

*(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!

RITUAL OF FRIENDSHIP AND CONGREGATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

PRELUDE *Fantasy on "In Dulci Jubilo"* transcribed by Russell

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Listen! Do you hear the sounds of joy?
Have you heard the messenger's good news?
**People: The Word was with God from the beginning.
In Jesus, the Word has come to dwell among us.**
Leader: Break forth into singing, people of God!
Your comfort and your salvation are at hand.
**People: In Christ, we are empowered as God's children.
We are gifted with grace and truth.**
Leader: Sing a new song and marvel at God's ways.
Make a joyful noise through all the earth.
**People: We celebrate the true light that enlightens us.
We rejoice in the gift of new life.**

*OPENING PRAYER

*CAROLS # 41 *"O Come All Ye Faithful"*
37 *"Infant Holy, Infant Lowly"*
27 *"Gentle Mary Laid Her Child"*

HEARING THE WORD OF GOD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

OLD TESTAMENT READING pg. 683 Isaiah 52:7-10

ANTHEM *"Beside Thy cradle here I stand"* J.S. Bach
Beside Thy cradle here I stand, O Thou that ever livest,
And bring Thee with a willing hand the very gifts Thou givest.
Accept me; 'tis my mind and heart, my soul, my strength, my ev'ry part,
That Thou from me requirest.
Published 1931 by E.C. Schirmer Music Co.

GOSPEL READING pg. 91 John 1:1-14

SERMON In the Beginning... The Rev. Dr. Barbara Edema

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

*CAROLS # 23 *"Angels We Have Heard on High"*
28 *"Good Christian Friends, Rejoice"*
44 *"O Little Town of Bethlehem"*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

GIVING OF OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

Offertory *"Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming"* Brahms
***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

*CAROLS # 29 *"Go, Tell It on the Mountain"*
40 *"Joy to the World!"*

*BENEDICTION

Leader: How beautiful are the messengers who announce peace.
How welcome is the news of our salvation!
**People: We have been given a new song to sing.
We will make a joyful noise to our God.**
Leader: God, who spoke through the prophets, speaks to us.
God, who sent Jesus, also has a mission for us.
**People: While the earth is our home, we are its stewards.
People of the earth are neighbors and kin.**
Leader: As John witnessed to the light, so are we to do.
We are empowered to become children of God.
**People: We will live our acceptance of God's gifts.
We will trust God and witness to the light.**
Leader: Amen.
People: Amen.

*POSTLUDE *"Joy to the World"* Cherwien

*For those who are able, please stand.

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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.

NOTES:

- Due to the shortened service next week (New Year's Day), **we will not be observing Communion.**
- There are **no Sunday School classes** today.
- There will be **no After Church Coffee Fellowship** today.
- There will be **no Gateway to Worship** for the children this morning.
- The Church office will be **closed on Monday, December 26th and Monday, January 2nd.**
- **2012 offering envelopes** are on the table in the Narthex.

Poinsettias

Thanks to all of you who helped to decorate and beautify our sanctuary during this season by contributing the **poinsettias**. Please take them home with you today and enjoy them!

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.

Today is our Accompanist, Jenni Marshall's last day with us. 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.

This morning we again welcome the Rev. Dr. Barbara Edema to the pulpit. Barb is an ordained minister in the Reformed Church in America (RCA). She has served churches in Pella, Iowa, and Grand Rapids & Chelsea in Michigan. She received her Doctor of Ministry degree from Western Theological Seminary in 2005. She is married to Dr. Doug Edema, is the mother of Elise, Lauren, Alana and Wes, and stepmother to Becky and Todd. Barb, Doug and Wes moved to Johnson City in November 2010. (Wes has since moved back to Chelsea to finish high school.)

Christmas Joy Offering

Last Sunday the Christmas Joy Offering was received. Our offering supports the education of students at Presbyterian racial ethnic schools and colleges and helps families of active and retired church workers in need. **There is still time to contribute. Thank you for your generosity.**

Youth Fundraiser - Thank You!!!

