

The Lord's Day in Worship

COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



“At its simplest a parable is a metaphor or simile drawn from nature or common life, arresting the hearer by its vividness or strangeness, and leaving the mind in sufficient doubt about its precise application to tease it into active thought.”

—C. H. Dodd

“Almighty God, and most merciful Father, we humbly submit ourselves, and fall down before your Majesty, asking you from the bottom of our hearts, that this seed of your Word now sown among us, may take such deep root, that neither the burning heat of persecution cause it to wither, nor the thorny cares of this life choke it. But that, as seed sown in good ground, it may bring forth thirty, sixty, or a hundredfold, as your heavenly wisdom has appointed. Amen.”

—Middleburg Liturgy

“What does Satan care if our immediate enthusiasms and superficial fervors have to do with good or evil, with truth or lies, as long as they are immediate and superficial? His point is to keep us living at the surface of ourselves, to prevent our ever coming to term with the deeper questions and yearnings within us that reveal the presence of God as beckoning Father at the center of our souls. All the better if our passing enthusiasms are religious! For Satan's greatest triumph is when he can get us to flirt with the divine and twiddle with Christ's sacred mysteries.”

—Erasmus Leiva-Merikakis

☒ CALL TO WORSHIP

8:00 service | Rev. Dan Edwards

10:30 service | Rev. John Fountain

☒ RESPONSIVE READING

from Isaiah 55:1-13

Leader: "Come, everyone who thirsts,
 come to the waters;
 and he who has no money,
 come, buy and eat!
 Come, buy wine and milk
 without money and without price.
 Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread,
 and your labor for that which does not satisfy?
 Listen diligently to me, and eat what is good,
 and delight yourselves in rich food.
 Incline your ear, and come to me;
 hear, that your soul may live;
 and I will make with you an everlasting covenant,
 my steadfast, sure love for David.

All: *"Seek the LORD while he may be found;
 call upon him while he is near;
 let the wicked forsake his way,
 and the unrighteous man his thoughts;
 let him return to the LORD, that he may have compassion on him,
 and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.
 For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
 neither are your ways my ways, declares the LORD.
 For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
 so are my ways higher than your ways
 and my thoughts than your thoughts.*

Leader: "For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven
and do not return there but water the earth,
making it bring forth and sprout,
giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater,
so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth;
it shall not return to me empty,
but it shall accomplish that which I purpose,
and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.
For you shall go out in joy
and be led forth in peace;
the mountains and the hills before you
shall break forth into singing,
and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.

All: *"Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress;
instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle;
and it shall make a name for the LORD,
an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off."*

PRAYER OF ADORATION


HYMN OF ADORATION
"Behold Our God"


1. Who has held the o - ceans in His hands?
 2. Who has giv - en coun - sel to the Lord?
 3. Who has felt the nails up - on His hand,



Who has num - bered ev - 'ry grain of sand?
 Who can ques - tion an - y of His words?
 bear - ing all the guilt of sin - ful man?



Kings and na - tions trem - ble at His voice.
 Who can teach the One who knows all things?
 God e - ter - nal, hum - bled to the grave,



All cre - a - tion ris - es to re - joice.
 Who can fath - om all His won - drous deeds?
 Je - sus, Sav - ior, ris - en now to reign!



Be - hold our God, seat - ed on His throne. Come let us a -



dore Him. Be - hold our King, noth - ing can com



pare, come, let us a - dore _____ Him.

READING FROM THE PROPHETS

Isaiah 6:8-13

And I heard the voice of Yahweh saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" Then I said, "Here I am! Send me." ⁹And he said, "Go, and say to this people:

"Keep on hearing, but do not understand;
keep on seeing, but do not perceive.'

¹⁰Make the heart of this people dull,
and their ears heavy,
and blind their eyes;

lest they see with their eyes,
and hear with their ears,
and understand with their hearts,
and turn and be healed."

¹¹Then I said, "How long, O LORD?"

