

*(As we enter the sanctuary, let us quietly prepare our hearts and minds for worship.  
Please sign the attendance pads at the end of the pew and turn off cell phones.)*

### GATHERING IN GOD'S NAME

#### SOUNDING OF THE HOUR

#### GREETING

This is the day the Lord has made!  
**Let us rejoice and be glad in it!**

#### CONGREGATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

**PRELUDE** "Of the Father's Love Begotten" Held

**\*HYMN OF PRAISE # 13** "Prepare the Way"

#### **\*CALL TO WORSHIP**

Leader: Advent is a time to prepare.

**People: Prepare the way of the Lord;  
make straight the way for our God.**

Leader: During Advent we prepare our eyes to see the light of Christ.

**People: Prepare the way of the Lord;  
make straight the way for our God.**

Leader: During Advent we prepare our hearts  
to receive the Word of Christ.

**People: Prepare the way of the Lord;  
make straight the way for our God.**

Leader: During Advent we prepare to share the joy of Christ.

**People: Prepare the way of the Lord;  
make straight the way for our God.**

Leader: During Advent we prepare to embrace the promise of Christ.

**People: Prepare the way of the Lord;  
make straight the way for our God.**

**LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH** Dave & Maureen Knechtel,  
Lynnea Hunter, Eric Parker and Josh Parsons

**Hymn** "Lighting the Flame of Hope" (Choir)

Lighting the flame, prepare the way, eagerly we watch and pray.  
Savior, Redeemer, come to earth! We await Your humble birth.

#### **Candle Lighting**

#### **Prayer**

**Hymn** "Lighting the Flame of Hope" (Congregation & Choir)

Lighting the flame, prepare the way, eagerly we watch and pray.  
Savior, Redeemer, come to earth! We await Your humble birth.

*Traditional French Carol, arr. Ruth E. Schram, © 2008 by Alfred Publ. Co.*

#### **\*CALL TO CONFESSION**

#### **\*PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

**All knowing God,  
we confess our worry and anxiety over unimportant matters.  
We admit the fears that make us defensive instead of loving.  
We acknowledge our resentment over losses we have sustained  
and oppression we have suffered.**

**We recognize that we have been far more concerned for our own welfare  
than for the building up of Christ's body, the church.**

**In our congregation, we have focused on survival more than service.**

**We look for what we can gain more than for what we can give.**

**Re-establish your rule among us, we pray, and save us from ourselves.  
Amen.**

#### **\*ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

**\*CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE # 23, refrain** "Angels We Have Heard on High"  
Gloria in excelsis Deo; Gloria in excelsis Deo.

### HEARING THE WORD OF GOD

#### PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

**OLD TESTAMENT READING** pg. 668 Isaiah 40:21-31

**ANTHEM** "See Amid the Winter's Snow" arr. Willocks  
"Away in a Manger" arr. Willocks

**CHILDREN'S MOMENTS** Deborah Lewis

**GOSPEL READING** pg. 109 John 14:25-27, Acts 1:4-5, 12-14, 2:1-4

**SERMON** Ways God Helps Us Wait The Rev. Bill Hyers

### RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

**\*HYMN # 56** "The First Nowell"

#### ORDINATION AND INSTALLATION OF ELDERS

Leader: There are varieties of gifts,  
but it is the same Spirit who gives them.

**People: There are different ways of serving God,  
But it is the same Lord who is served.**

Leader: God works through each person in a unique way,  
but it is God's purpose that is accomplished.

**People: To each is given a gift of the Spirit  
to be used for the common good.**

Leader: Together we are the body of Christ,  
and individually members of it.

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER** pg. 16 (Trad. version)

#### GIVING OF OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

**Offertory** "There is Faint Music" Forrest

**\*Doxology # 22 (v. 4)** "Angels, from the Realms of Glory"

All creation, join in praising God the Father, Spirit, Son,  
Evermore your voices raising To the eternal Three in One:  
Come and worship, come and worship, Worship Christ, the newborn King!

#### **\*Prayer of Dedication**

### GOING OUT TO SERVE

**\*HYMN # 40** "Joy to the World!"

#### **\*BENEDICTION**

Leader: Rejoice always and pray without ceasing.  
Give thanks to God, whatever your circumstances.

**People: God has done great things for us.  
We rejoice that we are part of God's family.**

Leader: Listen for the word of the prophets.  
Be open to the stirrings of the Holy Spirit.

**People: The Spirit of God has come to us.  
We have a mission to accomplish for God.**

Leader: God is faithful and will stand by you.  
You are valued in God's covenant community.

**People: We are filled with joy as we go out to serve.  
We are thankful for the good news we carry.**

Leader: Amen.  
**People: Amen.**

**\*POSTLUDE** "From Heaven Above to Earth I Come" Zachau

\*For those who are able, please stand.

