

The Lord's Day in Worship

COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 22, 2019

“The greatest and most momentous fact which the history of the world records is the fact of Christ’s birth.”

—Charles H. Spurgeon

In the bleak midwinter, frosty wind made moan,
Earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone;
Snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow,
In the bleak midwinter, long ago.

Our God, Heaven cannot hold Him, nor earth sustain;
Heaven and earth shall flee away when He comes to reign.
In the bleak midwinter a stable place sufficed
The Lord God Almighty, Jesus Christ.

What can I give Him, poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;
If I were a Wise Man, I would do my part;
Yet what I can I give Him: give my heart.

—Christina Rossetti

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

Candle of Peace

Todd, Patie, David, Jacob, and Zack Sitton

Luke told of the Angels singing, "Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!"

CALL TO WORSHIP

John Fountain

 *Congregation stand as able.*

☒ HYMN OF PRAISE

“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.
Gloria, in excelsis Deo,
Gloria, in excelsis Deo.

Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
Say what may the tidings be,
Which inspire your heav'nly song?
Gloria, in excelsis Deo,
Gloria, 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.
Gloria, in excelsis Deo,
Gloria, in excelsis Deo.

Gloria, in excelsis Deo,
Gloria, in excelsis Deo.

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

READING FROM THE PROPHETS

Dawson Cooper

Isaiah 40:1-5

Comfort, comfort my people, says your God.

²Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
and cry to her

that her warfare is ended,

that her iniquity is pardoned,

that she has received from the LORD'S hand
double for all her sins.

³A voice cries:

"In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD;
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

⁴Every valley shall be lifted up,

and every mountain and hill be made low;

the uneven ground shall become level,

and the rough places a plain.

⁵And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,

and all flesh shall see it together,

for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

☒ CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE

Gloria, in excelsis Deo,
Gloria, in excelsis Deo.

☒ PRAYER OF ADORATION

Glory be to You, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
For You have come to deliver Your people
from the darkness of our sorrows and sadness
into the light of Your peace and gladness,
wherefore we worship and adore You,
now and into eternity,
through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

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 ADVENT

“Of the Father’s Love Begotten”



1. Of the Fa - ther's love be - got - ten
 2. O that birth for - ev - er bless - ed,
 3. Let the heights of heav'n a - dore Him;
 4. Christ, to Thee, with God the Fa - ther,



ere the worlds be - gan to be,
 when the Vir - gin, blest of grace,
 an - gel hosts, His prais - es sing;
 and, O Ho - ly Ghost to Thee,



He is Al - pha and O - me - ga,
 by the Ho - ly Ghost con - ceiv - ing,
 pow'rs do - min - ions bow be - fore Him;
 hymn and chant and high thanks - giv - ing



He, the Source, the End - ing He,
 bore the Sav - ior of our race;
 and ex - tol our God and King;
 and un - wea - ried prais - es be,



of the things that are, that have been,
 and the babe, the world's Re - deem - er,
 let no tongue on earth be si - lent,
 hon - or, glo - ry, and do - min - ion



and that fu - ture years shall see,
 first re - vealed His sa - cred face,
 ev - 'ry voice in con - cert ring,
 and e - ter - nal vic - to - ry,



ev - er - more and ev - er - more!

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

Music: Plainsong, 13th century.

GIVING OF FIRST FRUITS

“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”

Chancel Choir

Hark! The herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn King!
Peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled!”
Joyful, all ye nations rise,
Join the triumph of the skies,
With th’angelic host proclaim,
“Christ is born in Bethlehem!”
Hark! The herald angels sing!
“Glory to the newborn King!”

Christ by highest heav’n adored,
Christ the everlasting Lord!
Late in time, behold Him come,
Offspring of a virgin’s womb.
Veiled in flesh the God-head see,
Hail th’incarnate Deity,
Pleased with us in flesh to dwell,
Jesus our Emmanuel,
Hark! The herald angels sing!
“Glory to the newborn King!”

Hail the heav’n born Prince of Peace,
Hail the Son of Righteousness!
Light and life to all He brings,
Ris’n with healing in His wings.
Mild He lays His glory by,
Born that man no more may die,
Born to raise the sons of earth,
Born to give them second birth,
Hark! The herald angels sing!
“Glory to the newborn King!”

Words: Charles Wesley, 1739. Music: Felix Mendelssohn, 1840, arr. by Dan Forrest.

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.

Children's Worship Information:

Children ages 3 to 4 may attend Children's Worship for the entire worship service, while kindergarteners through 2nd graders are dismissed during the Passing of the Peace. Following the worship service, parents will find their children attending Children's Worship in the following rooms:

3K ▪ C224/C225 (*available for the entire worship hour*)

4K ▪ C221 (*available for the entire worship hour*)

Kindergarten ▪ C221 (*dismissed during the Passing of the Peace*)*

1st & 2nd Grades ▪ C316 (*dismissed during the Passing of the Peace*)*

**Children on the main level will dismiss through the door leading into the Fellowship Hall, and children in the balcony will dismiss through the door closest to the elevator.*

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Visitors and members, please take a moment to fill out the pew pad with your full name and names of any family members attending with you. You may read all of our ministry announcements on page 19.

