

# FAITH COVENANT

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C H U R C H

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*Spreading A Love for God and His Glory*

*December 17, 2023*



For at that time I will change the speech of the peoples to a pure speech, that all of them may call upon the name of the LORD and serve him with one accord.

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Zephaniah 3:9

*Our worship is  
a response to  
God's initiative.  
The pattern of  
our worship  
reflects the  
gospel.*

## WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

### LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

*The word "Advent" comes from the Latin meaning "coming" or "arrival."  
Advent is a time of preparation for the final coming of Jesus, while we give thanks for  
the gift of Christ in the past. We meditate on the faithfulness of God to his promises –  
past, present, and future.*

#### **\*CALL TO WORSHIP:** *Isaiah 52:7-10*

Leader: How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who  
brings good news, who publishes peace, who brings good  
news of happiness, who publishes salvation, who says to  
Zion, "Your God reigns."

All: The voice of your watchmen- they lift up their voice;  
together they sing for joy; for eye to eye they see the  
return of the LORD to Zion.

Leader: Break forth together into singing, you waste places of  
Jerusalem, for the LORD has comforted his people; he has  
redeemed Jerusalem.

*\*Indicates  
when to stand.  
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**\*O COME, ALL YE FAITHFUL - Hymn #208**

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:

*(Chorus)*

*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;

*(Chorus)*

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

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  
*(Chorus)*

**\*PRAYER OF PRAISE**

**God Calls Us**

The Lord  
summons his  
people to  
worship and we  
respond in  
obedience.  
The Lord's call  
is a call to  
action. We  
gather, praise,  
adore, give  
thanks.

The Call to  
Worship is a  
joyful summons  
and a clear  
reminder that  
worship is our  
coming into  
God's presence  
by his  
command, and  
not our  
command that  
He come into  
our presence.

**\*GOD REST YOU MERRY GENTLEMEN - Hymn #211**

God rest you merry, gentlemen, let nothing you dismay,  
Remember Christ our Savior was born on Christmas Day,  
To save us all from Satan's pow'r when we were gone astray;  
O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy,  
O tidings of comfort and joy.

From God our heav'nly Father, a blessed angel came;  
And unto certain shepherds brought tidings of the same:  
How that in Bethlehem was born the Son of God by name.  
O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy,  
O tidings of comfort and joy.

"Fear not, then," said the angel, "let nothing you affright;  
This day is born a Savior of a pure virgin bright,  
To free all those who trust in him from Satan's pow'r and might."  
O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy,  
O tidings of comfort and joy.

Now to the Lord sing praises, all you within this place,  
And with true love and brotherhood, each other now embrace;  
This holy tide of Christmas, all others doth deface.  
O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy,  
O tidings of comfort and joy.

## COMMON CONFESSION OF SIN

### SCRIPTURE OF EXHORTATION: *Romans 2:1*

Therefore, you have no excuse, O man, every one of you who judges. For in passing judgment on another you condemn yourself, because you, the judge, practice the very same things.

## GOD, BE MERCIFUL TO ME

God, be merciful to me; on Thy grace I rest my plea  
Plenteous in compassion Thou, blot out my transgressions now;  
Wash me, make me pure within; cleanse, O cleanse me from my sin.

My transgressions I confess; grief and guilt my soul oppress.  
I have sinned against Thy grace, and provoked Thee to Thy face.  
I confess Thy judgment just; speechless, I Thy mercy trust.

## SILENT CONFESSION OF SIN

### DECLARATION OF GRACE: *Revelation 21:3-4*

And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away."

## God Cleanses Us

The biblical response to God's call to be in his presence is confessing our sins. We humble ourselves when we approach our God. This is a corporate prayer of all God's people. It is a great privilege of the gospel that we can stand forgiven before the Lord of glory.