NOTE: All music reprinted under OneLicense.net License #A71439

**Hearing devices and large-print Hymnals are available in the back of the sanctuary; and a limited number of large-print bulletins are on the table in the Narthex.**

**Please remember that the thermostat has been set to 68 degrees for the winter season. Lap blankets are available under the table in the Narthex for those who need them.**

There will be **no Gateway to Worship** for the children during the Advent season. We hope they enjoy the beauty of the sanctuary, Christmas carols, and the anticipation of Christmas!

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

**WELCOME VISITORS!** We are glad you are here. If you are seeking a church home, we invite you to join with us in service to Christ.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

### After Church Lunch - Today!

**Please join us in the Fellowship Hall immediately after worship for After Church Lunch.** We look forward to sharing this fellowship opportunity with you!

**Helen Davis and Anne Smith are being installed as Elders this morning.**

**Please welcome and enjoy ETSU's 8 Times-a-Lady**, a new ensemble started this semester by Dr. Zachary Marshall, Visiting Professor of Music. The ladies perform in diverse venues throughout the region, and their repertoire includes a variety of styles encompassing pop, sacred, and classical. The group specializes in a cappella music, but occasionally sings with instrumental accompaniment. They are accompanied this morning by Jennifer Marshall.

#### Members of 8 Times-a-Lady:

Jessica Abedlnour - Barquisimeto, Venezuela  
McKenzie Gentry - Cookeville, TN  
Kelsey Holmes - Glade Spring, VA  
Erin Larkin - Kingsport, TN  
Mackenzie Payne - Greeneville, TN  
Kelsey Snapp - Johnson City, TN  
Tatum Spears - Weber City, VA  
Kelsey Stubbs - Cookeville, TN

### Christmas Eve Schedule - December 24, 2011

Please join us for **refreshments in the Fellowship Hall from 4:00 to 5:30.** It will be a great time to visit with folks that you don't get to see very often who are in town for the holidays! *Please bring a plate of your favorite cookies or snacks to share and enjoy this time of fellowship with us! Punch and lemonade will be provided.*

**At 5:30 p.m., the Pre-Service Music will begin in the Sanctuary.**

**The Christmas Eve Candlelight Service will begin in the Sanctuary at 6:00 p.m.**

|               |  |                  |
|---------------|--|------------------|
| 4:00 – 5:30p: | Annual Christmas Eve Reception           | Fellowship Hall  |
| 5:30 – 6:00p: | Pre-Service Music                        | Sanctuary        |
| <b>6:00p:</b> | <b>Christmas Eve Candlelight Service</b> | <b>Sanctuary</b> |

### Christmas Eve Music

Christmas Eve is a special time in the life of our Church. It is also a time that many welcome home children, grandchildren, and other family members. Perhaps one of your family members sings solos or plays a musical instrument. **Prior to the 6:00 service on Christmas Eve**, there will be a 30-minute time of Christmas music. **If you or one of your family members would like to share music during this time, please call me. I would like to hear from you by December 11<sup>th</sup> (today).** Call Melodye at (843) 655-2557.

### Christmas Joy Offering

Next Sunday, December 18<sup>th</sup>, we receive the Christmas Joy Offering. This offering supports the education of students at Presbyterian racial ethnic schools and colleges and helps families of active and retired church workers in need through the assistance programs of the Board of Pensions.

### Good Samaritan Offering

Next Sunday, December 18<sup>th</sup>, the Good Samaritan Offering will be received. This month they need: dish soap, laundry detergent, paper towels, toilet paper, cleanser, deodorant, bath soap, toothbrushes, toothpaste, and shampoo.

### Human Resources Committee

Each year we are given the opportunity to provide monetary gifts to the Elder's Fund, the majority of which is used for Christmas honoraria for our fine staff. Our congregation has always been very generous in providing donations to the fund. Our members are appreciative of the dedication of our staff members, and this is a wonderful opportunity to show that appreciation. We ask that each member consider making their donations as generous as possible and, since it would be helpful for the staff to have their gifts well before Christmas, to make their donations as soon as they can. Just mark "Elder's Fund" on your checks and place in the offering plate or send to the church office. We know we can count on our membership, as we always have. Thanks so much, Max Wilson, Chair.

### Christmas Caroling - Sunday, December 18

Meet at the church at 4:30 p.m. to carol at various members' houses and nursing homes. After caroling we will bring snacks to share at the Sutter home. (Snacks can be brought to the church and given to Andrea after morning services that day.)

### Tithes and Offerings

Please remember that as year end approaches, your tithes and offerings **will be credited to your 2011 Statement of Giving** if made **before** December 31<sup>st</sup>. (Or if mailed, **postmarked** by December 31<sup>st</sup>.)

### The Mitten Tree

The Mitten Tree is in the hallway across from the church office! Please bring hats, scarves and mittens for children in our area who need a little warmth.

### Friendship (Afternoon) Circle

Hostess: Janet Powell. Co-Hostesses: Helen Davis and Sally Nagel.

Lesson Four Leader: Jan Pavaglio.