THE MORNING PRAYERS

John Smith T

☒ READING FROM THE GOSPELS

Matthew 1:1-17

The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

²Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, ³and Judah the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, and Perez the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Ram, ⁴and Ram the father of Amminadab, and Amminadab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon, ⁵and Salmon the father of Boaz by Rahab, and Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse, ⁶and Jesse the father of David the king.

And David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah, ⁷and Solomon the father of Rehoboam, and Rehoboam the father of Abijah, and Abijah the father of Asaph, ⁸and Asaph the father of Jehoshaphat, and Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, and Joram the father of Uzziah, ⁹and Uzziah the father of Jotham, and Jotham the father of Ahaz, and Ahaz the father of Hezekiah, ¹⁰and Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, and Manasseh the father of Amos, and Amos the father of Josiah, ¹¹and Josiah the father of Jechoniah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon.

¹²And after the deportation to Babylon: Jechoniah was the father of Shealtiel, and Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel, ¹³and Zerubbabel the father of Abiud, and Abiud the father of Eliakim, and Eliakim the father of Azor, ¹⁴and Azor the father of Zadok, and Zadok the father of Achim, and Achim the father of Eliud, ¹⁵and Eliud the father of Eleazar, and Eleazar the father of Matthan, and Matthan the father of Jacob, ¹⁶and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ.

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. An usher will prompt each pew when it is time to come forward to receive the bread and the cup, and then you will return to your seat. If you are not communing but would like to participate, please come forward and cross your hands in front of your chest, and the one serving communion will pray a brief prayer for you or pronounce a blessing over you.

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

Prayer of Confession

David Driskill

*Almighty God,
Who has made wondrous promises to us
and Who is faithful to keep them all,
we confess that we have failed to believe fully all that You have promised,
and have rather, at times, believed the false promises of this world.
We are truly sorry, and we humbly repent.
Please forgive our faltering faith and our lagging hope,
and grant us pure hearts to believe You
and willing spirits to obey You,
that You may be honored in all our thoughts, words, and deeds,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen*

Assurance of Pardon

She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.

—Matthew 1:21

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.

☒ **Nicene Creed**

*I believe in one God, the Father Almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.
And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God,
begotten of the Father before all worlds; God of God, Light of Light,
very God of very God; begotten, not made,
being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made.
Who, for us and for our salvation, came down from heaven,
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary,
and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate;
He suffered and was buried; and the third day He rose again,
according to the Scriptures; and ascended into heaven,
and sits on the right hand of the Father; and He shall come again,
with glory, to judge the quick and the dead;
whose kingdom shall have no end.
And I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of Life;
who proceeds from the Father and the Son;
who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified;
who spoke by the prophets.
And I believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins;
and I look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.*

☒ **Doxology**

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heav'nly host,
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.
Amen.

Words of Institution

from 1 Corinthians 11:23-26, Mark 14:22-25

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.

“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 field 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.

Words: James Montgomery, 1816. Music: REGENT SQUARE (Smart).

"Fullness of Grace"

Rachel Barlotta and Daniel Smith

"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!
Born is the King of Israel!

Words and Music: traditional English carol.

 **PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

 **CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE**

Noel, Noel! Noel, Noel!
Born is the King of Israel!

 **BENEDICTION**

THIS WEEK AT COVENANT: December 23 - 28, 2019

SUNDAY, December 23

- 8:45 a.m. Coffee Fellowship (Commons)
- 9:15 a.m. Sunday School for all ages and stages
(see page 21)
- 10:30 a.m. Gathered Worship (Sanctuary)
Children's Worship | Rising 3k through 2nd grades

TUESDAY, December 24 Church Office closed

- 4:30 p.m. Christmas Eve Candlelight Service (Sanctuary)
nursery childcare provided
- 6:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Candlelight Service (Sanctuary)

WEDNESDAY, December 25 Christmas Day Church Office closed

Should you need pastoral assistance after our regular office hours, please contact our pastor on call at 205-874-3559 (Josh Johnson, December 23 - 29).

MINISTRIES AND SPECIAL EVENTS

Please see our full calendar of Covenant events at covpres.com/calendar.

Christmas Eve Services. On Tuesday we will have our Christmas Eve candlelight services at 4:30 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. (Nursery childcare available during the 4:30 service.)

PCA Ministerial Relief Fund. During our Christmas Eve services we will be collecting an offering for the PCA Ministerial Relief Fund. In accordance with James 1:27, the PCA began the fund to aid in the financial stress of the widows of our pastors and missionaries. Your gift to this fund acknowledges their life of service and provides for them in their time of need. Special envelopes will be provided for this donation.

