

(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/silence cell phones.)

GATHERING IN GOD'S NAME

SOUNDING OF THE HOUR

WELCOME

Kathi Cary

GREETING

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

PRELUDE

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: A child has been born for us;
All: A child has been given to us.
Leader: And his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, the Prince of Peace. Once we were no people;
All: Now we are God's people.
Leader: Once we walked in darkness;
All: Now we have seen a great light.

from Cloth for the Cradle

OPENING PRAYER

*HYMN OF PRAISE # 132

"Good Christian Friends, Rejoice"

CALL TO CONFESSION

(Few moments of silent prayer)

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Leader: Eternal God, in the long ago days when the earth was flat, and heaven was above the clouds, and disease was caused by demons, your son was born to lighten all our darkneses. We now, after the enlightenment, are in bondage to different limitations. We doubt what we cannot prove; we ignore what we cannot see, and finding little room for faith, we must confess,

All: We suspect angels and disbelieve good news.

Leader: We admit ourselves to be both infected and affected by the spirit of our times. Behind talk of world peace, we hear the machinery of war; beneath talk of global equity we detect the posturing of the powerful; beside talk of your church being renewed, we recognize the bondage to failed patterns of the past. Rather than embrace the light, we become fascinated by darkness, and must confess,

All: We suspect angels and disbelieve good news.

Leader: Ah, God, who will save us? Our cynicism is the fruit of our experience, not the key to the future. Our suspiciousness helps us to smell the rat, never to recognize the dove. Our perfect analysis may describe the mountain, but is helpless to move it. It is with little pride we must confess,

All: We suspect angels and disbelieve good news.

Leader: In this season of Christmas give us a share of that naivete enjoyed by Elizabeth and Zechariah, Mary and Joseph, and unnamed shepherds who encountered the angels and believed the Good News and recognized Christ among them.

All: Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Leader: To all who turn from sin in sorrow, to all who turn to God in hope, this is God's Word of grace: We are accepted, we are forgiven, we are loved. This gift we have from God.

People: Thanks be to God!

*CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE # 417, vs. 1 "Lord Jesus, Think on Me"

Lord Jesus, think on me,
and purge away my sin.
From earthborn passions set me free,
and make me pure within.

*THE PEACE

Leader: As people forgiven by the abundant grace of God, we are at peace with God, and we are called to live in peace with one another. The peace of Christ be with you.

People: And also with you.

Leader: Please take a moment to share the peace of Christ with those near you.

****Gateway to Worship** (*Children can meet the Gateway leader in the back of the sanctuary near the entrance doors.*)

HEARING THE WORD OF GOD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

OLD TESTAMENT READING (p. 692—OT)

Isaiah 61:10-62:3

GOSPEL READING (p. 91—NT)

John 1:1-18

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

SERMON

Rev. Melissa Earley

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

*HYMN OF CONTEMPLATION # 666 "O Splendor of God's Glory Bright"

*AFFIRMATION 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 Ghost, 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 Ghost; the holy catholic church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

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.

GIVING OF OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

Offering

Offertory Duet "The Little Drummer Boy/Peace on Earth"

arr. James Christian, Jr.

*Doxology # 606

"Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow"

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise God, all creatures here below;
praise God above, ye heavenly host;
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

*Prayer of Dedication

GOING OUT TO SERVE

*HYMN OF SENDING # 113

"Angels We Have Heard on High"

*BENEDICTION

*POSTLUDE

*Please rise, in body or spirit.

Notes: *All music reprinted under CCLI license*

****Gateway to Worship** is our worship program for 4-year-olds through second graders. The Gateway leader will take the children to their classroom in the Fellowship Hall after the Congregational Response.

Large-print Hymnals are available in the back of the sanctuary; and **large-print bulletins** are on the table in the Narthex.

Hearing Assist Devices are located in the rear of the Sanctuary. Disposable ear buds are available for your convenience. They can be disposed after use in the labeled slot. **Please note**, only one ear bud receives signal, so please check both buds to determine that the unit is working. Contact the church office with any other issues.

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.

Please join us in the library immediately following worship for a time of fellowship and refreshments.

This morning we welcome the Rev. Melissa Earley to the pulpit. Melissa is the lead pastor of First United Methodist Church of Arlington Heights in Illinois. She is a writer, with pieces published in *The Christian Century*, *Disciplines*, and local newspapers. Melissa is a story teller. She tells regularly at First Person Live in Arlington Heights and recently won a Moth Story Slam. Melissa lives with her dog Mandy and is an avid reader, kayaker and hiker. You can read her blog at www.melissa-earley.com.

CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING

Last week we received 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. There is still time to give. Please give generously.

COMMUNION NEXT SUNDAY

The **SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER** will be celebrated next Sunday. Take time this week to prepare yourself in prayer and meditation.

NOTES ABOUT YEAR-END CONTRIBUTIONS

Here are just a few reminders as you consider your year-end contributions to the church.

If possible, please consider fulfilling your "2019" Pledge. To those who have made your 2020 Pledge, **thank you** for supporting the church and its mission. **If you are planning on giving a contribution of stock**, please have a broker statement in the Church Office no later than December 31, 2019, for the gift to be included as a "2019" contribution.

All donations must be delivered or mailed (and postmarked) on or before December 31, 2019 in order to receive a charitable tax donation for "2019". Checks that are placed in the church offering during the first worship service in 2020 will not qualify for a charitable tax contribution deduction in 2018. However, checks that are written, mailed and postmarked in "2019" will be deductible in 2019 even if not received by the church until 2020.