\*ANCIENT OF DAYS

Though the nations rage  
Kingdoms rise and fall  
There is still one King  
Reigning over all  
So I will not fear for this truth remains:  
That my God is the Ancient of Days

*(Chorus)*

*None above Him, none before Him  
All of time in His hands  
For His throne it shall remain and ever stand  
All the power, all the glory  
I will trust in His name  
For my God is the Ancient of Days*

Though the dread of night  
Overwhelms my soul  
He is here with me  
I am not alone  
O His love is sure and He knows my name  
For my God is the Ancient of Days

*(Chorus)*

Though I may not see  
What the future brings  
I will watch and wait  
For the Savior King  
Then my joy complete standing face to face  
In the presence of the Ancient of Days

*(Chorus)*

For my God is the Ancient of Days

## OFFERTORY & RESPONSE

*Reminder: please sign and pass the Attendance Register down the pew.  
Children ages 4-6 excused for Children's Church (downstairs Corner Classroom)*

### WHAT CHILD IS THIS - Hymn #213

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 a song on high,  
The virgin sings her lullaby.  
Joy, joy for Christ is born,  
The Babe, the Son of Mary.

### Offering

We give back to  
God a portion  
of what he has  
given us to use  
to declare that  
he is Lord of all.  
(This is part of  
our service as a  
church family,  
and visitors  
should not feel  
obligated to  
participate.)

*Sermon Series: Advent 2023—Anticipating Hope*  
Pastor Lloyd Pierson, PhD.  
*A Purified People: Zephaniah 3:9-13*

*Zephaniah 3 (ESV)*

<sup>8</sup>“Therefore wait for me,” declares the LORD, “for the day when I rise up to seize the prey. For my decision is to gather nations, to assemble kingdoms, to pour out upon them my indignation, all my burning anger; for in the fire of my jealousy all the earth shall be consumed. <sup>9</sup>For at that time I will change the speech of the peoples to a pure speech, that all of them may call upon the name of the LORD and serve him with one accord. <sup>10</sup>From beyond the rivers of Cush my worshipers, the daughter of my dispersed ones, shall bring my offering. <sup>11</sup>On that day you shall not be put to shame because of the deeds by which you have rebelled against me; for then I will remove from your midst your proudly exultant ones, and you shall no longer be haughty in my holy mountain. <sup>12</sup>But I will leave in your midst a people humble and lowly. They shall seek refuge in the name of the LORD, <sup>13</sup>those who are left in Israel; they shall do no injustice and speak no lies, nor shall there be found in their mouth a deceitful tongue. For they shall graze and lie down, and none shall make them afraid.”

I. God Makes a New People



## II. God Makes New Patterns

**God Consecrates Us**  
Consecrate means to make holy, to set apart. The Word of God does that for the lives of believers. Through the sermon, confessions of faith, and the offering we are sanctified for service to our Lord to joyfully offer up our lives to him.

### Questions for Further Reflection:

1. In the prophets, the long portions of judgment can seem overwhelming. And yet the twin themes of judgment and hope are repeatedly connected. What happens to the biblical message of the gospel when we remove the theme of judgment?
2. What does this emphasis on pure speech indicate? How might this relate to Isaiah 6:5-7 and Acts 2:1-3?
3. The Lord must remove the cause of their wrongdoing. The people could not shake free of the vice grip of their sin. What does the Lord do to fulfill this? Is this purifying work complete in this life?
4. The day of the Lord includes his great judgment but we also see in 3:9, 11 that it includes his mercy on his people. How do verses 11-13 anticipate the beatitudes?

### Children's Question

*Have you ever been frustrated that you don't do the things you know are right and you do the things you know you should not?*

*How does Paul answer this problem in Romans 7:24-25?*

**God Communes  
with Us**

The Lord  
strengthens and  
nourishes our  
faith through a  
sacramental  
meal. Through  
Jesus, commun-  
ion with God  
has been  
reestablished.  
The covenant  
has been  
renewed. The  
Lord's Supper is  
the gospel  
made visible for  
us and we share  
in it as the full  
community  
of God's  
people.

**\*COME LIGHT OUR HEARTS**

*(Chorus)*

*For You, O Lord our souls in stillness wait*

*For You, O Lord our souls in stillness wait*

*Truly our hope is in You*

*Truly our hope is in You*

O Lord of life, our only hope

Your radiance shines

On all who look to You in the dark

Emmanuel come, come light our hearts

*(Chorus)*

*Oh Joy above, all other loves*

*In You we find, more than enough*

*We come as we are, O heal and restore*

*Come light our hearts (2x)*

*(Chorus)*

Truly our hope is in You

**CELEBRATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER**

*Wine is located in the two outer rings; juice is located in the center ring.*

*(See FCC observance on below)*

We observe the Lord's Supper each Lord's Day as the climax of our worship service. We invite to the Lord's Table all those who are baptized disciples of Jesus Christ, under the authority of Christ and His body—the Church. Visiting children who have not been examined by their church's leadership, we ask to refrain. By sharing in the Supper, you are acknowledging to our church that you are in covenant with our Triune God through the person and work of Jesus Christ. If you are in doubt about your participation, please refrain. Wine and bread are the elements of the supper as instituted by Jesus Christ. We recommend the use of wine; however we offer both juice and wine in the tray to allow true liberty of conscience.

