The Lord's Day in Worship

COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

"Wittgenstein says that when the eye sees something beautiful, the hand wants to draw it. Beauty brings copies of itself into being. It makes us draw it, take photographs of it, or describe it to other people. Sometimes it gives rise to exact replication..."

—Elaine Scarry

"If the whole creation is affected by the fall, then the whole creation is also reclaimed in Christ...Everywhere Christ's victory is pregnant with the defeat of sin and the recovery of creation."

-Al Wolters

8:00 a.m. | Libby Dyess, Caroline Logan, and Emily Mince 10:30 a.m. | The Harrelsons

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

EXECUTE CALL TO WORSHIP

RESPONSIVE READING

Psalm 106:1-3, 47-48

Leader: Praise the LORD!

Oh give thanks to the LORD, for he is good,

for his steadfast love endures forever!

All: Who can utter the mighty deeds of the LORD,

or declare all his praise?

Leader: Blessed are they who observe justice,

who do righteousness at all times!

Save us, O LORD our God,

and gather us from among the nations, that we may give thanks to your holy name

and glory in your praise.

All: Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel,

> from everlasting to everlasting! And let all the people say, "Amen!"

Praise the LORD!

EXECUTE CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE

"Holy God, We Praise Thy Name"



Words: from Te Deum, 4th century, attr. Ignaz Franz (1719-1790); tr. Clarence A. Walworth (1820-1900). Music: Katholisches Gesangbuch, 1774 (GROSSER GOTT).

M PRAYER OF ADORATION

M HYMNS OF ADORATION

"Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus"

Come, Thou long expected Jesus, Born to set Thy people free; From our fears and sins release us, Let us find our rest in Thee. Israel's strength and consolation, Hope of all the earth Thou art; Dear Desire of ev'ry nation, Joy of ev'ry longing heart.

Joy to those who long to see Thee, Dayspring from on high, appear. Come, Thou promised Rod of Jesse, Of Thy birth we long to hear; O'er the hills the angels singing News, glad tidings of a birth; "Go to him, your praises bringing Christ the Lord has come to earth."

Come to earth to taste our sadness, He whose glories knew no end; By His life He brings us gladness, Our Redeemer, Shepherd, Friend. Leaving riches without number, Born within a cattle stall; This the everlasting wonder, Christ was born the Lord of all.

Born Thy people to deliver,
Born a child and yet a king;
Born to reign in us forever,
Now Thy gracious kingdom bring.
By Thine own eternal Spirit
Rule in all our hearts alone;
By Thine all-sufficient merit,
Raise us to Thy glorious throne.

Words: Charles Wesley, 1744. Music: Rowland H. Prichard, 1830.



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

Malachi 2:17-3:4; 4:1-6

^{2:17}You have wearied the LORD with your words. But you say, "How have we wearied him?" By saying, "Everyone who does evil is good in the sight of the LORD, and he delights in them." Or by asking, "Where is the God of justice?"

3:1"Behold, I send my messenger, and he will prepare the way before me. And the LORD whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple; and the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts. ²But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap. ³He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, and they will bring offerings in righteousness to the LORD. ⁴Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years.

⁴:"For behold, the day is coming, burning like an oven, when all the arrogant and all evildoers will be stubble. The day that is coming shall set them ablaze, says the LORD of hosts, so that it will leave them neither root nor branch. ²But 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. ³And you shall tread down the wicked, for they will be ashes under the soles of your feet, on the day when I act, says the LORD of hosts.

⁴"Remember the law of my servant Moses, the statutes and rules that I commanded him at Horeb for all Israel. ⁵"Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and awesome day of the LORD comes. ⁶And he will turn the hearts of fathers to their children and the hearts of children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the land with a decree of utter destruction."

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

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

But 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.

GIVING OF FIRST FRUITS

8:00 a.m.

"Exult in the Savior's Birth" Congregational Hymn



Words and Music: CCLI Song # 7013626. D. A. Carson, Matt Boswell. © 2013 Doxology & Theology. McKinney Music, Inc. CCLI License # 147209.

GIVING OF FIRST FRUITS

10:30 a.m.

"Behold a Star from Jacob Shining" Chancel Choir

Behold a star from Jacob shining, And a scepter from Israel rising; To reign in glory over the nations;

Like some bright morning star is He,
The promise of the coming day,
Beyond the night of sorrow.
Break forth, O Light!
We, our joyful hearts uplifting with thanksgiving,
Hail the brightness of Thy rising.

Words: from Numbers 24:17, arranged by Henry Wilder Foote, ed. Archibald T. Davison. Music: Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy (1809-1847).

