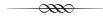


The Lord's Day in Worship

COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



"Enemy-occupied territory—that is what this world is. Christianity is the story of how the rightful king has landed...in disguise, and is calling us all to take part in a great campaign of sabotage."

—C.S. Lewis

"The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil."

—1 John 3:8c

"Life and truth, those ultimate expressions of reality we all claim to seek, are no longer to be found in books or in a succession of new experiences. Life has been gift-wrapped in a person. Truth has taken on human flesh; in order to experience it, we must lay hold of him. God took his place among us, as one of us. That is what Incarnation means."

—Michael Card

☒ CALL TO WORSHIP

Rev. John Fountain

☒ RESPONSIVE READING

from Matthew 1

Leader: Saint Matthew gives us a genealogy of Jesus Christ who is the Son of David, the promised seed of Abraham:

*All: All the generations from Abraham to David
were fourteen generations,
and from David to the humiliating exile to Babylon
fourteen generations,
and from the humiliating exile to Babylon to the Christ
fourteen generations.*

Leader: 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. And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly.

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

☒ *Congregation stand as able.*

Leader: All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken
by the prophet:

“Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,
and they shall call his name Immanuel.”

All: Immanuel means God with us.

PRAYER OF ADORATION

 **HYMNS OF ADORATION**

"O Come All Ye Faithful"

O come all ye faithful,
Joyful and triumphant,
O come ye O come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold Him,
Born the King of angels;
O come let us adore Him,
O come let us adore Him,
O come let us adore Him,
Christ the Lord!

Sing choirs of angels,
Sing in exultation,
Sing all ye citizens of heav'n above;
Glory to God,
Glory in the highest;
O come let us adore Him,
O come let us adore Him,
O come let us adore Him,
Christ the Lord!

Yea, Lord we greet Thee,
Born this happy morning;
Jesus, to Thee be all glory giv'n;
Word of the Father
Now in flesh appearing;
O come let us adore Him,
O come let us adore Him,
O come let us adore Him,
Christ the Lord!

 "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!"

READING FROM THE PROPHETS

Isaiah 1:2-3; 11:1-10

Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth;
for Yahweh has spoken:

“Children have I reared and brought up,
but they have rebelled against me.

³The ox knows its owner,
and the donkey its master's crib,
but Israel does not know,
my people do not understand.”

^{11:1}There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse,
and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit.

²And the Spirit of Yahweh shall rest upon him,
the Spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the Spirit of counsel and might,
the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of Yahweh.

³And his delight shall be in the fear of Yahweh.

He shall not judge by what his eyes see,
or decide disputes by what his ears hear,

⁴but with righteousness he shall judge the poor,
and decide with equity for the meek of the earth;
and he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,
and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.

⁵Righteousness shall be the belt of his waist,
and faithfulness the belt of his loins.

⁶The wolf shall dwell with the lamb,
and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat,
and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf together;
and a little child shall lead them.

⁷The cow and the bear shall graze;
their young shall lie down together;
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

⁸The nursing child shall play over the hole of the cobra,
and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den.

⁹They shall not hurt or destroy
in all my holy mountain;
for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of Yahweh
as the waters cover the sea.

¹⁰In that day the root of Jesse, who shall stand as a signal for the
peoples—of him shall the nations inquire, and his resting place
shall be glorious.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

*Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
We all like sheep have gone astray;
We have turned—every one of us—to our own way.
Since you, oh Lord, have laid our iniquities on Jesus Christ
we openly confess them now.
Since he was wounded for our transgressions, we hide them not.
Since he was crushed for our iniquities, we admit them plainly.
Please hear us as we silently confess our sins
to you in Jesus' name.*

Silent Confession

Leader: Lord, we exalt and lift up the name of Jesus, your Servant.
We praise you that in him we are accounted righteous,
since he has born our iniquities. Amen.

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE

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!"

❏ ASSURANCE OF PARDON

"I, I am he
who blots out your transgressions for my own sake,
and I will not remember your sins."
—Isaiah 43:25

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.*

☒ CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE

Christ, to Thee, with God the Father,
And, O Holy Ghost, to Thee;
Hymn and chant and high thanksgiving,
And unwearied praises be.
Honor, glory, and dominion,
And eternal victory,
Evermore and evermore!

GIVING OF FIRST FRUITS

"O Little Town of Bethlehem"

Congregational Hymn

O little town of Bethlehem,
How still we see thee lie.
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by;
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
The everlasting Light.
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary,
And gathered all above.
While mortals sleep the angels keep
Their watch of wondering love.
O morning stars together
Proclaim the holy birth.
And praises sing to God the King,
And peace to men on earth.

How silently, how silently
The wondrous gift is giv'n.
So God imparts to human hearts
The blessings of His heaven;
No ear may hear His coming,
But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will
Receive Him still,
The dear Christ enters in.

O holy child of Bethlehem,
Descend to us we pray.
Cast out our sin and enter in,
Be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels,
The great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us,
Our Lord Emmanuel.

 **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.

The “passing of the peace” precedes the Lord’s Supper as a liturgical reminder of our unity as members of Christ’s body. 1 Corinthians 11:18-19 implores us not to let factions and divisions remain in our midst. Thus, the peace calls us to move toward our brothers and sisters as Christ moves toward us in reconciling grace and mutual love.

