

(As we enter the sanctuary, let us quietly prepare our hearts and minds for worship. Please silence your cell phones for the duration of the service.)

GATHERING IN GOD'S NAME

SOUNDING OF THE HOUR

WELCOME

PRELUDE

“Star of the East”

*CALL TO WORSHIP

based on Psalm 8

Leader: O Lord, our God,
how majestic is your name in all the earth!
You have set your glory above the heavens.

**People: From the lips of children you bring forth
words of power and praise.**

Leader: When I behold your heavens,
the work of your fingers,
the moon and stars which you set in place,

**People: What is humanity that you should be mindful of us?
Who are we that you should care for us?
Yet, you have made us barely less than God
and crowned us with glory and honor.**

Leader: You have made us responsible for the works of your hands –
the beasts of the field, birds of the air, and fish of the sea.

People: O Lord, our God, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

*PRAYER OF THE DAY

*HYMN OF PRAISE # 150

“As with Gladness Men of Old”

CALL TO CONFESSION

(Few moments of silent prayer)

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God of glory, you sent Jesus among us as the light of the world, to reveal your love for all people. We confess that our sin and pride hide the brightness of your light. We turn away from the poor; we ignore cries for justice; we do not strive for peace. In your mercy, cleanse us of our sin, O God, and pour out the gifts of your Spirit, that forgiven and renewed, we may show forth your glory, shining in the face of Jesus Christ, our Lord in whom we pray. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Leader: We celebrate God's steadfast love,
this day and every day.
No matter what we do,
no matter what we neglect to do,
God's love never changes.
Friends, by the grace of God
we are forgiven.

People: Thanks be to God. Amen.

SHARING THE PEACE

Leader: The light shines in the darkness
and the darkness cannot overcome it.
May God's light shine on you and fill you with joy and peace.
The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People: And also with you.

HEARING THE WORD OF GOD

*HYMN OF INVITATION # 673

“Jesus, Light of Joy”

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

FIRST LESSON (p. 616—OT)

Ecclesiastes 3:1-13

SECOND LESSON (p. 259—NT)

Revelation 21:1-6a

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

SERMON

Now Is the Time

Joseph Useni

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

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.

STAR WORDS

GOING OUT TO SERVE

*HYMN OF BLESSING # 152

“What Star Is This, with Beams So Bright”

*CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

*Please rise, in body or spirit.

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Large-print Hymnals are available in the back of the sanctuary.

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.

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WELCOME VISITORS! We are glad you are here. We invite you to fill out a Visitor Card, found in the pews, and place it in the offering plate. If you are seeking a church home, you are welcome to join us in discipleship as a community of faith and service. Pastor Maggie would be happy to talk to you about your journey and church membership.

We welcome Joseph Chifuniro Useni back to the pulpit. Joseph and his wife of 10 years, Masceline, are from Zimbabwe, Africa. They have been blessed with 3 children, Anesimbaishe (Simba) a boy aged 8, two girls Anenyasha aged 6 years and Anesu 11 months. Joseph came to the U.S. in 2019 and is in his final year at Emmanuel working on his MDiv. In Zimbabwe, he worked at Zimbabwe Christian College as the Librarian and Dean of Students and was a part-time Minister at Highfield Christian Church in Harare. Joseph is serving as a Recovery Ministries Fellow at Crossroads Christian Church.

The Church office will be closed tomorrow, January 2, 2023.

NEWSLETTER

The **JANUARY COURIER** has been mailed or emailed to you. There are extra printed copies on the table for those who want one. You will also find the newsletter and January's calendar on our website under the “Media” tab: www.cpcjc.org.

5 CENTS A MEAL OFFERING

The basket is out for the 5 Cents a Meal Offering. You are asked to consider giving 5 cents for each meal you have eaten last month (or any amount you wish) to help feed those who are hungry. This offering supports both local and global hunger programs.

AFTER CHURCH LUNCH—JAN. 8

Join us next Sunday, January 8, for After Church Lunch. The theme this month is **Breakfast**, the most important meal of the day!! Please bring a dish or dessert to share with the congregation.

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION—JAN. 15

The **Annual Meeting of the Congregation** will be held following worship on **Sunday, January 15th**. We will elect officers (elders) for the Class of 2025. The nominees being presented by the Nominating Committee are: Patti Coble, Ann Freeman, Hal Hunter, and Phyllis Thompson. Highlights of 2022 will be reviewed, the 2023 budget will be presented, and we will elect members of the church Nominating Committee for 2023, as well as officers of the corporation. (Please remember that no one should be nominated who has not previously been asked and agreed to serve.) Please plan to attend! It will be a wonderful opportunity to learn more about what's happening at Covenant.