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 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

READING FROM THE GOSPELS

Luke 1:57-80

Now the time came for Elizabeth to give birth, and she bore a son. ⁵⁸And her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown great mercy to her, and they rejoiced with her. ⁵⁹And on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child. And they would have called him Zechariah after his father, ⁶⁰but his mother answered, "No; he shall be called John." ⁶¹And they said to her, "None of your relatives is called by this name." ⁶²And they made signs to his father, inquiring what he wanted him to be called. ⁶³And he asked for a writing tablet and wrote, "His name is John." And they all wondered. ⁶⁴And immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue loosed, and he spoke, blessing God. ⁶⁵And fear came on all their neighbors. And all these things were talked about through all the hill country of Judea, ⁶⁶and all who heard them laid them up in their hearts, saying, "What then will this child be?" For the hand of the Lord was with him.

⁶⁷And his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied, saying,

⁶⁸"Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,
for he has visited and redeemed his people
⁶⁹and has raised up a horn of salvation for us
in the house of his servant David,
⁷⁰as he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets from of old,
⁷¹that we should be saved from our enemies
and from the hand of all who hate us;
⁷²to show the mercy promised to our fathers
and to remember his holy covenant,
⁷³the oath that he swore to our father Abraham, to grant us
⁷⁴that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies,

75in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.

might serve him without fear,

⁷⁶And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways,

77 to give knowledge of salvation to his people in the forgiveness of their sins,

⁷⁸because of the tender mercy of our God, whereby the sunrise shall visit us from on high

⁷⁹to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace."

⁸⁰And the child grew and became strong in spirit, and he was in the wilderness until the day of his public appearance to Israel.

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.

MESSAGE			
Robby Holt			

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.

"Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming"

Lo, how a rose e'er blooming,
From tender stem hath sprung;
Of Jesse's lineage coming,
As men of old have sung;
It came a flow'ret bright,
Amid the cold of winter,
When half-spent was the night.

This flow'r whose fragrance tender With sweetness fills the air; Dispels with glorious splendor, The darkness everywhere; True man, yet very God, From sin and death He saves us, And lightens every load.

O Savior, child of Mary,
Who felt our human woe;
O Savior, King of glory,
Who dost our weakness know;
Bring us at length, we pray,
To the bright courts of heaven,
And to the endless day.

Bring us at length, we pray, To the bright courts of heaven, And to the endless day.

Words: 15th century carol, Theodore Baker, 1894; Harriett R. Spaeth, 1875; John C. Mattes, 1914. Music: German melody, 15th century / arr. by Michael Praetorius, 1609.



Words and Music: CCLI Song # 4408246. Keith Getty, Stuart Townend. © 2004 Thankyou Music (Admin. by Capitol CMG Publishing). CCLI License # 147209.

THIS WEEK AT COVENANT: December 19 - 25, 2021

SUNDAY, December 19

8:00 a.m. Gathered Worship

9:15 a.m. Sunday School for all ages (see page 20)

10:30 a.m. Gathered Worship

FRIDAY, December 24

12:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Service*4:30 p.m. Christmas Eve Service*6:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Service

*nursery childcare available; email nursery@covpres.com

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

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.

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 is open now through 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.

Women's Bible Studies. Ladies, we have several Winter/Spring 2022 Bible studies to choose from! The studies begin mid-January, and registration is open now. You can choose from Tuesday mornings, Wednesday evenings, and Sunday evenings for our "Remember Your Joy" study beginning January 11, 12, and 23 respectively. Divine Design Discipleship resumes the "In the Vault" study on January 25, and we will have one more women's study option on Wednesday evenings beginning January 12.

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

But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, ⁵to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. ⁶And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!"

⁷So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.

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 | S100 late 30s to late 40s

FOUNDATIONS | DINING ROOM early 40s to early 50s

LIGHTHOUSE | E304 late 30s to early 50s

(Pastor: David Driskill)

CROSSPOINTE | Fellowship Hall mid 3 os to early 4 os

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

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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

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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)
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Traci Parker, Director of Food Services
Justin Richardson, Assistant to the Church Administrator
Karan Stuart, Receptionist
Victoria Williams, Ministry Assistant (Women, Shepherding)

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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 2021.

DECEMBER READING PLAN

DECENTER RE	ADINOTEAN	
	EZEKIEL	1 JOHN
1	□ 47-48	□ 3
	DANIEL	
2	□ 1-2	□ 4
3	□ 3-4	□ 5
4/5	□ 5-10	□ 2 John-3 John
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

SERMON RESOURCES

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

Luke, R. T. France

Luke, Chapters 1-13, Dale Ralph Davis

The Gospel of Luke, Joel B. Green

Luke, Mark L. Strauss

Luke, Exegetical/Commentary of the New Testament, David E. Garland

