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Gospel Centered
CHRIST EXALTING

The Lord's Day
December 21, 2025

Covenant's Mission Statement

"To build a faithful community of joyful disciples."

Covenant's Values

Covenant is **biblical** by affirming the Bible as the authoritative Word of God,
connectional by affiliating with the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA),
confessional by adhering to the Westminster Standards,
missional by seeking to spread the Gospel worldwide, and
relational by encouraging the church family to build community.

The Fourth Sunday in Advent
Love

“No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him.”

Revelation 22:3

The Christmas Service of Lessons and Carols

Prelude

During the prelude selection, prepare for worship by reflecting on Revelation 22:3 printed above.

Life of the Church and Explanation of the Service

Call to Worship

Isaiah 25:9

[9] It will be said on that day, “Behold, this is our God; we have waited for him, that he might save us. This is the LORD; we have waited for him; let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.”

Opening Carol

“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;

refrain: *O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.*

God of God, Light of Light;
lo, He abhors not the Virgin's womb:
very God, begotten, not created;

refrain

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above;
glory to God in the highest;

refrain

Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, born this happy morning:
Jesus, to Thee be all glory giv'n;
Word of the Father, late in flesh appearing;

refrain

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Today's Advent Readers are Brason Young and Anna Grace McCarty

Responsive Reading

Reader: The Lord our God is with us and is mighty to save us.

**Congregation: God will take great delight in us and will quiet us in love.
God will rejoice over us with singing.**

[15] *He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.*
 [16] *For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.*
 [17] *And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.*
 [18] *And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent.*
 [19] *For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell,*
 [20] *and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.*
 [21] *And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds,*
 [22] *he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him,*
 [23] *if indeed you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, became a minister.*

Lighting of the Advent Candle

Prayer

Corporate Profession of Faith

Galatians 4:4-7

[4] But when the fullness of time had come,
 God sent forth his Son,
 born of woman, born under the law,
 [5] to redeem those who were under the law,
 so that we might receive adoption as sons.
 [6] And because you are sons,
 God has sent the Spirit of his Son
 into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!"
 [7] So you are no longer a slave, but a son,
 and if a son, then an heir through God.

Offertory and Collection of Tithes and Offerings

"The Love of God"

Choir

The love of God is greater far than tongue or pen can ever tell;
 it goes beyond the highest star, and reaches to the lowest hell;
 the guilty pair, bowed down with care, God gave His Son to win;
 His erring child He reconciled, and pardoned from his sin.

When years of time shall pass away and earthly thrones and kingdoms fall,
 when men who here refuse to pray, on rocks and hills and mountains call,
 God's love so pure shall still endure, all measureless and strong;
 redeeming grace to Adam's race— the saints' and angels' song.

Could we with ink the ocean fill and were the skies of parchment made,
 were ev'ry stalk on earth a quill and ev'ry man a scribe by trade,
 to write the love of God above would drain the ocean dry;
 nor could the scroll contain the whole, tho' stretched from sky to sky.

O love of God, how rich and pure! How measureless and strong!
 It shall forevermore endure: the saints' and angels' song!

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The First Lesson: The Fall of Man and the First Proclamation of the Gospel.

Genesis 3:1-15

Pastor Coyle

[1] Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?'" [2] And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, [3] but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.'" [4] But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. [5] For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." [6] So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. [7] Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths. [8] And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. [9] But the LORD God called to the man and said to him, "Where are you?" [10] And he said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself." [11] He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" [12] The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate." [13] Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate." [14] The LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you above all livestock and above all beasts of the field; on your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. [15] I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.

Corporate Confession of Sin

Almighty God, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ You have given us a sure hope and future, yet we confess that we have set out hope on other things: money, family, success, pleasure. Forgive us for breaking Your Law and putting these things ahead of You. By Your Spirit, help us to set our hope fully on Your promises and to lead holy lives as we await Christ's return. In Jesus name, Amen.

Individual Prayer of Confession (Silent Prayer)

Assurance of Pardon

Isaiah 40:1-2

[1] Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. [2] Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned, that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins.

The Carol

"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 host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

refrain: *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 the Virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see; hail th'incarnate Deity,
pleased as man with men to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel.

refrain

Hail the heav'n-born Prince of Peace! Hail, the Sun 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.

refrain

The Second Lesson: The Prophet foretells of the coming Messiah.
Isaiah 7:14; 9:2, 6-7

Dan Butkowski, Ruling Elder

[7:14) Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

[9:2] The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone.

[6] For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

[7] Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

The Third Lesson: The Prophet foretells the glory of little Bethlehem.
Micah 5:2-5

Dan Butkowski, Ruling Elder

[2] But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days.

[3] Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has given birth; then the rest of his brothers shall return to the people of Israel.

[4] And he shall stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they shall dwell secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth.

[5] And he shall be their peace. When the Assyrian comes into our land and treads in our palaces, then we will raise against him seven shepherds and eight princes of men.

