The Lord's Day in Worship

COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

"If we want to offer praise or engage in prayer, how are we to do so? Use Bible words...simply recognize that a majority of the praise and prayer we will need has already been written in the Old Testament and especially in the Psalms."

—Dale Ralph Davis

"It is a world of magic and mystery, of deep darkness and flickering starlight. It is a world where terrible things happen and wonderful things too. It is a world where goodness is pitted against evil, love against hate, order against chaos...That is the fairy tale of the Gospel with, of course, the one crucial difference from all other fairy tales, which is that the claim made for it is that it is true, that it not only happened once upon a time but has kept on happening ever since and is happening still."

-Frederick Buechner

2 LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE: JOY

8:00 a.m. | The Alexanders 10:30 a.m. | The O'Connors

Luke recounted the story, "And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them."

—Luke 2:20

EXECUTE CALL TO WORSHIP

RESPONSIVE READING

Psalm 34:1-5

Leader: I will bless the LORD at all times; his praise shall continually be in my mouth.

All: My soul makes its boast in the LORD; let the humble hear and be glad.

Leader: Oh, magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together!

All: I sought the LORD, and he answered me and delivered me from all my fears.

Leader: Those who look to him are radiant.

All: Their faces shall never be ashamed.

PRAYER 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 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.

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

READING FROM THE PROPHETS

1 Samuel 2:1-10

And Hannah prayed and said,

"My heart exults in the LORD; my horn is exalted in the LORD. My mouth derides my enemies, because I rejoice in your salvation.

2"There is none holy like the LORD: for there is none besides you; there is no rock like our God.
3Talk no more so very proudly, let not arrogance come from your mouth; for the LORD is a God of knowledge,

⁴The bows of the mighty are broken, but the feeble bind on strength.

and by him actions are weighed.

⁵Those who were full have hired themselves out for bread, but those who were hungry have ceased to hunger.

The barren has borne seven, but she who has many children is forlorn.

⁶The LORD kills and brings to life; he brings down to Sheol and raises up.

⁷The LORD makes poor and makes rich; he brings low and he exalts.

⁸He raises up the poor from the dust; he lifts the needy from the ash heap to make them sit with princes and inherit a seat of honor.

For the pillars of the earth are the LORD'S, and on them he has set the world.

9"He will guard the feet of his faithful ones, but the wicked shall be cut off in darkness, for not by might shall a man prevail.
10 The adversaries of the LORD shall be broken to pieces; against them he will thunder in heaven.
The LORD will judge the ends of the earth; he will give strength to his king and exalt the horn of his anointed."

This is the Word of the Lord. *Thanks be to God.*

Leader:

But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; ²⁸God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, ²⁹so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. ³⁰And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, ³¹so that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."

-1 Corinthians 1:27-31

O come Thou Wisdom from on high And order all things, far and nigh. To us the path of knowledge show, and cause us in her ways to go Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, O come Thou Lord of might, Who to Thy tribes, on Sinai's height, In ancient times didst give the law, In cloud and majesty and awe; Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

Leader:

There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit.

—Isaiah 11:1

O come, Thou Rod of Jesse, free
Thine own from Satan's tyranny.
From depths of hell Thy people save,
And give them vic'try o'er the grave.
Rejoice! Rejoice!
Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, Thou Key of David, come
And open wide our heav'nly home.
Make safe the way that leads on high,
And close the path to misery.
Rejoice! Rejoice!
Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

Leader:

But for you who fear my name, the sun of righteousness shall rise with healing in its wings. You shall go out leaping like calves from the stall.

