

Forgive us for ever doubting that you will accomplish your will and your desire, for even now we see the advent of a new day, the birth of a new age, the coming of a kingdom which is the perfection of your love and peace upon earth and in heaven above.

Hear us, as in silence we offer our personal prayers, then remake us in the image of Christ, our coming Lord.

A TIME FOR SILENT CONFESSION

THE ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Pastor: The God of all mercy and consolation has reconciled the world through the birth and death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, forgiving you all your sin.

By the power of the Holy Spirit
may the image of God be restored in you,
the wisdom of God renewed in you,
and the breath of God revived in you,
in the name of the Prince of Peace, the Word made flesh.

People: **In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven! Thanks be to God!**

*THE GLORIA PATRI 579

Gloria Patri

*THE AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We believe in God: who has created and is creating, who has come in the true human, Jesus, to reconcile and make new, who works with us and others by the Holy Spirit. We trust in God, who calls us to be the church: to celebrate the Spirit's presence, to love and serve others, to seek justice and resist evil, to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen, our Judge and our Hope. In life, in death, in life beyond death, God is with us. We are not alone. Thanks be to God! Amen!

*THE GREETINGS OF PEACE AND FRIENDSHIP

THE CHILDREN'S SERMON

THE SHARING OF JOYS, CONCERNS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE CHORAL PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

Creator of the Stars of Night Sarum Plainsong, 9th C.

THE OLD TESTAMENT LESSON Isaiah 2:2-5 (*Pew Bible p. 600*)

Liturgist: This is the word of the Lord. All: **Thanks be to God!**

THE ANTHEM *Of The Father's Love Begotten* Plainsong, Mode V

*Of the Father's love begotten, Ere the worlds began to be,
He is Alpha and Omega, He the source, the ending He,
Of the things that are, that have been, And that future years shall see,
Evermore and evermore!*

*O ye heights of heaven adore Him; Angel hosts, His praises sing;
Powers, dominions, bow before Him, And extol our God and King;
Let no tongue on earth be silent, Every voice in concert ring,
Evermore and evermore!*

*Christ, to Thee with God the Father, And, O Holy Ghost, to Thee,
Hymn and chant and high thanks-giving, And unwearied praises be:
Honor, glory, and dominion, And eternal victory,
Evermore and evermore! Amen.*

THE EPISTLE LESSON Romans 13:11-14 (*Pew Bible p. 153*)

Liturgist: Here ends the reading of the Epistle. All: **Praise be to you, O Lord.**

*THE GOSPEL LESSON Matthew 24:36-44 (*Pew Bible p. 26*)

Pastor: The Gospel of our Lord. All: **Glory to You, O Christ.**

*THE CONGREGATIONAL CANTICLE

Come Thou Long-Expected Jesus HYFRYDOL

**Come, Thou long-expected Jesus, Born to set Thy people free;
From our fears and sins release us; Let us find our rest in Thee.**

**Israel's strength and consolation, Hope of all the earth Thou art;
Dear desire of every nation, Joy of every longing heart.**

THE SERMON “ THE WAITING PLACE ” Dr. Swanson

THE PASTORAL PRAYER

THE LORD'S PRAYER (using “debts” and “debtors”)

THE THREE-FOLD AMEN Marty Haugen

THE PRESENTATION OF TITHES, OFFERINGS, AND GIFTS

THE OFFERTORY ANTHEM *Is Your Heart Prepared for a King?* Robert Lau

*In the quiet of the night, or in morning's early light,
Is your heart prepared for a King?
Will you hear an angel sing? Will your own hosannas ring?
Is your heart prepared for a king?*

*Wait! Watch! Pray for the one who brings hope to a wearied earth.
Wait! Watch! Pray for the one who brings peace, who brings peace by his birth.
Can you see the shining star? Does it call you from afar?
Is your heart prepared for a king?*

*Will you watch? Will you pray?
Is your heart prepared for a king?
Is the babe of whom we sing born to be our God and King?
Is your heart prepared for a king?*

*What can I give Him, Poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;
If I were a wise man, I would do my part.
Yet what I can I give Him, Give my heart.*

*THE UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Use us, O God of miracles, and the offerings we have brought, to bring life and health and hope to your world. Make us generous and faithful stewards of your mysteries, as we share the bounty which you have granted unto us. Through Christ we pray. Amen.