A big "Thank you!" to everyone who came to the **Youth Group's first Trivia Night!** **We were able to raise over \$300** so we're off to a really good start for our Montreat fundraising. Also, a big thank you to those of you who couldn't come, but have faithfully donated to us anyway. We're truly grateful! **Mark your calendars now for SpudFest, which will be the After Church Lunch for Sunday, March 11.** More details to follow, but you won't want to miss this!

Un-Greening of the Church -Saturday, January 7th -9:30 a.m.

Please join us the morning of January 7, 2012 to un-decorate the church. We will need some strong backs for this. Thanks!

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.

Presbyterian Women

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

Young Adult Gathering

The Young Adult January Gathering will be **Friday, January 13.** We'll be heading to Bristol for an ice skating party followed by dinner. (Or possibly dinner followed by ice skating; we'll see.) Watch your email, Facebook, and the bulletin for more information. See you then!

Youth Ski Trip

The youth ski trip is tentatively planned for Sunday night, January 15th at Ski Beech (www.beechmountainresort.com) for the 6:00 - 10:00 p.m. session! The trip leader is Ann Freeman. Prices are as follows:

- Lift tickets \$20
- Ski rentals \$16
- Snowboard rentals \$22

Details will be forthcoming about when and where to meet and return.

Annual Meeting

The **Annual Meeting of the Congregation** will be held as part of our **After Church Lunch on Sunday, January 22nd**. Highlights of 2011 will be reviewed, the 2012 budget will be presented, and we will elect members of the church Nominating Committee as well as officers of the corporation. Please plan to attend! It will be a wonderful opportunity to learn more about what's happening at Covenant.

- Note to Committee Chairs:** 2011 Committee Reports for the Annual Report need to be e-mailed to Tina **before January 10th, 2012**.

** Volunteers Needed in 2012 **

NURSERY:

While Jeanne Gamble has been rehired to cover the infant nursery, we still need continued coverage/staffing for the room across the hall, where the toddlers (aged 2+) are cared for during the service. If you are willing and able to help, please contact Linda Dulin at 913-0202. Thank you!

COMMUNION SERVERS and USHERS:

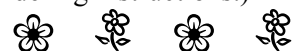
Sign-up sheets are on the bulletin board in the Narthex. For info on serving communion, please contact Helen Davis at 929-2085. For info on serving as an Usher, please call Jim Starr at 928-4108. Thank you!

AFTER CHURCH COFFEE FELLOWSHIP:

Oh, no! Juan Valdez is missing!! That means that dear ol' Covenant could use some help with Coffee Hour after Sunday worship. It isn't that time consuming or expensive and adds a great deal to our Sundays together. Won't you consider helping out? Just sign up on the bulletin board in the Narthex. If you have questions, please contact Andrea (773-5602) or Lauri (620-3625). Thank you!



The **2012 Flower Chart** is on the bulletin board in the hall outside the sanctuary. Please sign up if you would like to place flowers in the sanctuary to honor or remember someone or to mark a special occasion. (Please call Tina in the office at 282-5324 for ordering instructions.)



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.

PEOPLE IN OUR PRAYERS

Mary Nell Stegall, Barbara & Jerry Ladich, the Jones Family, Rose Willis, Eileen Madden, Doris Sanders, Mary Bell Orr (the Underwood's daughter's mother-in-law), Bill Hagood (Sharon Amstutz' father), Arlene Wilkinson, Chris Adler Hillhouse, Pat Wiley, Betty Maletich, Hugh Underwood, Everrette Dale Thompson (Phyllis Thompson's uncle), Jon Christiansen (missionary), Bob Rice (missionary), Peggy Underwood, Eric Smith (son of former members Keith & Pam Smith), Jack Fletcher, Corrine Broyles, Elva McCartt, Marie Britt, Hazel Hinkle (John Merriss' sister-in-law), Patsy Young (Butch Carr's cousin), Arthur "Bud" & Eileen Kelsey; Tim Jones, Joyce Ford & her family (all friends of Butch & Harriette Carr)

If you know of other reasons for rejoicing or concerns you would like to share with others please complete a prayer card with your requests.