-Malachi 4:2

O come Thou Dayspring, come and cheer Our spirits by Thine advent here; Disperse the gloomy clouds of night, And death's dark shadows put to flight; Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, Desire of Nations bind
In one the hearts of all mankind.
Bid, Thou, our sad divisions cease,
And be Thyself our King of peace.
Rejoice! Rejoice!
Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, O come Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel;
That mourns in lonely exile here,
Until the Son of God appear;
Rejoice! Rejoice!
Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

Words: Latin Hymn, 9th century, Psalteriolum Cantionum Catholicarum, 1710; translated by John M. Neale. Music: adapted from Plainsong by Thomas Helmore.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,

We acknowledge and confess before you;

Our sinful nature quick to do evil and slow to do good;

All our shortcomings and offenses are before you at all times.

You alone know how often we have sinned;

In wandering from your ways;

In wasting your gifts;

In forgetting your love.

O Lord, have mercy upon us;

For in our sin we have displeased you.

Teach us to hate our errors;

Cleanse us from our secret faults;

And forgive our sins;

For the sake of your dear Son.

And, most holy and loving Father,

Cause us to live in your light and walk in your ways;

In keeping with the commandments of Jesus Christ our Lord,

According to the promised grace of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

MASSURANCE OF PARDON

Comfort, comfort my people, says your God.
Speak 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.

-Isaiah 40:1-2

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.

GIVING OF FIRST FRUITS

8:00 a.m.

"Of the Father's Love Begotten" Congregational Hymn



Words: Marcus Aurelius C. Prudentius, 4th century; tr. John M. Neale (1818-1866). Music: Plainsong, 13th century.

GIVING OF FIRST FRUITS

10:30 a.m.

"All Praise to Thee"

Chancel Choir

All praise to Thee, eternal God, Who, clothed in garb of flesh and blood, Dost take a manger for Thy throne, While worlds on worlds are Thine alone. Alleluia!

Thou comest in the darksome night
To make us children of the light,
To make us in the realms divine,
Like Thine own angels, round Thee shine.
Alleluia!

A little Child, Thou art our Guest That weary ones in Thee may rest; Forlorn and lowly is Thy birth That we may rise to heav'n from earth. Alleluia!

Amen.

Words: Gelobet seist du, Jesu Christ, German, st. 1370, Martin Luther, 1524, translation unknown. Music: Elaine Hagenberg.

12 M PASSING OF THE PEACE

The peace of the LORD be with you.

And also with you.

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

See page 21 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 | 10:30 a.m. Children ages 3 years old (by 9/1/2021) through Kindergarten 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 Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall, prior to communion, 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

Luke 1:39-56

In those days Mary arose and went with haste into the hill country, to a town in Judah, ⁴⁰ and she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹ And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, ⁴² and she exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! ⁴³ And why is this granted to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? ⁴⁴ For behold, when the sound of your greeting came to my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. ⁴⁵ And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord."

⁴⁶And Mary said,

"My soul magnifies the Lord,

⁴⁷and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

⁴⁸ for he has looked on the humble estate of his servant.

For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed;

⁴⁹ for he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name.

 ${}^{50}\mbox{And}$ his mercy is for those who fear him

from generation to generation.

⁵¹He has shown strength with his arm;

he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts;

 $^{52}\mbox{he}$ has brought down the mighty from their thrones

and exalted those of humble estate;

⁵³he has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty.

⁵⁴He has helped his servant Israel,

in remembrance of his mercy,

55 as he spoke to our fathers,

to Abraham and to his offspring forever."

 56 And Mary remained with her about three months and returned to her home.

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.

THIRD
SUNDAY
OF ADVENT
DECEMBER
12, 2021
8:00 & 10:30 AM
≥

MESSAGE		
John Fountain		
joint i ountuin		

LITURGY OF THE TABLE

Congregation, please read aloud the portions that are italicized.

Words of Institution

from Matthew 26:26-29; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

Confession of Faith: The 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 Spirit,

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 Spirit; the holy catholic Church;

the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins;

the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

Prayer of Humble Access

We come to your Table, Lord Jesus,
not trusting in our own righteousness, but in your rich mercies.
We are not worthy, O Great King, to gather up the crumbs under your Table,
yet you are the King of mercy.
Grant us therefore, gracious Lord,
in this breaking of bread, a rich participation in your body,
and in this cup, a stronger grasp of your grace,
that by your Spirit, we may commune with you
and you with 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.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil,
for Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever, Amen.