Thank you for your generous gifts to the church.

The Church office will be closed on **Wednesday, January 1, 2020.**

NEWSLETTER

The **JANUARY COURIER** *may* be on the table in the Narthex. If not, it will be mailed/emailed to you early this week. Please be sure to read it! You will also be able to find the newsletter and January's calendar on our website: www.cpcjc.org.



MEMBERS & REGULAR VISITORS: Please pick up your **2020 Offering Envelopes**, which are on the table in the Narthex. If you would like envelopes for 2020, but don't see your name, please call Tina in the church office at 282-5324!

ARMCHAIR TRAVELERS—JANUARY 5 FROM 3—5 PM

Join us in the Library on the first Sunday of the month from 3—5 PM as we travel to faraway places from the comfort of our armchairs or the sofa! This month we continue our journey in Italy. Bring a light snack to share.

THE LUNCH BUNCH IN JANUARY

The Lunch Bunch will not meet on the 1st Wednesday in January because of New Year's Day, but will meet on the 3rd Wednesday, **January 15th at 12:30 PM at Carraba's Italian Grill**, 175 Marketplace Dr. **Contact Victory Cooper at 282-4641** for more information and to let her know if you plan to come so she can make the appropriate number of reservations.

ATTN: COMMITTEE CHAIRS/LIAISONS

By now you should have received an email with your committee's 2018 Annual Report attached. **Please revise it for 2019 and email it to Tina by Wednesday, January 8, 2020**, for inclusion in Covenant's 2019 Annual Report. If you have any questions, please contact Tina at 282-5324 or office@cpcjc.org. Thank you!

ONLINE GIVING!

Online Giving is available through our website at www.cpcjc.org. Getting started is easy—just click on the **Online Giving** link. This is a convenient and safe way to make a one-time or recurring donation. *If you have any questions, please contact Tina in the church office.*

NAME TAGS

Please wear your name tag to make it easier to get to know each other. **If you don't find one with your name on it, please let us know!**

COLD & FLU SEASON

There are **Purell hand sanitizers** located throughout the building. These were given to the church as a donation to help reduce the spread of illness during cold and flu season. So shake hands (or "fist bump") all you like, just stop by one of the hand sanitizers on your way out!

TODAY AT COVENANT

Morning Greeter:	Jim Starr
Liturgist:	Dr. David Wood
Section Leader:	Shawn Hale
Duet:	Joe Gumina & Shawn Hale
Nursery:	Jane Deaton
Gateway:	Julie Wood

CHURCH STAFF

Music Director:	Jessica Siple
Office Administrator:	Tina Simon
Administrative Assistant:	Anne Webb
Custodian:	Marie Britt
Nursery Worker:	Jeanne Gamble

PRAYER CONCERNS

Week of December 29—January 4, 2020

Mona Barron, who fell and broke her leg. She was scheduled for surgery at JCMC on Friday or Saturday.
Eddie Mullins, Holly Bland's father, who is in the hospital in Morristown with internal bleeding.
Linda Sisk, who is in the hospital (JCMC) with severe cellulitis.
Cynthia Erdei, who is recovering from surgery.
Steve Jones, a dear friend of Sharon Fuhrman, who has kidney cancer.
Bob & Betty Thompson, Phyllis' parents.
Michael & Karen, missionaries who are stationed in Afghanistan.

Please remember those in our congregation who are homebound and unable to join us regularly in worship:

Vi Block, Jeter Collins, Lattie Collins, Mary Derouen,
Helen Fletcher, Glay Hood, Barbara Quisenberry, C.B. Willis

Join us in continually lifting up in prayer our mission co-workers:

Bob & Kristi Rice: South Sudan
Jon & Kathy Christiansen: Zimbabwe

and Ministries of the Presbytery:

UKirk ETSU (Pres. Campus Ministry)
Holston Presbytery Camp



In the event of emergency, be aware that our Automated External Defibrillator (AED) Unit is located on the wall outside the front door of the Church Office.



Covenant Presbyterian Church is proud to have received the designation of being an Earth Care Congregation, through the PC(USA).

Covenant Presbyterian Church has been certified as a **Recovery Congregation** by the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services.



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

CHRIST • PEOPLE • COMMUNITY

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Facebook: "Covenant Presbyterian Church (Johnson City, TN.)"
Instagram: @covenantpcjohnsoncity

DECEMBER 29, 2019

1ST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS DAY

PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

O God, we joyously come together to worship, realizing we need not summon you into our midst, for you are here. We need not call you into the secret places of our hearts, for you are there. We need our eyes of faith to be opened, that we may see you; our ears to be unstopped, that we may hear you; our minds to be sensitive, that we may know you; our hearts to be tender, that we may receive you.

Grant each one a blessing, O Lord, as each has need, in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

THIS WEEK AT COVENANT

Today, Dec. 29

9:30a – 9:55a

Weekly Prayer Group

9:45a/10:00a

Sunday School

11:00a

Worship Service

7:00p

N.A. Meeting

Monday, Dec. 30

7:00p

NarAnon Meeting

Tuesday, Dec. 31 – New Year’s Eve

7:00p

Al-Anon Meeting

Wednesday, Jan. 1 – New Year’s Day

Church Office Closed

7:00p

N.A. Meeting

Thursday, Jan. 2

8:00a

Men’s Bible Study

Noon

Al-Anon Meeting

Friday, Jan. 3

Noon

CoDA Meeting

1:30p

N.A. Meeting

6:30p

Al-Anon Meeting