship during the Passing of the Peace. Children will walk with staff to C222, C223, or C224, and staff will then walk children back to the Fellowship Hall, prior to the benediction, to join their parents.

Enfold Disability Ministry. Our church seeks to embrace and enfold people affected by disability. Please let an usher know how we can support and accommodate your needs during worship.

THE MORNING PRAYERS

READING FROM THE GOSPELS

Matthew 2:1-12

Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, ²saying, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him." ³When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; ⁴and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. ⁵They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet:

⁶"And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for from you shall come a ruler
who will shepherd my people Israel."

⁷Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star had appeared. ⁸And he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word, that I too may come and worship him." ⁹After listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was. ¹⁰When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. ¹¹And going into the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. ¹²And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.

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.*

PRAYER OF COMMITMENT AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

13

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.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil,

for Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever, Amen.

CHRISTMASTIDE | DECEMBER 27, 2020 | 10:30 AM

☒ HYMN OF GLORY

"As With Gladness Men of Old"



1. As with gladness men of old Did the guiding star behold;
 2. As with joy - ful steps they sped to that low - ly manger bed,
 3. As they offered gifts most rare at that manger rude and bare;
 4. Ho - ly Je - sus, ev - 'ry day keep us in the nar - row way;



As with joy they hailed its light, lead - ing on - ward, beam ing bright;
 There to bend the knee be - fore Him Whom heav'n and earth a - dore;
 so may we with ho - ly joy, pure, and free from sin's al - loy,
 and when earth - ly things are past, bring our ran - somed souls at last



so, most gra - cious Lord, may we ev - er - more be led to Thee.
 So, may we with will - ing feet ev - er seek Thy mer - cy seat.
 all our cost - liest trea - sures bring, Christ, to Thee, our heav'nly King.
 where they need no star to guide, where no clouds Thy glo - ry hide.

Words: William Chatterton Dix, 1860; alt. 1961. Music: Conrad Kocher, 1838;
 arr. by William H. Monk, 1861.

☒ BENEDICTION

THIS WEEK AT COVENANT: December 27, 2020 - January 2, 2021

SUNDAY, December 27

10:30 a.m. Gathered Worship (livestream only)

FRIDAY, January 1 *Church office closed*

CHRISTMASTIDE | DECEMBER 27, 2020 | 10:30 AM

Should you need pastoral assistance after our regular office hours, please contact our pastor on call at 205-874-3559 (Josh Johnson, December 28 - January 3).

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

January 3 Gathered Worship. We announced this past week that our pastors, in communication with our re-entry committee, have made the decision to move to online worship only for a very limited time. This decision includes next Sunday, January 3. We will livestream our service at 10:30 a.m. that morning, and it will remain available at covpres.com/covid19 and on our YouTube channel (Covenant Presbyterian Church Birmingham, AL) after that.

Financial Stewardship. It is not too late to contribute to the 2020 General Fund. Our December goal is \$925,000. If you are considering a year-end gift, our offices will be open December 31. Also, in November we asked our congregation to make 2021 financial commitments to Covenant's General Fund. If you have not yet made your pledge, please take a moment to consider how the Lord is leading you to give in the coming year. You may mail in your commitment card or bring it by the office.

Sunday School Plan on Hold. Although we had planned and hoped to be able to return to Sunday School on Sunday mornings in January, at this point we cannot safely do so. As we continue to plan and gain further clarity regarding the spread and containment of COVID-19, we will provide the new Sunday School dates as soon as we can.

Women's Bible Studies on Hold. We had planned to begin Bible studies in January, but we cannot safely do so at this time. Our hope and prayer is that we will be able to gather in person again soon, and we will send you information as it becomes available. In the meantime, you can register now for our new study, "Esther, The Hidden Hand of God." Divine Design Discipleship is on hold as well, but when we can gather again, we will continue our study on "Expectations." For details and to register, please visit covpres.com/womens-bible-studies.

Discover Covenant Class. Our next Discover Covenant class is Friday, January 22, through Sunday, January 24. This class is a great way to learn about our church and what it means to become a member and for us to get to know you! Discover Covenant is required for anyone who desires to become a member; however, you are not obligated to join after attending the class. If you would like to register, please visit covpres.com/new-members. Nursery childcare (ages 5 and under) is available for each session. If you have any questions, please contact Victoria Williams (vwilliams@covpres.com, 205-871-7002).

STAFF CONTACT INFORMATION

EXECUTIVE STAFF

Robby Holt, Senior Pastor	rholt@covpres.com
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RULING ELDERS

2020

Bill Bennett
Will Brooke
Michael Latta
Charlie Logan
Paul Loyless
Bob Schaffeld
Lee Sheppard
Steve Stigler
Mark Taylor
John Wood

2021

Eric Getty
Russell Martin
Daniel Murray
Warren Norville
Sandy Stradtman
Clay Wheeler

2022

Ty Dedmon
John Hamilton
Mark Hogewood
John James
David O'Dell
Norman Pless
Kurt Senn

DEACONS

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

2021

Nick Baggett
Ward Bailey
Samuel Bragg
Trey Clegg
Will Graham
Jeff Hicks
Jim Jenkins
Alan Spooner
Patrick Strong

2022

Jim Bennett
William Edwards
Merrill Johnston
Randall Lancaster
Mark Midyette
Stephen Mince
Clyde Prather
John Shank
Matt Thomas
Greg Tomlinson

STEERING COMMITTEE

2020

Michael Latta, Clerk of the Session
Stephen Mince, Chair of the Diaconate
Lee Sheppard, Personnel Committee Chair
John Shank, Finance Committee Chair

Will Brooke, Member At-large
Daniel Murray, Family Ministry Chair
Steve Stigler, Missions Ministry Chair
Ty Dedmon, Shepherding Ministry Chair

BIBLE READING PLAN

These readings are provided as a personal, family, or group worship resource. You can use them along with the readings, prayers, and hymns from your worship guide each week. 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 2020.

DECEMBER READING PLAN

	EZEKIEL	1 JOHN
1	□ 47-48	□ 2
	DANIEL	
2	□ 1-2	□ 3
3	□ 3-4	□ 4
4	□ 5-6	□ 5
5/6	□ 7-10	□ 2 John-Jude
		REVELATION
7	□ 11-12	□ 1
	HOSEA	
8	□ 1-3	□ 2
9	□ 4-6	□ 3
10	□ 7-9	□ 4
11	□ 10-12	□ 5
12/13	□ 13-Joel 3	□ 6
	AMOS	
14	□ 1-3	□ 7
15	□ 4-6	□ 8
16	□ 7-9	□ 9
17	□ Obadiah-Jonah 3	□ 10
18	□ Jonah 4-Micah 2	□ 11
19/20	□ Micah 3-7	□ 12
21	□ Nahum	□ 13
	HABAKKUK	
22	□ 1-2	□ 14
23	□ 3-Zephaniah 2	□ 15
24	□ Zephaniah 3-Haggai 2	□ 16
	ZECHARIAH	
25	□ 1-3	□ 17
26/27	□ 4-8	□ 18
28	□ 9-10	□ 19
29	□ 11-13	□ 20
30	□ 14-Malachi 1	□ 21
	MALACHI	
31	□ 2-5	□ 22

