



December 24, 2021 – 8:00 PM

Covenant is an accepting, welcoming community sharing the glory of God's love with all.

PRELUDE Christmas Concerto, Op. 6 No. 8, "Fatto per la notte di natale" ("Made for Christmas Night.") by Arcangelo Corelli Lyrata String Quartet

WELCOME, ANNOUNCEMENTS, AND PRAYER REQUESTS

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE †

The Turney Family

- A: In God's house, there is hope—
For God loves us too much to leave us just as we are.
(Light the candle of hope.)
- B: In God's house, there is peace—
For all that separates us from God falls away.
(Light the candle of peace.)
- A: In God's house, there is joy—
Because God created music, and coffee, and dance floors, and laughter that is contagious, and endless rounds of peek-a-boos with babies; and if those things have God's fingerprints, then God's house surely exudes joy.
(Light the candle of joy.)
- B: In God's house, there is love—
Because God is love, from start to finish, and that love exists for us all.
(Light the candle of love.)
- A: And in the center of our hope,
B: In the center of our peace,
A: In the center of our joy,

B: In the center of our love, is God—who came to this earth to dwell among us.
A: So tonight we light the Christ candle, for God's love just could not stay away.
B: Welcome home. Amen.

INTROIT "Candles Glowing, Promise Showing"
Candles glowing, promise showing Jesus born a baby small.
Hosts rejoicing, shepherds voicing – praising Christ the Lord of all.
God is with us, shout hosanna, raise a chorus, singing ever:
Praising Christ the Lord of all! Praising Christ the Lord of all!

***CALL TO WORSHIP** † Liturgist: Please stand as you are able and join me in the call to worship

Leader: An unmarried teenage girl was invited—
People: to carry Christ into this world.
Leader: An ordinary carpenter was invited—
People: to be a father to a child unlike any other.
Leader: The shepherds were invited—
People: outcast and isolated, included at the manger.
Leader: The Magi were invited—
People: foreigners and seekers, included at the manger.
Leader: And if she was invited, and he was invited, and they were invited—
People: then we can trust that we too are invited.
Leader: This story is for us.
People: This love is for us.
Leader: Family of faith, this is our invitation. Welcome home.

***CAROL #133** "O Come, All Ye Faithful"

Ribbon

1 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!

3 Sing, choirs of angels;
sing in exultation;
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God, all glory in the highest!
[Refrain]

Refrain:
O come, let us adore him;
O come, let us adore him;
O come, let us adore him,
Christ, the Lord!

4 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]

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION † Liturgist

Holy God,
We've heard this story a million times—
Mary and Joseph, the angels, the shepherds.
We've heard it a million times,
but we want to hear it like it's the first.
So move among us.
Circle back.
Draw close.
Crack open our hearts and fill them with your goodness. Help us to hear what it is you
might be saying to us
with curiosity, joy, and hope.
This is an invitation.
Come be here with us.
Gratefully we pray, amen.

GOSPEL READING Luke 2:1-20

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

SPECIAL MUSIC "While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks " arr. Dan Forrest Chancel Choir

SERMON "Invited Home" Notepad

SPECIAL MUSIC "Come Home" by Marty Funderburk Chancel Choir

CHRISTMAS PRAYER AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father who art in heaven... (Hymnal p. 35. We say "debts & debtors.")

PRESENTATION OF OFFERING † Liturgist:

Jesus was not born in a real home.
He was born into poverty.
He was born into simplicity.
He was born into a manger in Bethlehem.
And despite the little he might have had, Jesus still spent the rest of his days on earth giving to
others.

Generosity is in the DNA of our faith. We give what we can, not because we should or because
scripture says to. We give because we're family. We give because we belong to one another.
We give because all are invited into God's house. So let us give our tithes and our offerings
now.

OFFERTORY "O Holy Night" by Adolfe Adam, arr. Matt Naughtin Lyrata String Quartet

*Doxology #606

Ribbon

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise God, all creatures here below;**

**praise God above, ye heavenly host;
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

*Prayer of Dedication † Liturgist
Gracious God,
Your story is one that forever invites us
to be our full selves,
to take up space,
to go where we feel called,
and to allow this community to feel like home.
So use these gifts to keep building your home here.
With gratitude as tall as the ceiling, we pray. Amen.

Cross

CELEBRATION OF THE LIGHT OF CHRIST

SPECIAL MUSIC “All My Heart This Night Rejoices” by Z. Randall Stroope Covenant
Vocal Ensemble

***CAROL #122** “Silent Night”

1 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.

3 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.

2 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!”

4 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.

***CAROL #134** “Joy to the World”

1 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.

Ribbon
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and
plains
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

2 Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!
Let all their songs employ,

3 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.

4 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.

CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

“Joy to the World” arranged by Bish

† Prayers by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org.

Assisting in Worship Today:

The Turney Family- Advent Wreath Lighters

Jim Buchanan—Liturgist

Lyrata String Quartet: Eric Kline and Solomon Liang, violins; Elise Skaggs, viola; Cora Kuyvenhoven,
cello

Covenant Vocal Ensemble: Allie Garner, Whitney Dodds, Brian Gray, Jim Eder, Jason Guthrie, Ashley
Cherie Brooks – Director of Music

Katie Wynkoop—Organist/Pianist & Assistant Director of Music

Erin Wise – Director of Children’s & Youth Ministries

Brian Biller – Media Production Specialist

Rev. Joel A. Esala – Pastor



“Ordinary Glory”
by Rev. Lauren Wright Pittman