



A CANDLELIGHT COMMUNION SERVICE

December 24, 2025

5:00 p.m.

SANCTUARY

Covenant Presbyterian is a dynamic Christian community that gladly invites all people into a transformational experience of faith; boldly proclaims the gospel; bravely works toward a whole and just world; and passionately nurtures discipleship.

CANDLELIGHT COMMUNION

SERVICE OF WORSHIP

December 24, 2025 at 5:00 p.m.

Welcome to Covenant; we are glad you are here. Children are always welcome in worship. Childcare is available in the Education Wing for children ages 6 weeks to 5 years old. Infant soothing rooms with live video of the worship service are available on the left side of the balcony and parlor. See an usher for assistance.

PRELUDE

Christmas Concerto A. Corelli
I. Vivace II. Allegro-Adagio-Allegro III. Vivace IV. Allegro V. Pastorale
Bring a Torch Jeanette Isabella S. Fife
~ Carolina Chamber Players ~

CHORAL INTROIT

O Holy NightA. Adam¹
O Holy Night! The stars are brightly shining,
It is the night of the dear Saviour's birth.
Long lay the world in sin and error pining,
'Til he appeared and the soul felt its worth.
A thrill of hope, the weary world rejoices,
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn.
Fall on your knees! Oh, hear the angel voices!
O night divine, O night when Christ was born;
O night, O Holy Night, O night divine!
Truly he taught us to love one another,
His law is love and his gospel is peace.
Led by the light of faith serenely beaming,
With glowing hearts by his cradle we stand.
Sweet hymns of joy in grateful chorus raise we,
Let all within us praise his holy name.
Christ is the Lord! Oh, praise his name forever,
His power and glory ever more proclaim!
~ Lauren Russell, soprano ~

PRAYER OF CHRISTMASTIDEKatherine Kerr

*PROCESSIONAL HYMN 133

O Come, All Ye Faithful..... ADESTE FIDELES
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!
True God from true God, Light from light eternal, born of a virgin,
a mortal he comes; very God, begotten, not created! (*Refrain*)
Sing, choirs of angels; sing in exultation; sing, all ye citizens
of heaven above! Glory to God, all glory in the highest! (*Refrain*)
Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning;
Jesus, to thee be all glory given; Word of the Father, now in flesh
appearing! (*Refrain*)

SCRIPTURE READING.....Katherine Kerr

Isaiah 11:1-3, 6-9 Old Testament, page 602

CAROL

Angels We Have Heard on High, #113 GLORIA
Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o’er the plains,
and the mountains in reply, echoing their joyous strains.
Gloria in excelsis Deo. Gloria in excelsis Deo.
Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be, which inspire your heav’nly song?
(Refrain)
Come to Bethlehem and see, Him whose birth the angels sing.
Come, adore on bended knee, Christ the Lord, the newborn King.
(Refrain)
See him in a manger laid, whom the choirs of angels praise.
Mary, Joseph, lend your aid, while our hearts in love we raise.
(Refrain)

SCRIPTURE READING..... Courtney Shudak

Matthew 1:18-25 New Testament, page 1

*CAROL

O Little Town of Bethlehem, #121 ST. LOUIS
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 all on earth.
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!

SCRIPTURE READING..... Courtney Shudak

Matthew 2:1-11 New Testament, page 1-2

OFFERING AND THE GIFT OF ANGEL ORNAMENTS

This year’s Christmas Eve offering will be given directly toward supporting vulnerable children here in Charlotte and Nablus, Palestine. Through your generosity, the offering will benefit God’s work through Charlotte Family Housing and Tomorrow’s Youth Organization, two partners dedicated to helping children find safety, stability, and hope when they are most vulnerable. To make a gift online today, simply text “Give” to 704-312-7616. You’ll receive a link—follow the prompts to complete your gift.

Each family is invited to select an ornament to take home (however you define family). This angel is a symbol of the spirit of Christmas shared by our Covenant family—a reminder of love, generosity, and hope as you place it on your tree.

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

A Child is Born in Bethlehem P. Stopford²
A child is born in Bethlehem, Alleluia, Alleluia.
And joy is in Jerusalem, Alleluia, Alleluia.
Rejoice, rejoice, sing high, sing low, Alleluia, Alleluia.

²*You are invited to rise in body or spirit

Benedicamus Domino, Alleluia, Alleluia.
To Thee O Lord, be glory paid, Alleluia.
The Son of Mary, mother maid, Alleluia.
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.
To Holy Trinity give praise, Alleluia, Alleluia.
With Deo gracias always, Alleluia, Alleluia.
~ *Covenant Choir* ~

Where Shepherds Lately Knel C. Courtney³

Where shepherds lately knelt, and kept the angel's word,
I come in half belief, a pilgrim strangely stirred;
but there is room and welcome there for me.
In that unlikely place I find Him as they said:
sweet newborn Babe, how frail and in a manger bed:
a still small voice to cry one day for me.
How should I not have known Isaiah would be there,
his prophecies fulfilled? With pounding heart I stare,
a Child, a Son, the Prince of Peace for me.
Can I, will I forget how Love was born and burned its
way into my heart unasked, unforced, unearned,
to die, to live, and not alone for me.
~ *Covenant Choir; Bryan Culler, flute* ~

THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

Invitation to The Lord's Table

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

The Lord's Prayer (unison)

**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.**

Words of Institution

Communion of the People

The communion bread is gluten free.

