

Christmas Eve Service

COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



"We will begin...with the creation of the world and with God its Maker, for the *first fact* that you must grasp is this: *the renewal of creation has been wrought by the self-same Word who made it in the beginning.* There is thus *no inconsistency* between creation and salvation; for the One Father has employed the same Agent for both works, effecting the salvation of the world through the same Word who made it in the beginning."

—Athanasius

"All language about God is metaphorical. But the metaphor became flesh and dwelt among us."

—Michael Gerson

"They say Aslan is on the move—perhaps has already landed."

—Mr. Beaver

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

11:00 service | *The Scrogginses*

4:30 service | *The Storeys*

6:00 service | *The Collums*

Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

—John 8:12

☒ CALL TO WORSHIP

11:00 service | *Rev. Josh Johnson*

4:30 service | *Rev. Henry Morris*

6:00 service | *Rev. Dan Edwards*

☒ RESPONSIVE READING

from John 1

Leader: In the beginning was the Word,
and the Word was with God,
and the Word was God.

All: *He was in the beginning with God.*

Leader: All things were made through him,
and without him nothing was made that has been made.

All: In him was life, and the life was the light of men.
The light shines in the darkness,
and the darkness has not overcome it.

☒ *Congregation stand as able.*

Leader: And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us,

All: *and we have seen his glory,
glory as of the only Son from the Father,
full of grace and truth.
For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.*

Leader: For the law was given through Moses;
grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

All: *No one has ever seen God:
the only God, who is at the Father's side,
he has made him known.*

☒ CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE

Christ, to Thee, with God the Father,
And, O Holy Ghost, to Thee;
Hymn and chant and high thanksgiving,
And unwearied praises be.
Honor, glory, and dominion,
And eternal victory,
Evermore and evermore!

☒ PRAYER OF ADORATION

 **HYMNS OF ADORATION**

"Joy to the World"

Joy to the world! The Lord is come;
Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare Him room,
And heaven and nature sing,
And heaven and nature sing,
And heaven and heaven 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 and wonders of His love.

☒ "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.

READING FROM THE PROPHETS

Isaiah 9:2-7

The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness,
on them has light shone.

³You have multiplied the nation;
you have increased its joy;
they rejoice before you
as with joy at the harvest,
as they are glad when they divide the spoil.

⁴For the yoke of his burden,
and the staff for his shoulder,
the rod of his oppressor,
you have broken as on the day of Midian.

⁵For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult
and every garment rolled in blood
will be burned as fuel for the fire.

⁶For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given;
and the government shall be upon his shoulder,
and his name shall be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

⁷Of the increase of his government and of peace
there will be no end,
on the throne of David and over his kingdom,
to establish it and to uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time forth and forevermore.
The zeal of Yahweh of hosts will do this.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

CONFESSION OF SIN

*Almighty God,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
Maker, Sustainer, and Redeemer of all things,
We acknowledge before you our many sins and sorrows.
We have sinned by thought, word, and deed,
And we have done so against your divine majesty.
Turn us away from our sin and sorrows to you, the God of all grace.
In your mercy, forgive us all our sins;
And grant us new lives in and through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

❏ ASSURANCE OF PARDON

When the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!” So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.

—Galatians 4:4-7

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.

OFFERTORY

For our Christmas Eve offering, we have an opportunity to give to the Ministerial Relief Fund. In accordance with James 1:27, the PCA began the Ministerial Relief Fund to aid in the financial stress of the widows of our pastors and missionaries. If you would like to contribute to this fund, please use the designated envelopes in your pew.

"God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen"

Congregational Hymn | 11:00 service

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)

"Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"

Emilie Sanders and Orchestra | 4:30 and 6:00 p.m.

READING FROM THE GOSPELS

Matthew 1:18-23

Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. ²⁰But 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." ²²All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:

²³"Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,
and they shall call his name Immanuel"
(which means, God with us).

Leader: In the beginning was the Word,
and the Word was with God,
and the Word was God.

All: *And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.*

 **HYMN MEDLEY**

"Angels We Have Heard on High"

Angels we have heard on high,
Sweetly singing o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply
Echo back their joyous strains.

Glo...ria
In excelsis Deo,
Glo...ria
In excelsis Deo.

Come to Bethlehem, and see
Him whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee
Christ the Lord, the newborn King.

Glo...ria
In excelsis Deo,
Glo...ria
In excelsis Deo.

❧ "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear"

It came upon the midnight clear,
That glorious song of old;
From angels bending near the earth
To touch their harps of gold:
"Peace on the earth good will to men,
From heaven's all gracious King."
The world in solemn stillness lay,
To hear the angels sing.

And ye, beneath life's crushing load,
Whose forms are bending low,
Who toil along the climbing way
With painful steps and slow,
Look now! For glad and golden hours
Come swiftly on the wing.
O rest beside the weary road,
And hear the angels sing!

 "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.

 **LIGHTING OF THE CHURCH**

"Silent Night"

Silent night, holy night,
 All is calm, all is bright
 'Round yon virgin, mother and child.
 Holy infant, so tender and mild,
 Sleep in heavenly peace,
 Sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night,
 Shepherds quake at the sight.
 Glories stream from heaven afar,
 Heav'nly hosts sing "Alleluia!"
 Christ the Savior is born!
 Christ the Savior is born!

Silent night, holy night,
 Son of God, love's pure light
 Radiant beams from Thy holy face,
 With the dawn of redeeming grace,
 Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth!
 Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth!

Silent night, holy night,
 Wondrous star lend thy light.
 With the angels let us sing
 "Alleluia" to our King;
 Christ the Savior is born!
 Christ the Savior is born!

 **BENEDICTION**

JOIN US FOR GATHERED WORSHIP

CHRISTMAS DAY
December 25 | 10:30 a.m.

NEW YEAR'S DAY
January 1 | 10:30 a.m.

*There will be no Sunday School, Children's Worship,
or nursery childcare on these days.*

HYMN CREDITS

Find our gathered worship playlist at covpres.com/music-worship.

"Of the Father's Love Begotten"

Words: Marcus Aurelius C. Prudentius, 4th century; tr. John M. Neale (1818-1866).

"Joy to the World"

Words: Isaac Watts (1674-1748). Music: George Frederick Handel, arr. Lowell Mason, 1848.

"Angels From the Realms of Glory"

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

"Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"

Words: Charles Wesley (1707-1788), alt. Music: Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847); adapt. William H. Cummings (1831-1915). Arr. Rick Barnes.

"God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen"

Words and Music: traditional English carol.

"Angels We Have Heard on High"

Words: traditional French carol. Music: traditional French melody; arr. by Edward S. Barnes, 1937.

"It Came Upon the Midnight Clear"

Words: Edmund H. Sears, 1849. Music: Richard Storrs Willis, 1850.

"What Child Is This?"

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

"Silent Night"

Words: Josef Mohr, circa 1816-181. Stanzas 1 & 3 translated from German to English by John F. Young, 1863. Music: Franz X. Gruber, circa 1820.