The Carol

“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here, until the Son of God appear.

refrain: *Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.*

O come, O come, thou Lord of might, Who to thy tribes, on Sinai's height,
in ancient times didst give the law in cloud and majesty and awe.

refrain

O come, thou Rod of Jesse, free Thine own from Satan's tyranny;
from depths of hell Thy people save, and give them victory o'er the grave.

refrain

O come, Thou Dayspring from on high and cheer us by Thy drawing nigh;
disperse the gloomy clouds of night, and death's dark shadows put to flight.

refrain

O come, Thou Key of David, come and open wide our heav'nly home;
make safe the way that leads on high, and close the path to misery.

refrain

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[26] In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, [27] to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. [28] And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" [29] But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. [30] And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. [31] And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. [32] He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, [33] and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." [34] And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?" [35] And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy - the Son of God. [36] And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. [37] For nothing will be impossible with God." [38] And Mary said, "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

The Carol

"Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence"

Let all mortal flesh keep silence, and with fear and trembling stand;
ponder nothing earthly minded, for with blessing in His hand,
Christ our God to earth descendeth, our full homage to demand.

King of kings, yet born of Mary, as of old on earth He stood;
Lord of lords, in human vesture, in the body and the blood,
He will give to all the faithful His own self for heav'nly food.

Rank on rank the host of heaven spreads its vanguard on the way,
as the Light of light descendeth from the realms of endless day,
that the pow'rs of hell may vanish as the darkness clears away.

At His feet the six-winged seraph; cherubim, with sleepless eye,
veil their faces to the presence, as with ceaseless voice they cry,
"Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, Lord Most High!"

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[46] And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, [47] and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, [48] for he has looked on the humble estate of his servant. For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed; [49] for he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name. [50] And his mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. [51] He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts; [52] he has brought down the mighty from their thrones and exalted those of humble estate; [53] he has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty. [54] He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, [55] as he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his offspring forever." [56] And Mary remained with her about three months and returned to her home.

All praise to Thee, Eternal Lord, clothed in a garb of flesh and blood;
choosing a manger for Thy throne, while worlds on worlds are Thine alone.

Once did the skies before Thee bow; a virgin's arms contain Thee now:
angels who did in Thee rejoice now listen for Thine infant voice.

A little child, Thou art our guest, that weary ones in Thee may rest;
forlorn and lowly is Thy birth, that we may rise to heav'n from earth.

Thou comest in the darksome night to make us children of the light,
to make us, in the realms divine, like Thine own angels round Thee shine.

All this for us Thy love hath done; by this to Thee our love is won:
for this we tune our cheerful lays, and shout our thanks in ceaseless praise.

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The Sixth Lesson: St. Matthew tells of the birth of Jesus.
Matthew 1:18-25

Richard Long, Ruling Elder

[18] 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.

[19] And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly.

[20] 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.

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

[22] All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:

[23] “Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel” (which means, God with us).

[24] When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife,

[25] but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.

The Seventh Lesson: St. Luke tell of the birth of Jesus.
Luke 2:1-7

Richard Long, Ruling Elder

[2:1] In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered.

[2] This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria.

[3] And all went to be registered, each to his own town.

[4] And 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,

[5] to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child.

[6] And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth.

[7] And 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.

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.

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The Eighth Lesson: The Shepherds are led to the Manger.

Luke 2:8-16

J. C. Baker, Ruling Elder

- [8] *And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field,
 keeping watch over their flock by night.*
- [9] *And an angel of the Lord appeared to them,
 and the glory of the Lord shone around them,
 and they were filled with fear.*
- [10] *And the angel said to them, “Fear not, for behold,
 I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.*
- [11] *For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior,
 who is Christ the Lord.*
- [12] *And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby
 wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.”*
- [13] *And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude
 of the heavenly host praising God and saying,*
- [14] *“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace
 among those with whom he is pleased!”*
- [15] *When the angels went away from them into heaven,
 the shepherds said to one another,
 “Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened,
 which the Lord has made known to us.”*
- [16] *And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph,
 and the baby lying in a manger.*

Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o’er the plains,
 and the mountains in reply echo back their joyous strains.

refrain: *Gloria, in excelsis Deo!*
Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
 Say what may the 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

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The Ninth Lesson: St. John unfolds the great mystery of the incarnation.

John 1:1-14

William Fennell, Ruling Elder

- [1] *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*
[2] *He was in the beginning with God.*
[3] *All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.*
[4] *In him was life, and the life was the light of men.*
[5] *The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.*
[6] *There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.*
[7] *He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through Him.*
[8] *He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.*
[9] *The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world.*
[10] *He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him.*
[11] *He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him.*
[12] *But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God,*
[13] *who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.*
[14] *And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.*

The Carol

“Joy to the World”
(stanzas 1-2)

Joy to the world! the Lord is come: let earth receive her King;
let every heart prepare Him room, and heav’n and nature sing,
and heav’n and nature sing, and heav’n, and heav’n and nature sing.