## PRAYER FOR THE CONGREGATION

### \*THIS IS JESUS

Night of wonder, still and silent  
Heaven's brilliance from above, light of glory  
Pierced the darkness, mercy pierced my heart with love

*(Chorus)*

*This is Jesus, King of glory, here to rescue from the fall  
Son of God who comes to save us, Prince of peace and Lord of all*

Oh the mystery who could fathom,  
God would leave His Holy throne  
For a manger, for a sinner, for us all to be His own

*(Chorus)*

*Rejoice He is with us, Rejoice Hope is here (4x)*

*(Chorus)*

For the hearts so prone to wander, for these feet so quick to flee  
God is here and love is reaching, for the lost and least of these

### \*BENEDICTION

*If you are in need of personal prayer, an elder is available up front after the service.*

### God Commissions Us

Having been richly blessed by the Lord in our worship, we are sent forth as his ambassadors of reconciliation into the world. Our worship of God as his people now extends into our lives throughout the week. We are to offer ourselves as living sacrifices to him in all areas of our lives.

#### Leaders & Staff

Senior Pastor Lloyd Pierson, Ph.D. — Associate Pastor John Sackett

Music Director/Assistant: Lisa Iddings/Laura Sackett

Refuge Director: Sissy Hashley Staff: Hanni Hanson, Carlynn Stahlberg, Kelly Brown, Jenny Mattern

Elders: Tim Anderson, Jason Davis, Sean Iddings, Tom Jentz,

Trent Neumann, Don Olmsted, Matt Riley, Micah Tinkham

Deacons: Wade Carroll, Terry Falk, Kyle Hanson, Jeff McGarvey,  
Ryan Petersen, Mike Stahlberg, Mike Thompson, Bruce Tulloch

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**LOCAL MINISTRY TO PRAY FOR:** Hope Church, Pastor Lance Dannic

**MISSIONARIES TO PRAY FOR:** Jamie & Alyssa Shattenberg, Madagascar

**VESPERS:** Come unplug and recharge with this evening service of prayer and song TONIGHT at 6:30pm.

**DECEMBER JR/SR HIGH YOUTH GROUP:** will be Dec. 20 from 6-7:30pm.

**HOLIDAY SEASON SERVICE TIMES:** Please note that there will be NO Sunday school and the service times will be at 8:15 & 10:15 for the next two Sundays (Dec. 24 & Dec. 31). We will resume our regular schedule Jan. 7.

**CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE TIMES:** Candlelight services will be held at 4pm, 5:30pm, & 7pm on Sunday, Dec. 24. Nursery will be available at the 4pm service.

**PCA MAGAZINE:** There's a stack of ByFaith magazines in the foyer. Feel free to take one!

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**SERVING:** December Deacon - Terry Falk

**Today (1st service/2nd service)**

Ushers: Nick & Hanni Hanson / Mike & Julie Thompson

Children's Church: Jentz / Sharon Salyer and Gracyn vonOlhausen

Nursery: Lancasters

Fellowship Hosts: Paula Saldamando & Chris Scrima

Communion Prep/Cleanup: Jenn Eck / Arline Tinkham

**Next Sunday December 24**

Ushers: Nick & Hanni Hanson / Mike & Julie Thompson

Children's Church: Jentz / Tim Anderson

Nursery: Streits

Fellowship Hosts: Laura Pierson & Kim von Olhausen

Communion Prep/Cleanup: Carolyn Duncan & Niam Moody

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**WEEKLY/MONTHLY**

**Sunday Worship Services**

8:15 & 10:15am

**Vespers**

2nd Sunday @ 6:30 pm

**Elder/Deacon Meeting**

3rd Tuesdays 7 pm

**Wednesdays**

Men's Breakfast 6:30 am

Career Group 7 pm