GOOD SAMARITAN FOOD OFFERING

We are now collecting the following food items on a regular basis: **Jelly/Jam; Peanut Butter; Canned Veggies; Canned Fruits; Dry / Canned Beans; Rice; Soups; Cereals (hot and cold); Canned Meats (Tuna, Vienna Sausage, etc.); Powdered Milk.** If you wish to make a monetary donation, we will pass it along, too. Thank you for your generous donations to this local ministry!

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN'S CIRCLES IN JANUARY

- ♦ **Joy Circle:** Thursday, January 12 at 11:30 a.m. Contact is Anne Smith.
- ♦ **Friendship Circle:** Wednesday, January 11 at 1:30 PM in the church library. Contact is Rosemary Whitson.
- ♦ **Red Tent Circle:** Thursday, January 12 at 7:00 PM. Location to be determined. Contact Gwen Hunter to confirm.

COMMITTEE ACTION NEEDED

Note to Committee Chairs: 2022 Committee Reports for the Annual Report need to be e-mailed to Tina by **January 4, 2023**. Reports from 2021 have been e-mailed to you. You may use them as samples for your 2022 reports. Questions? Ask Tina.

GIVING ENVELOPES FOR 2023

If you asked for a box of Giving Envelopes for 2023, they are on the table in the Narthex.

GIVING TO THE CHURCH

Besides online giving or dropping off or mailing a check, it is also easy (and free) to set up **automatic payments** through your banking institution or online BillPay. Thank you for continuing to support the work of Covenant Presbyterian Church.

AFFIRMING ALL GOD'S CHILDREN

We at Covenant Presbyterian Church of Johnson City, Tennessee, under the auspices of the Presbyterian Church (USA), aka PC(USA), present its Churchwide Antiracism Policy, first adopted in 1999 and revised in 2016. It proclaims the following:

“While recognizing that racism victimizes many different racial ethnic groups, we acknowledge its unique impact on the African American community. Given the particular forms that anti-Black racism has taken in the United States of America, both historically (including slavery and Jim Crow) and today (including mass incarceration, disproportionate policing, economic inequality, and continuing acts of racially oriented violence and hate), we state clearly: **GOD LOVES BLACKNESS**. Too many have denied this basic truth for too long. Our choice to align ourselves with love and not hate requires both a rejection of racism and a positive proclamation that God delights in Black lives.”

THIS WEEK AT COVENANT

Today, January 1

11:00a
7:00p

Worship Service
N.A. Mtg

Monday, January 2

Church Office Closed

Tuesday, January 3

10a—3p
10:00a
10:00a
7:00p

Good Sam Food Dropoff
Worship Committee Mtg
Al-Anon Mtg
Al-Anon Mtg

Wednesday, January 4

Deadline for 2022 Annual Committee Reports

10a—3p
7:00p

Good Sam Food Dropoff
N.A. Mtg

Thursday, January 5

10a—3p
Noon
10:00a

Good Sam Food Dropoff
Al-Anon Mtg
Congregational Life Committee Mtg

Friday, January 6

6:30p

Al-Anon Mtg

TODAY AT COVENANT

Morning Greeter:
Liturgist:
Accompanist:
Nursery:

Stacy Larsen
Kathi Cary
Anne Smith
Betsy Moakler

CHURCH STAFF

Pastor:
Office Administrator:
Financial Assistant:
AV Tech:

Rev. Maggie Rust
Tina Simon
Anne Webb
Harvey Trueblood

PRAYER CONCERNS

If you know of other reasons for rejoicing or concerns you would like to share feel free to complete a prayer card with your request. **Please contact the church office with any updates to this list.** Names will remain in the bulletin for three weeks unless we are notified about a change.

Week of January 1—7, 2023

Howard Bowman; Cathy Eades, Jim Starr's cousin; Allen White, Maggie's uncle; Charlotte Brumit, Betsy Moakler's mother; Estelle Armistead; Sharon Fuhrman; Vickie Koppel, friend of Don & Patti Coble; all those affected by gun violence; all those in our community affected by Covid-19; the people of Ukraine, its neighbors, and the innocent people of Russia.

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

Bob & Kristi Rice: South Sudan
The Adams Maldonado Family: Frontera de Cristo
and these Covenant ministry partners:

UKirk ETSU (Pres. Campus Ministry) † Holston Presbytery Camp
Good Samaritan Ministry † The River † BABMOC



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.



Covenant Presbyterian Church

603 Sunset Drive, Johnson City, TN 37604

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



Covenant

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

CHRIST • PEOPLE • COMMUNITY

JANUARY 1, 2023

FIRST SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS

CPC STATEMENT OF OPENNESS AND WELCOME

We aspire to Christ's model of openness and love for all persons. As God has welcomed us, we also welcome everyone into the life, leadership, and community of Christ's church, regardless of abilities, age, economic status, education, ethnicity, gender identity, race, sexual orientation, social position or any identity or status that might be perceived as separating us from God or one another.

We pledge to affirm the inherent worth and dignity of each of God's children, with membership, leadership, and employment open to whomever God calls.

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.