And he said:

"Until cities lie waste
without inhabitant,
and houses without people,
and the land is a desolate waste,

¹²and Yahweh removes people far away,
and the forsaken places are many in the midst of the land.

¹³And though a tenth remain in it,
it will be burned again,
like a terebinth or an oak,
whose stump remains
when it is felled."

The holy seed is its stump.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Leader: Let us confess our sins together.

*Most Merciful God,
We confess that we have sinned against you
in thought, word, and deed,
by what we have done, and by what we have left undone.
We have not loved you with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.
Grant us a holy grief that honors you.
Move us to genuine repentance for your Name's sake.
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us;
that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways,
to the glory of your Name.*

Leader: Hear us now, as we silently confess our sins.

Silent 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.
He will again have compassion on us;
He will tread our iniquities underfoot.
He will cast all our sins
into the depths of the sea.

—Micah 7:18-19

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.

 **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.*

 **DOXOLOGY**

Praise God from Whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.
Amen.

GIVING OF FIRST FRUITS

"O Great God"

Congregational Hymn



1.O great God of high - est heav'n, oc - cu -
 2.I was blind - ed by my sin, had no
 3.Help me now to live a life that's de -



py my low - ly heart. Own it all and reign su -
 ears to hear Your voice, did not know Your love with
 pend-ent on Your grace. Keep my heart and guard my



preme, con - quer ev - 'ry re - bel pow'r.
 in, had no taste for heav - en's joys.
 soul from the e - vils that I face.



Let no vice or sin re - main that re -
 Then Your Spir - it gave me life, o - pened
 You are wor - thy to be praised with my



sists your ho - ly war. You have loved and pur-chased
 up Your Word to me through the Gos - pel of Your
 ev - 'ry thought and deed; O great God of high - est



me; make me Yours for - ev - er - more.
 Son, gave me end - less hope and peace.
 heav'n, glo - ri - fy Your Name through me.

☒ PASSING OF THE PEACE

The peace of the LORD be with you.

And also with you.

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

See page 19 for all of our Ministry Announcements. Please fill out the attendance pad in your pew and pass it down.

Children's Worship | 8:00 a.m. & 10:30 a.m. Children in 3K (3 years old before 9/1/22) through Kindergarten are invited to Children's Worship during the Passing of the Peace. Children leave from the foyer of the Sanctuary and walk to C221 with staff and volunteers. Children will return to join their families for Communion, so please help your child find you by watching for him or her.

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

Mark 4:1-34

Again he began to teach beside the sea. And a very large crowd gathered about him, so that he got into a boat and sat in it on the sea, and the whole crowd was beside the sea on the land. ²And he was teaching them many things in parables, and in his teaching he said to them: ³“Listen! Behold, a sower went out to sow. ⁴And as he sowed, some seed fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured it. ⁵Other seed fell on rocky ground, where it did not have much soil, and immediately it sprang up, since it had no depth of soil. ⁶And when the sun rose, it was scorched, and since it had no root, it withered away. ⁷Other seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no grain. ⁸And other seeds fell into good soil and produced grain, growing up and increasing and yielding thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold.” ⁹And he said, “He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”

¹⁰And when he was alone, those around him with the twelve asked him about the parables. ¹¹And he said to them, “To you has been given the secret of the kingdom of God, but for those outside everything is in parables, ¹²so that

“they may indeed see but not perceive,
and may indeed hear but not understand,
lest they should turn and be forgiven.”

¹³And he said to them, “Do you not understand this parable? How then will you understand all the parables? ¹⁴The sower sows the word. ¹⁵And these are the ones along the path, where the word is sown: when they hear, Satan immediately comes and takes away the word that is sown in them. ¹⁶And these are the ones sown on rocky ground: the ones who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with joy. ¹⁷And they have no root in themselves, but endure for a while; then, when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately they fall away. ¹⁸And others are the ones sown among thorns. They are those who hear the word, ¹⁹but the cares of the world and the

deceitfulness of riches and the desires for other things enter in and choke the word, and it proves unfruitful. ²⁰But those that were sown on the good soil are the ones who hear the word and accept it and bear fruit, thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold.”