The December meeting of the Friendship Circle will be a Holiday Luncheon on **Tuesday, December 13<sup>th</sup> at 11:30 a.m.** We will meet at the home of Janet Powell (417 Shade Tree Way, J.C.), and we welcome all of our regular members as well as any others who would like to join us for lunch! Please call Janet at 610-0445 to let her know that you are coming and to find out what to bring. We will study Lesson Four after lunch.

### Joy (Evening) Circle

The Joy Circle will meet on **Tuesday, December 27<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. at the church.** Lesson 4. Contact: Anne Smith (929-1604).

### Alternative Gift Fair

Is it too late?! Not for **Alternative Gift** giving. Each mission could still use and appreciate your help, this year more than ever. If you missed the Alternative Gift Fair and would like to give a gift in a friend or family member's name, there is still time. Missions are: **Missionaries Kristi and Bob Rice, The River, Interfaith Hospitality Network and Living Waters for the World.** Alternative Gift forms and Brochures describing these missions are on the table in the Narthex. (Cards and envelopes for your use are available in the church office.) These forms may be turned in any time during Advent. Thank you.

### Youth Montreat Fundraiser Trivia Night - December 15<sup>th</sup>

There will be no Third Thursday Dinner in December, but there will be a brand-new, one-time only, absolutely not-to-be-missed **Third Thursday Montreat Fundraiser Trivia Night!** Look for details in the December Courier and in future bulletins. As many of you know, several youth from our church (and some adults) had a great time at last summer's Montreat Youth Conference in Montreat, NC. This summer's conference will be June 10-16, 2012, and the theme is "Perfectly Imperfect." Covenant has a whopping 18 eligible youth ("eligible" is anyone currently in grades 8-12) and we're hoping that most of them can go. With food, housing, transportation and conference fees, the total cost \$476 per person.

Now, you may be asking yourself what this has to do with you. Maybe you don't have any youth that can go, or maybe you've never had a chance to do anything with the youth group before. Fear not! There's a first time for everything. As a community and family in Christ, we—the members of Covenant Presbyterian Church—have a great opportunity to help our children.

The total per person cost of \$476 has been divided into thirds; the participating youth will be expected to raise a third of the cost, the families of the participating youth will raise a third, and we, as the church family, will help raise a third. Ergo, our "Third" Thursday Montreat Fundraiser Trivia Night! **Mark your calendars for December 15, 6.30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Donations will be accepted at the door, and all the proceeds will go to support the church's third of the Montreat cost! So come join the fun!**

For more information on Montreat Youth Conferences, go to [www.montreat.org](http://www.montreat.org). For more on Covenant's participation or financial questions, contact Lynnea Hunter (828-266-1917).

### Jenni Marshall

Jenni Marshall, our wonderful accompanist, has submitted her resignation effective December 26, 2011. When she accepted the position she stated clearly she did not know how long she would be able to be with us, and the decision was made to enjoy her talents as long as she could stay. In her own words, "My husband, Zach's position as a music professor at ETSU has only been granted for one school year. In the meantime the position of organist of First Baptist Church Knoxville has become available to me. Zach and I feel that this is an opportunity that could provide some security for us as he discovers God's will for his employment for the next school year. It has been an honor and a blessing to serve as organist/accompanist at Covenant, and both Zach and I appreciate the warm welcome we have received in this congregation!" We will miss Jenni, but wish her and Zach God's blessings for their future.

### Today at Covenant:

Morning Greeter:  
Liturgist:  
Nursery:

Jim Starr  
Hal Hunter  
Nancy Hart

### Church Staff:

|                         |                   |                      |               |
|-------------------------|-------------------|----------------------|---------------|
| Dir. of Youth Ministry: | Lynnea Hunter     | Financial Secretary: | Anne Webb     |
| Music Director:         | Melodye Sparks    | Custodian:           | Marie Britt   |
| Accompanist:            | Jennifer Marshall | Nursery Worker:      | Jeanne Gamble |
| Secretary:              | Tina Simon        |                      |               |

### Mission Statement

Covenant Presbyterian Church exists to glorify and enjoy God. We live knowing that God calls us to be a place of love, support, hope and acceptance regardless of earthly labels; Jesus Christ commissions us to make disciples and passionately share our gifts with the world through prayer, teaching, and service; the Holy Spirit allows us to determine and carry out Christ's will for our lives and the life of our church, and empowers us to seek out and respond to the needs of our local and global community.

# COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent – December 11, 2011

603 Sunset Drive, Johnson City, TN 37604  
(423) 282-5324

E-Mail: [office@covenantpresjc.org](mailto:office@covenantpresjc.org),  
Website: [www.covenantpresjc.org](http://www.covenantpresjc.org)



### PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

Holy God, we pray your blessing  
on those who lead us in worship this day,  
those who speak and sing and move among us,  
those who direct others in singing and playing,  
those who have prepared this space with beauty.

We ask that each of them may lead  
with a sense of peace and confidence  
that comes from your Spirit,  
so that your truth may be proclaimed faithfully  
and we may live up to our calling as the body of Christ.  
Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.