Joy to the earth! The Savior reigns: let men their songs employ;
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains repeat the sounding joy,
repeat the sounding joy, repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

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Message

“He Comes to Make His Blessings Flow”
Revelation 22:1-5

Pastor Reed

The Carol

“Joy to the World”
(stanzas 3 & 4)

No more let sins and sorrows grow, nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make His blessings flow far as the curse is found,
far as the curse is found, far as, far as the curse is found.

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.

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Ordination and Installation of Officers

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The Concluding Carol

“Doxology”

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above ye, heav’nly host:
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

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Scriptural Benediction

Postlude

Service of Ordination and Installation

Installation	Session	Mr. Jim Lewis (class of 2028) Dr. Tom Paulus (class of 2028)
Installation	Deacon	Mr. Steve Nielson (class of 2028)
Installation & Ordination	Deacon	Mr. Zachary Wagers (class of 2028) Mr. Bryant Young (class of 2028)

The warrant and nature of the Office of Elder and Deacon

Rev. Derek Coyle

Constitutional Questions to the Candidates

Rev. Tim Reed

- (1) Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as originally given, to be the inerrant Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice?
- (2) Do you sincerely receive and adopt the *Confession of Faith* and the *Catechisms* of this Church, as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures; and do you further promise that if at any time you find yourself out of accord with any of the fundamentals of this system of doctrine, you will, on your own initiative, make known to your Session the change which has taken place in your views since the assumption of this ordination vow?
- (3) Do you approve of the form of government and discipline of the Presbyterian Church in America, in conformity with the general principles of biblical polity?
- (4) Do you accept the office of elder or deacon in this church, and promise faithfully to perform all the duties thereof, and to endeavor by the grace of God to adorn the profession of the Gospel in your life, and to set a worthy example before the Church of which God has made you an officer?
- (5) Do you promise subjection to your brethren in the Lord?
- (6) Do you promise to strive for the purity, peace, unity, and edification of the Church?
(Book of Church Order, 24-5)

Constitutional Question to the Congregation

Rev. Tim Reed

Do you, the members of this church, acknowledge and receive these brothers as elders and deacons, and do you promise to yield them all that honor, encouragement and obedience in the Lord to which his office, according to the Word of God and the Constitution of this Church, entitles him?
(Book of Church Order, 24-5)

Ordination of Deacons

Declaration of Ordination and Installation

Charge to the Officers

Ruling Elder Dan Butkowski

Charge to the Congregation

Ruling Elder William Fennell

The Right Hand of Fellowship by the Session

RULING ELDERS

Class of 2025
Mr. J. C. Baker
Mr. Dan Butkowski
Dr. Bob Tramel

Class of 2026
Mr. William Fennell
Mr. Jeff Nissen
Mr. Bill Scholl

Class of 2027
Dr. Ken Knecht
Mr. Richard Long
Mr. Carl Monroe

TEACHING ELDERS

Rev. Dr. Tim J. Reed, Senior Pastor
Rev. Derek W. Coyle, Associate Pastor

BOARD OF DEACONS

Class of 2025
Mr. Peter Bogaards
Dr. Jonathan Goodwin
Mr. Jason Guenther

Class of 2026
Mr. Andrew Kinzler
Mr. Mike Lieblich
Dr. David Matlock

Class of 2027
Mr. Bob Davis
Mr. Scott Freydl
Mr. Jeff Rooker

STAFF

Rev. Justin Hilliard, Assistant Pastor (Pinnacle Classical Academy)
Mr. Ben Russ, Bookkeeper
Mrs. Peggy Washburn, Administrative Assistant

MUSICIANS/VOCALISTS

Mrs. Roanna Wilson, Choir Director
Mr. David Beurman, Violinist
Mr. Jake Hilburn, Guitarist

Mrs. Valerie Hilliard, Vocalist
Mrs. Katie Hughes, Pianist

COVENANT'S MISSIONARY FAMILIES

Paul & Connie Backstrom	FamilyLife/Bentonville
Dan & Nancy Butkowski	CRU Arts & Culture/Little Rock
Gabriel & Olga Diaz	Church Planting - MTW/Mexico
Frank & Daisy Du	Church Planting/Little Rock
Roger & Laura Dye	FamilyLife/Latin America
Jamie & Jacki Gildard	MTW/France
Kevin & Annie Hale	Training Leaders International
Rob & Jenny Ilderton	MTW/England
Darlene Johnson	MTW/Japan
Tom & Karen Mirabella	MTW/Japan
Pete Mitchell	MTW/France
Ben & Kirstin Spivey	RUF/London
Raimo & Annemari Survo	MTW/Finland
Will & Martha	International
Wes & Kim	Undisclosed

COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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