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sunday, January 1. Join us at 10:30 a.m. for gathered worship. We will not have Sunday School, Children's Worship, or nursery childcare that morning.

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

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 2:1-7

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³And all went to be registered, each to his own town. ⁴And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, ⁵to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. ⁶And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

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.

LITURGY OF THE TABLE

Congregation, please read aloud the portions that are *italicized*.

Words of Institution

from Luke 22:14-23; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

Confession: Our Confident Access in Jesus Christ

Leader: In Jesus, the Son of God, we have a sympathetic,
great high priest who lives for us.

*All: He was delivered up for our trespasses
and raised for our justification.
After making purification for sins,
he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.*

Leader: Let us, therefore, with confidence draw near
to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy
and find grace to help us in our time of need.

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.

HYMN FOR THE EUCHARIST

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

"What Child Is This?"

What child is this who laid to rest
 On Mary's lap is sleeping?
 Whom angels greet with anthems sweet,
 While shepherds watch are keeping?
 This, this is Christ the King,
 Whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
 Haste, haste to bring him laud,
 The babe, the son of Mary.

Why lies he in such mean estate,
 Where ox and ass are feeding?
 Good Christian, fear; for sinners here
 The silent Word is pleading;
 Nails, spear, shall pierce him through,
 The cross be borne for me, for you;
 Hail, hail the Word made flesh,
 The babe, the Son of Mary.

So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh,
 Come peasant, king, to own him;
 The King of kings salvation brings,
 Let loving hearts enthrone him.
 Raise, raise the song on high,
 The virgin sings her lullaby;
 Joy, joy for Christ is born,
 The babe the son of Mary.

 **BENEDICTION**

THIS WEEK AT COVENANT: December 25 - 31, 2022

19

SUNDAY, December 25

10:30 a.m. Gathered Worship

MONDAY, December 26 -

Church Office closed

TUESDAY, December 27

Should you need pastoral assistance after our regular office hours, please contact our pastor on call at 205-874-3559 (John Fountain, December 26 - January 1).

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sunday, January 1. Join us at 10:30 a.m. for gathered worship. We will not have Sunday School, Children's Worship, or nursery childcare that morning.

Financial Stewardship. It is not too late to contribute to the 2023 General Fund. Our December goal is \$1.1 million. If you are considering a year-end gift, our church office will be open December 30 until 5:00 p.m. If you would like information about making a gift of stock or other securities, please contact Marty Crawford at 205-871-7002 or mcrawford@covpres.com. Also, in November we asked our congregation to make 2023 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 plate.

Scripture Memory. Our church-wide scripture memory verse for the Season of Advent and Christmas (November 27 - January 5) is Matthew 1:20b-21:

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

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

Marty Crawford, Assistant Pastor (Church Administrator, Senior Adults, Missions)	mrcrawford@covpres.com
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Laura Tucker, Director of Children's Ministries	ltucker@covpres.com

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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

2022	2023	2024
Ty Dedmon	Will Brooke	Dave Gray
John Hamilton	Nathan Collums	Heath Henderson
Mark Hogewood	Jeff Dyess	Paul Loyless
John James	Michael Latta	Tyler O'Connor
David O'Dell	Charlie Logan	Jason Peevy
Norman Pless	Bob Schaffeld	Charlie Regan
Kurt Senn	John Smith T	Charles White
	Steve Stigler	

DEACONS

2022	2023	2024
Jim Bennett	Tripp Alexander	Samuel Bragg
William Edwards	Joseph Cascio	Paul Darden
Merrill Johnston	Richard Cox	Joe Fante
Randall Lancaster	Jay Evans	Steve Killgore
Mark Midyette	Bryan Flores	Robert Luttrell
Stephen Mince	Gary Gorham	Steve Pfitzer
Clyde Prather	Jeff Hayes	Brent Powell
John Shank	John Shults	Matt Searson
Matt Thomas	Joe Strickland	
Greg Tomlinson	Darrell Tucker	

STEERING COMMITTEE

Will Brooke, Member At-large	Mark Hogewood, Personnel Committee Chair
Nathan Collums, Family Ministry Chair	Robby Holt, Moderator of the Session
Marty Crawford, Pastoral Liaison (Missions)	Ingram Link, Ministry Liaison (Women)
David Driskill, Pastoral Liaison (Shepherding)	Bob Schaffeld, Missions Ministry Chair
John Fountain, Pastoral Liaison (Family)	John Shank, Finance Committee Chair
Gary Gorham, Chair of the Diaconate	John Smith T, Clerk of the Session
Heath Henderson, 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 2022.

DECEMBER READING PLAN

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

HYMN CREDITS

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

"O Come All Ye Faithful"

Words: attr. John F. Wade (1711-1786); tr. Frederick Oakeley (1802-1880).

Music: John F. Wade's Cantus Diversi, 1751.

"Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"

Words: Charles Wesley (1707-1788), alt. Music: Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847); adapt. William H. Cummings (1831-1915).

"Of the Father's Love Begotten"

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

Music: Plainsong, 13th century.

"O Little Town of Bethlehem"

Words and Music: CCLI Song No. 27879. © Public Domain. Lewis Henry Redner, Phillips Brooks, 1868. For use solely in accordance with the SongSelect Advanced Terms of Agreement. All rights Reserved. www.songtouch.com. CCLI License No. 2265122.

"What Child Is This?"

Words: William C. Dix (1837-1898). Music: traditional English melody, 16th century.