Music At Communion

The First Noel D. Forrest⁴

The first noel the angels did say,
was to certain poor shepherds in fields where they lay.
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep,
on a cold winter's night that was so deep.
Noel, born is the King of Israel.
They looked up and saw a star shining in the east beyond them far.
And to the earth it gave great light, and so it continued both day and night.
Noel, born is the King of Israel.
Then let us all with one accord sing praises to our heav'nly Lord,
that hath made heav'n and earth of naught,
and with His blood our life hath bought.
Noel, born is the King of Israel.

Away in a Manger M. Wilberg⁵

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed.
The little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.
The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay.
The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.
The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes.
But, little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes.
I love Thee, Lord Jesus, look down from the sky.

Stay by my cradle, till morning is nigh.
Be near me Lord Jesus, I ask Thee to stay
Close by me forever and love me I pray.
Bless all the dear children in Thy tender care,
And fit us for heaven to live with Thee there.

~ Covenant Choir; Carolina Chamber Players; Bryan Culler, flute;
Daniel Ellis, oboe; Henry Trexler, bass ~

FESTIVAL OF LIGHT AND LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE

Please take care with the open flames, particularly near young children.

*CAROL

Silent Night, Holy NightSTILLE NACHT

Silent night, holy night! All is calm, all is bright.

Round yon virgin mother and child!

Holy infant, so tender and mild,

Sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night! Shepherds quake at the sight

Glories stream from heaven afar,

Heavenly hosts sing "Alleluia:

Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born!"

Silent night, holy night! Son of God, love's pure light

Radiant beams from thy holy face,

With the dawn of redeeming grace,

Jesus, Lord at thy birth, Jesus, Lord at thy birth.

Silent night, holy night! Wondrous star, lend thy light;

With the angels let us sing, Alleluia to our King;

Christ the Savior is born; Christ the Savior is born.

*BENEDICTION

*CAROL

Joy to the WorldANTIOCH

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.**

**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, wonders of his love.**

*POSTLUDE

Joy to the World.arr. M. Burkhardt

Please place candles in the baskets as you exit the Sanctuary.

WELCOME TO COVENANT

Interested in joining Covenant? We welcome new members every Sunday at 10:30 a.m. in the Parlor, located downstairs in the Sanctuary building. Feel free to contact our office at 704-333-9071 or email Lora.Borrelli@covenantpresby.org for more information.

Assistive listening devices are available from the ushers.
Audio-induction hearing loops are installed in the sanctuary for use with hearing aids.



Each Sunday, we offer educational and fellowship opportunities in the mornings and evenings for children, youth and adults in the Education Wing and Fellowship Hall. Please see the digital signs in each building for details.

Are you signed up to receive our weekly emails? If not, please contact Lacy King, Communications Manager, at Lacy.King@covenantpresby.org.

THE WORSHIP SERVICE

Leading Worship this Evening

Bob Henderson, senior minister

Katherine Kerr, senior associate minister, congregational care

Courtney Shudak, pastoral resident, mission and outreach

Emily Floyd, director of traditional music

Mark Glaeser, organist

Covenant Choir

Emily Chatham, violin; Alison Lawson, violin; Shawn Snider, viola;

Matthew Lavin, cello; Henry Trexler, bass; Dan Hays, timpani; Bryan Culler, flute; Daniel Ellis, oboe.

Cover Image

Shepherds at Night is located in the Sanctuary on the west nave in the first window from the narthex entrance. Reference: Lk 2:8-20; Num 24:7; 2 Peter 1:19; Rev 22:16. © 2010 JonSilla

Advent Star (wood, willow branches, bamboo, vine)

The star installed in the sanctuary was designed and created by members of the Worship Arts Ministry. Using non-traditional materials to construct the art piece, the star symbolizes the totality of the Christmas story. The rugged and harsh aspects of the star remind us that Christ's birth was darkened by political unrest, genocide, and homelessness. And yet, the green branches attest to the new life Christ brings. Like the Advent wreath, the star serves as a visual reminder of God's light that shines in a world of darkness.

UPCOMING WORSHIP SERVICES

Sunday, December 28, Sanctuary

One worship service: 11 a.m. (contemporary)

Childcare will be available.

Beginning Sunday, January 4

We resume our regular worship schedule:

8:45 a.m. Chapel (Traditional)

9:30 a.m. Sanctuary (Contemporary)

11:00 a.m. Fellowship Hall (Family Service)

11:00 a.m. Sanctuary (Traditional)

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2 © 2001 Ecclesium Publishing

3 © Poet: Jaroslav J. Vajda, 1986, Concordia Publishing Houses

4 © 2009 Beckenhorst

5 © 1987 Hinshaw Music

This service is being streamed live and recorded for online viewing at CovenantPresby.org/live.

If you would not like to keep this bulletin, please recycle it in the bins located in the narthex.



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www.CovenantPresby.org