

# The Lord's Day in Worship

COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



But peaceful was the night  
Wherein the Prince of Light  
His reign of peace upon the earth began.  
—John Milton, "On the Morning of Christ's Nativity"

God cannot give us a happiness and peace apart from Himself,  
because it is not there. There is no such thing.  
—C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*

The Christmas message is that there is hope for a ruined humanity—  
hope of pardon, hope of peace with God, hope of glory—because at  
the Father's will Jesus became poor, and was born in a stable so that  
thirty years later He might hang on a cross.  
—J. I. Packer, *Knowing God*

## LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

8:10 *The Fantes*

10:25 *The Hendersons*

*Candle of Peace*

Luke told of the Angels singing:

“Glory to God in the highest,  
and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!”

—Luke 2:14

### ☒ CALL TO WORSHIP

### ☒ PRAYER OF ADORATION

Almighty God, Maker and Preserver  
of all things visible and invisible:  
We adore You in Your infinite majesty,  
And bless You for Your wondrous love  
Revealed in Jesus Christ Your Son, our Savior,  
To whom with You, O Father, and the Holy Spirit,  
Be all honor and glory, world without end. Amen.

—*The Book of Common Worship*, 1932

☒ *Congregation stand as able.*

## ❏ HYMNS OF ADORATION


"Hark! The Herald Angels Sing!"

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 hosts 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 Godhead see;  
Hail th'incarnate Deity,  
Pleased, as man, with men 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 (1707-1788), alt. Music: Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847); adapt.  
William H. Cummings (1831-1915).

 "Joy Has Dawned"


1. Joy has dawned up - on the world,  
 2. Sounds of won - der fill the sky  
 3. Shep - herds bow be - fore the Lamb,  
 4. Son of A - dam, Son of Heav'n,



prom - ised from cre - a - tion:  
 with the songs of an - gels,  
 gaz - ing at the glo - ry;  
 giv - en as a ran - som;



God's sal - va - tion now un - furled,  
 as the might - y Prince of Life  
 gifts of men from dis - tant lands  
 re - con - cil - ing God and man -



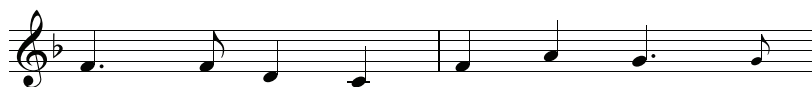
hope for ev - ery na - tion.  
 shel - ters in a sta - ble.  
 pro - phes - y a sto - ry.  
 Christ our might - y Champ - ion!



Not with fan - fares from a - bove,  
 Hands that set each star in place,  
 Gold, a King is born to - day;  
 What a Sav - iour, what a Friend,



not with scenes of glo - ry,  
 shaped the earth in dark - ness,  
 in - cense, God is with us;  
 what a glo - rious mys - t'ry:



but a hum - ble gift of love: \_\_\_\_\_  
 cling now to a moth - er's breast, \_\_\_\_\_  
 myrrh, His death will make a way and  
 once a babe in Beth - le - hem, \_\_\_\_\_



Je - sus, born of Ma - ry.  
 vul - n'ra - ble and help - less.  
 by His blood He'll win us.  
 now the Lord of his - t'ry.

Words and Music: Keith Getty and Stuart Townend. CCLI 4408246.

## PRAYER OF CONFESSION

*Merciful Father,  
We are ashamed,  
and we want to hide our faces from you.  
We have been your enemies,  
Willfully rebelling against your kind and gracious commands  
In order to cultivate our own peace of prosperity and security.  
Forgive us for the sake of Jesus, our Savior and Redeemer,  
and enable us to know and cherish true peace—  
living in a restored relationship with You.*

## SILENT PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

### ☒ ASSURANCE OF PARDON

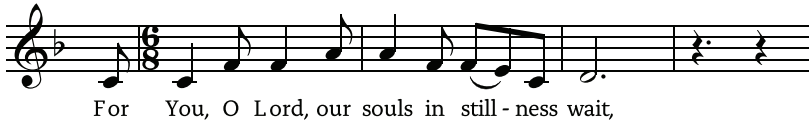
Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

—Romans 5:1

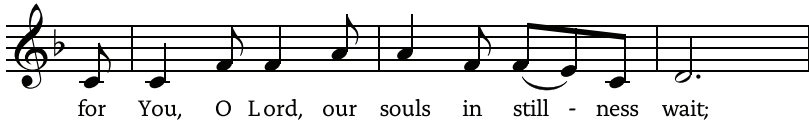
The almighty and merciful Lord grant you forgiveness of all your sins, true repentance, amendment of life, and the grace and consolation of His Holy Spirit.

☒ CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE

"Come Light Our Hearts"



For You, O Lord, our souls in still-ness wait,



for You, O Lord, our souls in still-ness wait;



tru-ly our hope is in You, tru-ly our hope is in You.



O Lord of life, our on-ly hope, Your ra-diance  
Oh Joy a-bove all o-ther loves, in You we



shines on all who look to You in the dark,  
find more than e-nough. We come as we are,



Em-man-u-el come, come light our hearts.  
O heal and re-store, come light our hearts.

Words and Music: Sandra McCracken, 2016. CCLI 7054135.

**READING FROM THE PROPHETS**

Isaiah 9:1-7

But there will be no gloom for her who was in anguish. In the former time he brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time he has made glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations.

<sup>2</sup>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.

<sup>3</sup>You 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.

<sup>4</sup>For 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.

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

<sup>6</sup>For 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.