THE COMMUNION HYMN 5 (seated)

Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence

PICARDY

THE INVITATION TO THE TABLE

THE LITANY OF THANKSGIVING

Pastor: Friends, we are the body of Christ.
People: **His Spirit is with us.**
Pastor: Let us lift up our hearts.
People: **We lift them to the Lord.**
Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
People: **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**
Pastor: With angels and archangels, with all the saints before us and beside us, with brothers and sisters, east and west, north and south, we sing the hymn of unending praise:
People: **Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of truth and light, heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

THE PRAYER OF CONSECRATION AND THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION

THE CELEBRATION OF THE SACRAMENT

*THE RESPONSE FOLLOWING COMMUNION

Pastor: The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you all.
People: **And also with you.**
Pastor: Bless the Lord, O my soul;
People: **And all that is within me, bless His Holy Name.**
Pastor: Bless the Lord, O my soul;
People: **We forget not all His benefits.**

Pastor: Let us pray.

O God, who called us from death to life: we give ourselves to You, and with the church through all ages, we praise You for Your great gift of Jesus Christ, born to set us free. Now strengthen us by this holy meal, shared in the spirit with our Lord, who makes us new and strong, who brings us life eternal. Amen.

*THE RECESSIONAL HYMN 8 *Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates* TRURO

*THE BENEDICTION

*THE CHORAL RESPONSE *Eternal Light, Shine in My Heart* Jane M. Marshall

*THE TIME OF SILENCE

*THE CHARGE AND DISMISSAL

Pastor: Let us go in eager expectation of the in-breaking day of the Lord with all its fullness and peace.

Wait and watch, pray and work, for such is the calling of faith.

People: **We will not grow weary, but urge one another on with words of hope and encouragement.**

Pastor: Then go in peace! Serve the Lord!

People: **Thanks be to God!**

THE POSTLUDE *Toccata on Veni, Redemptor gentium* Paul Manz

*Those who are able, please stand.

GREETINGS TO ALL this day who have come to worship. We want to get to know you, especially if you are a visitor!

Please introduce yourself to others sitting nearby during the passing of the peace. Following the worship, everyone is invited to share a time of coffee, tea and fellowship downstairs in the Assembly Room. (exit at the rear of the sanctuary, go down the stairs and past the Library to the entrance near the Sallman painting of Christ knocking at the door.)

THE POINSETTIAS in the Sanctuary are given by Helen Ferguson in honor of Beverly Antis, Choir Director and the men and women of the Covenant Choir.

FELLOWSHIP HOUR immediately follows this worship service downstairs in the Assembly Room. Everyone is cordially invited to attend. Hosting today's Fellowship Hour are Orville and Edna Nicholas.

YOU WERE GREETED TODAY by Donna Hobaugh.

THE USHERS: Nancy and David Blewett

Covenant Cupboard:

December - noodles or tuna

Baskets for your donations are located in the front hallway.

Monetary donations are always appreciated and needed.

Please make checks payable to Covenant Cupboard.



SPECIAL NEEDS COMMUNION IN DECEMBER



A communion/luncheon for our shut-ins and their caregivers will be held on **Thursday, December 6th at 11:30 a.m.** (All others are of course welcome to attend.)

The half-hour service is for shut-ins who are restricted by mobility, disability or have other health related issues which makes it difficult for them to attend the longer more formal Sunday worship services. A light lunch and fellowship will follow the service.

If you know of someone who can benefit from this service or if you can provide transportation, please see or contact Pastor Jim at the church office.