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 partaking of these elements but would like to come forward with your fellow worshipers, please 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.

HYMNS FOR THE EUCHARIST

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

"Come Light Our Hearts"













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"Is He Worthy?"

Do you feel the world is broken? (We do)
Do you feel the shadows deepen? (We do)
But do you know that all the dark won't stop the light from getting through? (We do)

Do you wish that you could see it all made new? (We do)

Is all creation groaning? (It is)
Is a new creation coming? (It is)
Is the glory of the Lord to be the light within our midst? (It is)
Is it good that we remind ourselves of this? (It is)

Chorus:

Is anyone worthy? Is anyone whole?
Is anyone able to break the seal and open the scroll?
The Lion of Judah who conquered the grave!
He is David's root and the Lamb who died to ransom the slave!

Is He worthy? Is He worthy? Of all blessing and honor and glory, Is He worthy of this? He is!

Does the Father truly love us? (He does)

Does the Spirit move among us? (He does)

And does Jesus, our Messiah hold forever those He loves? (He does)

Does our God intend to dwell again with us? (He does)

(Chorus)

From every people and tribe, Every nation and tongue, He has made us a kingdom and priests to God To reign with the Son.

Is He worthy? Is He worthy?
Of all blessing and honor and glory,
Is He worthy? Is He worthy?
Is He worthy of this? He is!
Is He worthy? Is He worthy? He is! He is!

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SUNDAY, December 12

8:00 a.m. Gathered Worship

9:15 a.m. Sunday School for all ages (see page 22)

10:30 a.m. Gathered Worship

MONDAY, December 13

8:15 a.m. Women's Prayer Time (Parlor)

9:00 a.m. Registration opens for Women's Retreat 2022

covpres.com/womens-retreat

TUESDAY, December 14

6:00 p.m. Lovelady Dinner & Concert

covpres.com/lovelady

WEDNESDAY, December 15

10:00 a.m. Church-wide Prayer Time (S100)

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Lovelady Christmas Concert. The Lovelady Christmas Concert is December 14, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.! That evening, we host the women and children from The Lovelady Center for a dinner, a Christmas concert, and a Christmas Vacation Bible School. We serve around 300 women and 75 children, and there are many ways to get involved: help set up, help in the kitchen, volunteer with VBS, greet and host women throughout the event, serve dinner, and clean up. Visit covpres.com/lovelady to see sign ups and times. You may also make donations to help fund the event. You can mail in your donation or place it in the offering plate (marked for Lovelady), or you can give online at covpres.com/give (type "Lovelady" in the "Other" field).

Christmas Eve Services. We will have three Christmas Eve services on December 24 at 12:00 p.m., 4:30 p.m., and 6:00 p.m. Nursery childcare will be available for the 12:00 and 4:30 services by reservation; please email nursery@covpres.com with the names and ages of your children to make your reservations.

December 26 & January 2. On December 26 and January 2, we will have one gathered worship service at 10:30 a.m. There will be no Sunday School on those days.

Financial Stewardship 2022. If you have not yet done so, please prayerfully consider a financial commitment to Covenant for 2022. Commitment cards are available in the Sanctuary foyer and the church office.

Women's Retreat 2022. Ladies, mark your calendars! February 4-5, 2022, we will gather at the Capitol Hill Marriott in Prattville, AL, for a women's retreat. Join us Friday night at 6:30 for dinner, fun, and sharing. Saturday morning we will start at 9:00 and end our retreat after dinner at 6:30. Registration opens December 13 at 9:00 a.m. and will close January 4. The cost is \$130, plus hotel room (up to four women per room). Visit covpres.com/womens-retreat for all of the details and to register.