Of 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 the LORD of hosts will do this.

This is the Word of the Lord.

*Thanks be to God.*

**GIVING OF FIRST FRUITS**

"Fullness of Grace"

*Liz Richardson, soloist*

Fullness of grace in man's human frailty,  
This is the wonder of Jesus.

Laying aside His power and glory,  
Humbly He entered our world.

Chose the path of meanest worth:  
Scandal of a virgin birth.

Born in a stable cold and rejected:  
Here lies the hope of the world.

Fullness of grace the love of the Father  
Shown in the face of Jesus.

Stooping to bear the weight of humanity,  
Walking the Calvary road.

Christ the holy innocent  
Took our sin and punishment.

Fullness of God despised and rejected:  
Crushed for the sins of the world.

Fullness of hope in Christ we had longed for,  
Promise of God in Jesus.

Through His obedience we are forgiven,  
Op'ning the floodgates of heav'n.

All our hopes and dreams we bring  
Gladly as an offering.

Fullness of life and joy unspeakable:  
God's gift in love to the world.

Words and Music: Keith and Kristyn Getty, Stuart Townend. CCLI 4411752.

## ☒ PASSING OF THE PEACE

The peace of the LORD be with you.

*And also with you.*

### MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

*See page 17 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 1:18-21

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. <sup>19</sup>And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. <sup>20</sup>But 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. <sup>21</sup>She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins."

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**

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.*

## ■ HYMN OF GLORY

15

"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 - 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.

SEASON OF ADVENT | DECEMBER 20, 2020 | 8:15 AM & 10:30 AM

## ■ BENEDICTION

**THIS WEEK AT COVENANT: December 20-25, 2020****SUNDAY, December 20**

- 8:15 a.m. Gathered Worship (Sanctuary, Fellowship Hall)
- 10:30 a.m. Gathered Worship (Sanctuary, Fellowship Hall)

**THURSDAY, December 24** *Church office closed*

- 10:00 a.m. Christmas Eve Service
- 12:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Service
- 4:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Service
- 6:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Service

*Reservations required; nursery childcare available, by reservation at 10:00, 12:00, and 4:00 for ages 3 and younger.*

**FRIDAY, December 25** *Church office closed*

*Should you need pastoral assistance after our regular office hours, please contact our pastor on call at 205-874-3559 (Dan Edwards, December 21-27).*



## MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Christmas Eve Services.** We have added another Christmas Eve service at 10:00 a.m. on December 24! We want to welcome as many people as possible on Christmas Eve while remaining safe and socially distant. RSVPs are required for the services (10:00, 12:00, 4:00, and 6:00) and for nursery childcare, which is available for ages 3 and under at the 10:00, 12:00, and 4:00 services. Although Sanctuary seating is almost full for the later services, there are still options to join us in worship on Christmas Eve! Please visit [covpres.com/advent](http://covpres.com/advent) to RSVP.

**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, bring it by the office, or drop it in the offering plates in the Sanctuary foyer on Sunday mornings.

**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](http://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](http://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](mailto:vwilliams@covpres.com), 205-871-7002).

## STAFF CONTACT INFORMATION

### EXECUTIVE STAFF

Robby Holt, Senior Pastor	rholt@covpres.com
Marty Crawford, Assistant Pastor (Church Administrator, Senior Adults, Missions)	mcrawford@covpres.com
David Driskill, Assistant Pastor (Shepherding, Middle Adults)	ddriskill@covpres.com
John Fountain, Assistant Pastor (Students and Families)	jfountain@covpres.com
Ingram Link, Director of Women's Ministries	ilink@covpres.com

### MINISTRY STAFF

Rick Barnes, Director of Music	rbarnes@covpres.com
Jami Bennett, Director of MDO and Nursery Ministries	jbennett@covpres.com
Rachel Davis, Assistant Director of Girls' Ministries	shields.rachel.c@gmail.com
Dan Edwards, Assistant Pastor (Middle Adults)	dedwards@covpres.com
Katie Flores, Assistant Director of Children's Ministries, Director of Enfold Disability Ministry	kflores@covpres.com
Bill Hay, Pastor Emeritus	bhay@covpres.com
Josh Johnson, Assistant Pastor (Young Adults, Adult Discipleship)	jjohnson@covpres.com
Sara Litten, Director of Girls' Ministries	slitten@covpres.com
Daniel Sluis, Director of Guys' Ministries	dsluis@covpres.com
Brooke Stewart, Director of Covenant Day School	bstewart@covpres.com
Laura Tucker, Director of Children's Ministries	ltucker@covpres.com

### ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Katie Caldwell, Director of Design and Production	kcaldwell@covpres.com
Meg Cotney, Director of Finance	mcotney@covpres.com
Tyler Cuidon, Director of Technical Services	tcuidon@covpres.com
Phyllis Hamm, Ministry Assistant (Missions, Member Care)	phamm@covpres.com
Jeff Herbert, Director of Facilities	jherbert@covpres.com
Stacey Loyless, Director of Communications and Media	sloyless@covpres.com
Casey O'Dell, Ministry Assistant (Children's Choir, Worship)	caseys.odell@gmail.com
Kim Oliver, Assistant to the Senior Pastor	koliver@covpres.com
Traci Parker, Director of Food Services	tparker@covpres.com
Justin Richardson, Assistant to the Church Administrator	jrichardson@covpres.com
Karan Stuart, Receptionist	kstuart@covpres.com
Victoria Williams, Ministry Assistant (Women, Shepherding)	vwilliams@covpres.com

## 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

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