Memorial Service

DOROTHY B. HITCHCOCK 1922-2007

A Memorial Service for our dear friend and faithful member, Dorothy Hitchcock, who departed this life on November 15, 2007, will be held in the Sanctuary on

Saturday, December 8 at 11 a.m.

A lunch in the Assembly Room will follow the memorial service. The Reception Committee with Martha Keasey, Chair, will host and help serve the catered lunch by Chef George Schroth.

Memorial donations can be made to Covenant Presbyterian Church.

SEEKERS ADVENT SERIES

During the Sundays of December, the Seekers Adult Sunday School Class will again be privileged to hear Dr. Kang Yup Na, associate professor in the Department of Religion, History, Philosophy, and Classics at Westminster College, New Wilmington, Pa.



Dr. Na will be teaching on "Parables in Luke 15."

Seekers meet each Sunday morning at 9:45 a.m. in the Assembly Room. Coffee, tea and a snack are available before each class.

Advent Choir Rehearsals:

The Covenant Choir will rehearse in the Sanctuary on Thursdays from 6:30 pm – 8:30 pm (a half-hour earlier). This time schedule will continue through December.

In The Life of Our Church

Prayer Concerns:

Bill Wilson now at Harmerville Rehabilitation Center
Phyllis Thoma recovering from eye surgery, making progress
Rogelio Guimong Shari Swanson's father in Manila, Phillipines;
diagnosed with lung cancer
Karen Swanson knee surgery on Dec. 3 at St. Elizabeth Hospital
Bob and Joan Moore in the nursing home (Concordia at Rebecca)
Mary Elizabeth Goehring in the nursing home (Concordia)
Julie and Bud Bruno for improved strength and health (at home)

Birthdays: Marian Curran - December 6



STEWARDSHIP REPORT

Thank you to those who have pledged financially and/or made a commitment to conserve the vital and precious resources of our planet and to further God's Kingdom here on earth. At present 30 pledge cards have been received, representing a total of \$88,988 in support of our 2008 budget. If you have already returned your completed pledge card, thanks! If you haven't, please mail in or drop off your pledge in the next few weeks.

Just 23 more shopping days 'til Christmas!!

It's time now to talk about gift-giving with family and friends! How are you going to celebrate Christmas this year? What is really most meaningful? Are you willing to spend less on yourselves and give more to the truly needy? Ask your family, relatives and friends.

A "simple life" is a "disciplined life" – disciplined, not punished or deprived or joyless. We are given great freedom to care about all of God's Creation, rather than living to acquire "more stuff." Stuff exists to meet our needs. But if we spend our time, energy and money accumulating things instead of nurturing our relationships with God and others, those "things" will own us, control us and ultimately destroy us and our Earth. The average North American consumes five times more than a Mexican, ten times more than a Chinese person and thirty times more than someone in India. We are the most voracious consumers in the world.



This year, why not choose a date and mark your calendar as "Buy Nothing Day." On that day, and from that date on, you pledge to buy nothing more for Christmas. Be satisfied with the ornaments and gifts you have already purchased and resist the urge get "one more last minute gift" for Aunt Sue, Uncle George, the postal carrier, or the neighbor next door. Just think how relaxing it will be to know you are finally "Done!" and that for this year "enough is enough." (Even the magi showed wisdom in bringing just one gift each, not a cart-load!)

December 2, 2007
First Sunday in Advent

“Our whole life is spent, one way or another, in waiting. The customer service representative puts us on hold and fills our time with thin, irritating music. Our order hasn't come yet. The elevator is so slow. Our spouse is late. Will the snow ever melt, the rain ever stop, the paint ever dry? Will anyone ever understand? Will I ever change? Life is a series of hopes and waitings and half-fulfillments. We contend with unsatisfied desires, we wait upon our uncompleted salvation. Advent invites us to understand with a new patience that waiting must come before receiving.”

-- from “Advent Reflections” by the Rev. Dr. William L. Self,
pastor of Johns Creek Baptist Church in Alpharetta, GA

The Reverend Dr. James E. Swanson

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