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.

²¹And he said to them, “Is a lamp brought in to be put under a basket, or under a bed, and not on a stand? ²²For nothing is hidden except to be made manifest; nor is anything secret except to come to light.

²³If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear.” ²⁴And he said to them, “Pay attention to what you hear: with the measure you use, it will be measured to you, and still more will be added to you. ²⁵For to the one who has, more will be given, and from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away.”

²⁶And he said, “The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground. ²⁷He sleeps and rises night and day, and the seed sprouts and grows; he knows not how. ²⁸The earth produces by itself, first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. ²⁹But when the grain is ripe, at once he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come.”

³⁰And he said, “With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable shall we use for it? ³¹It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when sown on the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth, ³²yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes larger than all the garden plants and puts out large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade.”

³³With many such parables he spoke the word to them, as they were able to hear it. ³⁴He did not speak to them without a parable, but privately to his own disciples he explained everything.

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

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.

"Rock of Ages"

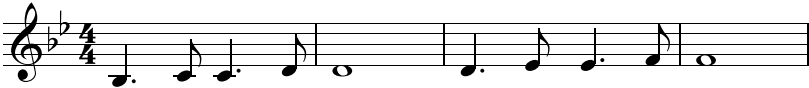
Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee;
Let the water and the blood,
From Thy riven side which flowed
Be of sin the double cure,
Cleanse me from its guilt and power.

Not the labors of my hands
Can fulfill thy law's demands;
Could my zeal no respite know,
Could my tears forever flow,
All for sin could not atone;
Thou must save, and thou alone.

Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to thy cross I cling;
Naked, come to thee for dress;
Helpless, look to thee for grace;
Foul, I to the Fountain fly;
Wash me, Savior, or I die.

While I draw this fleeting breath,
When mine eyelids close in death,
When I soar to worlds unknown,
See thee on thy judgment throne,
Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee.

"The Power of the Cross"



1.Oh, to see the dawn of the dark - est day:
2.Oh, to see the pain writ - ten on Your face,
3.Now the day - light flees, now the ground be - neath
4.Oh, to see my name writ - ten in the wounds,



Christ on the road to Cal - va - ry.
bear - ing the awe - some weight of sin;
quakes as its Mak - er bows His head.
for through Your suf - fring I am free.



Tried by sin - ful men, torn and beat - en, then
ev - 'ry bit - ter thought, ev - 'ry ev - il deed
Cur - tain torn in two, dead are raised to life;
Death is crushed to death, life is mine to live,



nailed to a cross of wood.
crown - ing Your blood - stained brow.
"Fin - ished!" the vic - t'ry cry.
won through Your self - less love.

Chorus:



This the pow'r_____ of the cross: Christ be - came_____
(*after 4th verse) Son of God,_____



sin for us, took the blame,_____ bore the wrath;
slain for us. What a love!_____ What a cost!



we stand for - giv - en at the cross.
we stand for - giv - en at the cross.

THIS WEEK AT COVENANT: October 9 - 15, 2022

SUNDAY, October 9

8:00 a.m.	Gathered Worship
9:15 a.m.	Sunday School for all ages (see page 26)
10:30 a.m.	Gathered Worship
4:00 p.m.	6th Grade Small Groups (Youth Rooms)
5:00 p.m.	4th/5th Grade Faith & Fun (3rd floor)
5:00 p.m.	Jr. & Sr. High Small Groups (Youth Rooms)
5:00 p.m.	Women's Study: Revelation

MONDAY, October 10

8:15 a.m.	Women's Prayer Time (Parlor)
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TUESDAY, October 11

6:15 a.m.	Men's Breakfast (Fellowship Hall)
10:00 a.m.	Women's Study: Divine Design Discipleship (100)
11:00 a.m.	Women's Study: Revelation (Sanctuary)

