

# SEPTEMBER 24, 2023--17<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST



## Covenant

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

**CHRIST • PEOPLE • COMMUNITY**

### 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 is proud to be an **Earth Care Congregation**, a **More Light Church** – supporting the LGBTQ+ community, and a **PC(USA) Matthew 25 Church** – committed to dismantling structural racism, eradicating systemic poverty, and building congregational vitality.

603 Sunset Drive, Johnson City, TN 37604

423-282-5324 ♦ office@cpcjc.org ♦ www.cpcjc.org

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

*(As you participate in worship today, you're invited to rise in body or spirit at \* and read aloud the **bolded** responses together with the congregation.)*

### GATHERING IN GOD'S NAME

WELCOME

MINUTE FOR MISSION

Peace & Global Witness Offering

GREETING

One: The Lord God is our shepherd.

All: **We are the people of God's pasture, the sheep of God's hand.**

PRELUDE

\*CALL TO WORSHIP

from Psalm 100

One: Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth.

Serve the Lord with gladness and come into God's presence with singing!

All: **Know that the Lord is God, the one who made us. We belong to our Creator.**

One: We are God's people, the sheep of God's pasture.

Enter the gates with thanksgiving and praise!

Come and worship our God who is faithful.

All: **Bless God's holy name with me!**

**For the Lord is good; God's steadfast love endures forever.**

\*PRAYER OF THE DAY

\*HYMN OF PRAISE # 343

*"Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life"*

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**Lord, if we had known it was you, we would have done something different. If we had known it was you, we would have given you food; we would have taken you in; we would not have passed you by. But we did. Too often we make excuses for not taking care of each other, for ignoring your commandments to love. We do not deserve your forgiveness, but we ask for it anyway, and we ask you to help us to change. Bring us back to your fold. We pray through Jesus Christ, the Lamb upon the throne. Amen.**

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

One: God seeks out the lost, brings back those who have strayed,

binds up the injured, and strengthens the weak.

In Christ, we are forgiven and restored.

All: **Thanks be to God. Amen.**

SHARING THE PEACE

## HEARING THE WORD OF GOD

SPECIAL MUSIC

*“God Help the Outcasts”*

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

FIRST LESSON (*p. 803—OT*)

Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-23

\*HYMN OF INVITATION # 852

*“When the Lord Redeems the Very Least”*

SECOND LESSON (*p. 29—NT*)

Matthew 25:31-46

One: This is the word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

Rev. Maggie Rust

## RESPONDING TO GOD’S WORD

CELEBRATING CONFIRMATION

Cara and Ian Shepherd

RECEIVING NEW MEMBERS

Rusty and Leigh Shepherd  
Alan and Deborah Lewis

\*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.**

OFFERTORY

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.**

## GOING OUT TO SERVE

\*HYMN OF BLESSING # 726

*“The Summons”*

\*CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

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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. **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 and place it in the offering plate. If you are seeking a church home, you are welcome to join us in discipleship in our community of faith and service; Pastor Maggie would be happy to talk to you about your journey and church membership.

## WORLD COMMUNION NEXT SUNDAY

Next Sunday we celebrate World Communion with Christian siblings of faith from around the globe. All are welcome at the table, and we invite you to be in prayer this week about how you will receive the sacrament. We will also be taking up the 5 Cents a Meal and Peace Offerings.

## PEACE & GLOBAL WITNESS OFFERING—OCTOBER 1

God’s presence empowers us to live joyfully within our communities and to bring peace to all around us. Through the Peace & Global Witness Offering, we connect with each other to confront systems of injustice and promote reconciliation in places around the world and right here at home. 25% of this Offering will stay with Covenant for our own ministries of peacemaking and reconciliation. 25% of this Offering will join with other congregations in our area to support peacemaking work in the region. 50% of this Offering supports programs and ministries working actively for peace and justice around our nation and the world. Peace begins with each of us. If we all do a little, it adds up to a lot! Together we are building God’s household of peace where everyone is welcome and all can find compassion, peace and justice.

## TODAY AT COVENANT

Liturgist: Christian Zembower

Accompanist: Jeremi Lukanus

## CHURCH STAFF

Pastor: Rev. Maggie Rust

Music Director: Katelyn Gabler

AV Tech: Harvey Trueblood

Office Administrator: Tina Simon

Admin. Assistant: Artie David