Today at Covenant:

| | |
|------------------|---------------------------|
| Morning Greeter: | Jim Starr |
| Liturgist: | Doug Edema |
| Nursery: | Beth Amstutz & Kathi Cary |

This Week at Covenant:

Today, December 25 – Christmas Day

11:00a Worship Service

Monday, December 26

Church Office Closed

7:00a AA Meeting

Tuesday, December 27

7:00p Joy Circle

7:00p AI-Anon Meeting

Wednesday, December 28

7:00a AA Meeting

7:15p Choir Practice

Thursday, December 29

8:00a Men's Bible Study

9:30a Women in the Bible

Noon AI-Anon Meeting

Friday, December 30

7:00a AA Meeting

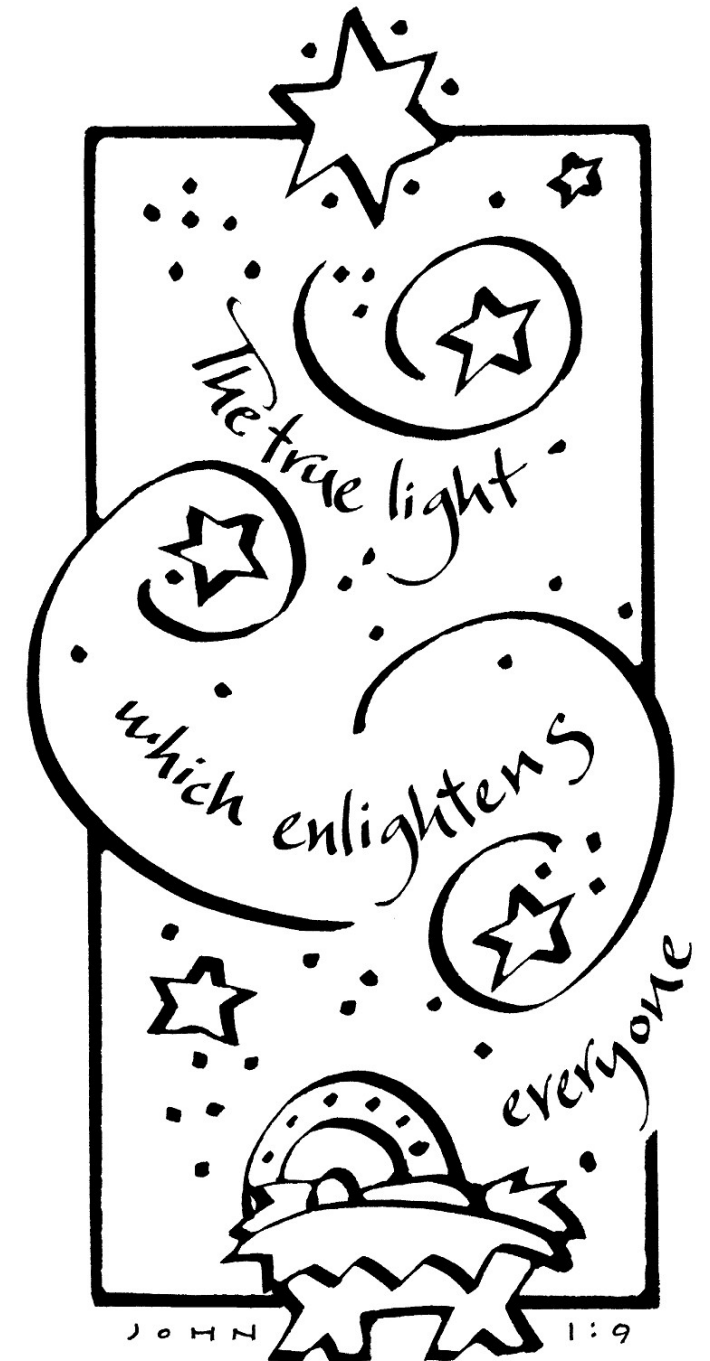
Church Staff:

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

Covenant Presbyterian Church
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COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Christmas Day – December 25, 2011



PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

*Bless us, O God,
with a reverent sense of your presence,
that we may be at peace
and may worship you with all our mind and spirit;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*