Church-wide Memory Passage. Our memory passage from Advent through Epiphany is Galatians 4:4-7.

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL COMMUNITIES

9:15 a.m. Directional signs are located around the church.

LIVING STONES | E303 late 40s to late 50s

KINGDOM BUILDERS | E201 late 40s to late 60s

(Pastor: Dan Edwards)

CORNERSTONE | S100late 30s to late 40sFOUNDATIONS | DINING ROOMearly 40s to early 50sLIGHTHOUSE | E304late 30s to early 50s

(Pastor: David Driskill)

CROSSPOINTE | Fellowship Hall mid 30s to early 40s

THRESHOLD | E301 Singles, college students, and

young marrieds; 20s and 30s

(Pastor: Josh Johnson)

COMMUNITY | E305 All ages and life stages

OPEN DOORS & late 6os and above

UPPER ROOM | S101 (Pastor: Marty Crawford)

YOUTH | YOUTH AREA Students grades 7-12

(Pastor: John Fountain)

STAFF CONTACT INFORMATION

EXECUTIVE STAFF

Marty Crawford, Assistant Pastor (Church Administrator, Senior Adults, Missions)

David Driskill, Assistant Pastor (Shepherding, Middle Adults)
John Fountain, Assistant Pastor (Students and Families)
Robby Holt, Senior Pastor

Ingram Link, Director of Women's Ministries

mcrawford@covpres.com

ddriskill@covpres.com jfountain@covpres.com rholt@covpres.com ilink@covpres.com

MINISTRY STAFF

Rick Barnes, Director of Music

Jami Bennett, Director of MDO and Nursery Ministries

Rachel Davis, Assistant Director of Girls' Ministries

Dan Edwards, Assistant Pastor (Middle Adults)

Katie Flores, Assistant Director of Children's Ministries,

Director of Enfold Disability Ministry
Bill Hay, Pastor Emeritus
Josh Johnson, Assistant Pastor
(Young Adults, Adult Discipleship, Missions)
Scott Leveille, Teacher in Residence (Curriculum)

Sara Litten, Director of Girls' Ministries
Andrew Luchenbill, Assistant Director of Guys' Ministries
Daniel Sluis, Director of Guys' Ministries

Brooke Stewart, Director of Covenant Day School Laura Tucker, Director of Children's Ministries rbarnes@covpres.com jbennett@covpres.com shields.rachel.c@gmail.com dedwards@covpres.com

kflores@covpres.com bhay@covpres.com jjohnson@covpres.com

scottleveille@gmail.com slitten@covpres.com aluchenbill@covpres.com dsluis@covpres.com bstewart@covpres.com ltucker@covpres.com

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Katie Caldwell, Director of Design and Production
Meg Cotney, Director of Finance
Tyler Cuidon, Director of Technical Services
Anne Hall, Assistant Director of Nursery Ministries
Phyllis Hamm, Ministry Assistant (Missions, Member Care)
Jeff Herbert, Director of Facilities
Deidre Lackey, Ministry Assistant (Students and Families)
Stacey Loyless, Director of Communications and Media
Jocelyn Martin, Ministry Assistant (Children's)
Casey O'Dell, Ministry Assistant (Children's Choir, Worship)
Kim Oliver, Assistant to the Senior Pastor
Traci Parker, Director of Food Services
Justin Richardson, Assistant to the Church Administrator
Karan Stuart, Receptionist
Victoria Williams, Ministry Assistant (Women, Shepherding)

kcaldwell@covpres.com mcotney@covpres.com tcuidon@covpres.com nursery@covpres.com phamm@covpres.com jherbert@covpres.com dlackey@covpres.com sloyless@covpres.com jmartin@covpres.com caseys.odell@gmail.com koliver@covpres.com tparker@covpres.com jrichardson@covpres.com vwilliams@covpres.com

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 2021.

DECEMBER READING PLAN

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