WEDNESDAY, October 12

10:00 - 11:00 a.m.	Church-wide Prayer Time (104)
5:15 - 7:15 p.m.	Wednesdays@Covenant
5:15 p.m.	Dinner (Fellowship Hall)
6:15 p.m.	<i>Adult Options:</i>
	- Choir (Sanctuary)
	- Because You Asked (201)
	- Women's Study: Revelation (303, 304, 305)
	- Grief Support Group (300)
	<i>KidConnection</i> (3k - 5th grades, 3rd floor)
	<i>Youth Activities</i> (6th - 12th grades; Youth Rooms)

FRIDAY, October 14 - SUNDAY, October 16

Discover Covenant Class

Should you need pastoral assistance after our regular office hours, please contact our pastor on call at 205-874-3559 (Marty Crawford, October 10 - 16).

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Nominating Committee Recommendations. Today is the last day to submit your recommendations for our 2023 Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee is elected by the congregation to serve a one-year term and is responsible for nominating church officers for election by the congregation. Please complete the form at the back of this worship guide and place it in the basket provided in the Sanctuary foyer or email your recommendations to Victoria Williams at vwilliams@covpres.com.

Men's Monthly Breakfast. Our next Men's Breakfast is Tuesday, October 11, at 6:15 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. These monthly breakfasts are for men of all ages to foster healthy community across the generations. Invite your friends, neighbors, and co-workers!

Hymn Sing. Our Fall Hymn Sing is Sunday, October 23 at 5:00 p.m. in the parking lot outside the Sanctuary. We will have a church-wide BBQ dinner immediately following in the Youth parking lot (\$5 per person/\$20 family max; pay online at covpres.com). Everyone is invited—you don't want to miss this night of worship and fellowship!

Local Missions Sunday. Mark your calendars for Local Missions Sunday: Serving Our City on November 6! We will host our local missions partners and learn how we can pray for them and serve alongside them in Birmingham. Sunday's schedule:

9:15 a.m. – Ministry Partners share in Sunday Schools

10:30 a.m. – Ministry Partners introduced in Gathered Worship

12:00 p.m. – Covenant members host missionaries for lunch

5:00 p.m. – Church-wide Dinner (Fellowship Hall)

5:30 - 7:00 p.m. – Local Missions Program

Visit covpres.com/missions-festival for a list of our local missions partners and to sign up to host a missionary for lunch.

Women's Ministry: Feast Not Famine. Ladies, mark your calendars for Feast Not Famine Wednesday, November 16! The holiday market will be open from 5:00 - 6:30 p.m. followed by dinner, special music, and a guest speaker. More information coming soon!

Church-wide Memory Verse. Our memory verse for fall (August 14 - November 26) is Psalm 96:1-3.

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL COMMUNITIES

9:15 a.m.

Directional signs are located around the church.

THRESHOLD 304	<i>Singles, college students, and young marrieds; 20s and 30s</i>
KING'S TABLE 301	<i>30s</i> (Pastor: Josh Johnson)
CROSSPOINTE 100	<i>mid 30s to mid 40s</i>
CORNERSTONE 104	<i>late 30s to late 40s</i> (Pastor: John Fountain)
LIGHTHOUSE 305	<i>late 30s to early 50s</i> (Pastor: David Driskill)
FOUNDATIONS DINING ROOM	<i>early 40s to early 50s</i>
LIVING STONES 303	<i>late 40s to late 50s</i> (Pastor: Henry Morris)
KINGDOM BUILDERS 201	<i>late 40s to late 60s</i> (Pastor: Dan Edwards)
COMMUNITY 300	<i>All ages and life stages</i>
OPEN DOORS & UPPER ROOM 101	<i>late 60s and above</i> (Pastor: Marty Crawford)
YOUTH YOUTH AREA	<i>Students grades 7-12</i> (Pastor: John Fountain)

STAFF CONTACT INFORMATION

EXECUTIVE STAFF

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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 2022.