Financial Stewardship. In November we asked our congregation to make 2020 financial commitments to Covenant's General Fund. If you've 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, bring it by the office, or drop it in the offering plate. Also, it is not too late to contribute to the 2019 General Fund. Our December goal is \$850,000. If you are considering a year-end gift, our offices will be open December 31.

Wednesdays@Covenant. Wednesdays@Covenant kick off January 8! We'll have dinner at 5:30, choir rehearsal at 6:00, and studies at 6:15. KidConnection is 5:30-7:15 on the third floor. This semester we are offering two study options: a women's study of "God of Covenant" by Jen Wilkin and "A Heart & Mind for God: THE-ologies of Christianity" with Josh Johnson. Topics for this study will include "Who am I?", "Who is Jesus?", and "How is One Saved?"

Come to the Table 2020. Ladies, our Come to the Table event is just around the corner! Mark your calendars for January 10, 2020. We will meet at Covenant to hear from one of our local missions partners and then head out to host homes in groups of six to eight to share a meal and work on a missions project together. This is such a fun way to meet women in our church! You can make reservations at covpres.com/come-to-the-table.

Discover Covenant Class. If you would like to consider joining Covenant Presbyterian, our next Discover Covenant Class is January 24-26, with sessions Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. Nursery childcare will be provided for each session. For more information and to register, please email Victoria Williams at vwilliams@covpres.com.

Lighthouse Family Retreat. Lead your family on mission with Lighthouse Family Retreat March 22-28 (Spring Break)! Childhood cancer is hard, and Lighthouse Family Retreat seeks to lighten that burden by providing a week-long beach retreat in the Destin area for families living with cancer. This trip is for individuals and families (with children age 4+) and will be a transformational experience for the parents and children you serve, as well as for you and your own family. Sign up by January 28. Contact Kate and Clay Wheeler to learn more, katewheeler24@gmail.com or 205-862-2769.



CELEBRATE THE SEASON AT COVENANT

SUNDAY MORNINGS IN ADVENT

December 22

Gathered Worship ▪ 10:30 a.m.

CHRISTMAS EVE

Candlelight Service ▪ 4:30 p.m. & 6:00 p.m.

CHRISTMASTIDE SUNDAY

December 29

Gathered Worship ▪ 10:30 a.m.

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL COMMUNITIES

9:15 a.m.

Maps and directional signs are located around the church.

COLLEGE COMMONS	<i>College students*</i>
COMMUNITY E305	<i>All ages and life stages</i>
CORNERSTONE S104	<i>30s and 40s</i>
CROSSPOINTE S100	<i>Young families; 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>
THRESHOLD DINING ROOM	<i>Singles and young marrieds; 20s and 30s</i>
UPPER ROOM S101	<i>60s and 70s</i>
YOUTH YOUTH AREA	<i>Students grades 7-12</i>

**College students gather in Commons Area at 12:00 for class and lunch.*

STAFF CONTACT INFORMATION

EXECUTIVE STAFF

Marty Crawford, Assistant Pastor (Church Administrator, Senior Adults, Missions)	mcrawford@covpres.com
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RULING ELDERS

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

2021

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

DEACONS

2019

Jim Bennett
Gary Gorham
Keith Harrelson
Jeff Hayes
Steve Killgore
Steve Pfitzer
Brent Powell
Matt Searson
John Shank
Todd Sitton
William Slappey
Billy Tapscott
Darrell Tucker

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

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 2019.

DECEMBER READING PLAN

	EZEKIEL	2 PETER
1	□ 43-46	□ 2-3
		1 JOHN
2	□ 47-48	□ 1
	DANIEL	
3	□ 1-2	□ 2
4	□ 3-4	□ 3
5	□ 5-6	□ 4
6	□ 7-8	□ 5
7/8	□ 9-12	□ 2 John - 3 John
	HOSEA	JUDE
9	□ 1-4	□ Jude
		REVELATION
10	□ 5-8	□ 1
11	□ 9-11	□ 2
12	□ 12-14	□ 3
13	□ Joel	□ 4
	AMOS	
14/15	□ 1-6	□ 5-6
16	□ 7-9	□ 7
17	□ Obadiah	□ 8
18	□ Jonah	□ 9
	MICAH	
19	□ 1-3	□ 10
20	□ 4-5	□ 11
21/22	□ 6-Nahum 3	□ 12-13
23	□ Habakkuk	□ 14
24	□ Zephaniah	□ 15
25	□ Haggai	□ 16
	ZECHARIAH	
26	□ 1-3	□ 17
27	□ 4-6	□ 18
28/29	□ 7-12	□ 19-20
30	□ 13-14	□ 21
31	□ Malachi	□ 22