OCTOBER READING PLAN

	ISAIAH
1/2	<input type="checkbox"/> 24-27
3	<input type="checkbox"/> 28-30
4	<input type="checkbox"/> 31-32
5	<input type="checkbox"/> 33-34
6	<input type="checkbox"/> 35-37
7	<input type="checkbox"/> 38-40
8/9	<input type="checkbox"/> 41-46
10	<input type="checkbox"/> 47-48
11	<input type="checkbox"/> 49-50
12	<input type="checkbox"/> 51-53
13	<input type="checkbox"/> 54-55
14	<input type="checkbox"/> 56-58
15/16	<input type="checkbox"/> 59-63
17	<input type="checkbox"/> 64-66
	JEREMIAH
18	<input type="checkbox"/> 1-3
19	<input type="checkbox"/> 4-5
20	<input type="checkbox"/> 6-7
21	<input type="checkbox"/> 8-9
22/23	<input type="checkbox"/> 10-13
24	<input type="checkbox"/> 14-15
25	<input type="checkbox"/> 16-17
26	<input type="checkbox"/> 18-20
27	<input type="checkbox"/> 21-23
28	<input type="checkbox"/> 24-26
29/30	<input type="checkbox"/> 27-32
31	<input type="checkbox"/> 33-34

EPHESIANS

6-Philippians 1

PHILIPPIANS

2

3

4

COLOSSIANS

1:1-2:5

2:6-3:17

3:18-1 Thessalonians 1:10

1 THESSALONIANS

2:1-12

2:13-3:5

3:6-13

4

5

2 THESSALONIANS

1-2

3

1 TIMOTHY

1

2

3

4

5:1-6:2a

6:2b-2 Timothy 1:18

2 TIMOTHY

2

3

4

TITUS

1

2-3

Philemon

SERMON RESOURCES

Our pastors are using the following resources as they study and prepare for their sermons.

A Theology of Mark, Hans F. Bayer

Let's Study Mark, Sinclair B. Ferguson

The Gospel of Mark, R. T. France

The NIV Application Commentary: Mark, David E. Garland

Handbook on the Gospels, Benjamin Gladd

Mark (A Biblical-Theological Guide to the New Testament - The Gospel Realized),
Benjamin Gladd

Loosing the Lion, Leroy A. Huizenga

King's Cross, Timothy Keller

The Gospel of Mark, William L. Lane

Tyndale New Testament Commentaries: Mark, Eckhard J. Schnabel

Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament: Mark, Mark L. Strauss

HYMN CREDITS

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

"Behold Our God"

Words and Music: CCLI Song # 5937510. Jonathan Baird, Meghan Baird, Ryan Baird, Stephen Altrogge. © 2011 Sovereign Grace Praise. CCLI License # 147209.

"Doxology"

Words: Thomas Ken, 1674. Music: OLD HUNDREDTH, attr. to Louis Bourgeois (1551).

"O Great God"

Words and Music: CCLI Song #4804015. Bob Kauflin. © 2006 Sovereign Grace Praise (Admin. by Capitol CMG Publishing (IMI)).

"Rock of Ages"

Words: Augustus M. Toplady, 1776; alt. by Thomas Cotterill, 1815.

Music: TOPLADY; Thomas Hastings, 1830.

"The Power Of The Cross"

Words and Music: CCLI Song # 4490766. Keith Getty, Stuart Townend.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

FOR THE 2023 NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Nominating Committee is elected by the congregation to serve a one-year term and is responsible for nominating church officers for election by the congregation. The Nominating Committee is made up of 14 members (4 elders, 3 deacons, 7 at-large congregants) and pastoral staff.

Please submit your recommendations for male and female lay persons by October 9 by either emailing Victoria Williams at vwilliams@covpres.com or by filling out this form and placing it in the basket provided in the Sanctuary foyer.

► **FEMALE RECOMMENDATIONS** for the Nominating Committee:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

► **MALE RECOMMENDATIONS** for the Nominating Committee:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

RECOMMENDED by: _____

**There will be a congregational meeting in December, between the services,
to elect the 2023 Nominating Committee members.**