

## **Covenant United Presbyterian Church**

107 Staley Ave. Butler, PA 16001

724-287-7731 [covenantoffice@zoominternet.net](mailto:covenantoffice@zoominternet.net)

Worship with us on [YouTube.com/@CovenantTV1813](https://www.youtube.com/@CovenantTV1813)



### **Advent I - Hope**

**November 30, 2025, 11:00 AM**

Guest Pastor: Brian F Graff, C.P.

TV Producer: Brian F Graff, C.P.

Worship Leader: Nancy Rice

Music Director: Dominico Reyes

Lighting the hope Candle: Ann & Lars Morrison

## ~ Order of Worship ~

\*\* = Please stand, as able

### ***"Waiting"** ~ Ione Mathias*

"Let's wait until after the holidays." Hmm...

Waiting is what we do in Advent.

Waiting for the baby to come;

Waiting for a phone call or a ride;

Waiting for a test result;

Waiting for the cookies to bake;

Waiting for a package to arrive;

Waiting for the right time.

Waiting is what we do in Advent!

This is the time!

Waiting for THE BABY to come,  
the Prince of Peace, the one who makes all things new.

## **The Gathering**

CHORAL INTROIT

*Prepare the Way, O Zion ~ Price*

*Prepare the Way, O Zion, your Christ is drawing near!*

*Let every hill and valley a level way appear.*

*Greet One who comes in glory, foretold in sacred story.*

*O blest is Christ who came in God's most holy name.*

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE & TIME OF CENTERING

PROCLAMATION

\*\* A STATEMENT ON ADVENT

\*\*OPENING HYMN 82

*Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus*

HYFRYDOL

LIGHTING OF THE FIRST ADVENT CANDLE ~ The Candle of Hope

**Ann & Lars Morrison**

*God's promise of hope is for all people;*

*Together, we anticipate the day of his coming.*

Ann: We light this candle as a sign of the coming light of Christ. Advent means coming. Even as we celebrate the birth of our Lord in Bethlehem so long ago, we are preparing ourselves for the return of our Lord Jesus as he comes again in glory! The first candle calls us to hope!

Lars: Hear this blessing from Apostle Paul's Letter to the Romans: "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." Let the light of this one candle shine brightly in our lives, reminding us to live in hope! And let us walk in the light of the Lord.

Congr.: **Faithful God, out of death you bring life. Renew us in hope, that we may be alert to the burgeoning of Christ's advent among us. God of promise, God of hope, into our darkness come. Amen.**

#### CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE

VENI EMMANUEL

***O Come, O Come, Emmanuel, And ransom captive Israel,  
That mourns in lonely exile here Until the Son of God appear.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel.***

#### INVITATION TO CONFESSION & CORPORATE PRAYER CONFESSION

**Sometimes it is hard for us to take you seriously, God of our lives. With so many places damaged by war, terror, and fear, how do we hope for peace? With bullies being given unlimited access on social media, why shouldn't we respond with anger and vindictive slights? With our hopes turned to ashes, how can we become beacons of light for those in the shadows?**

**Forgive us, God of holy seasons, and have mercy. In the days to come, may we discover the grace which has always been ours, so we can share it with others. May we taste the sweet goodness of your love, and feed those around us. May we be filled with the peace of your Spirit, so we may expect you to come in those we least expect, in places which surprise us, in moments we overlook, just as you did in Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. Amen.**

#### A TIME OF SILENT CONFESSION & ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Pastor: Reach out and touch the kingdom, for it is right next to you. Breathe in, and feel the Spirit of peace and hope. Trust and believe this good news: God is nearer than you might ever imagine.

People: **We can set aside our differences and embrace everyone, we can seek peace for all in our lives, our neighborhoods, our world. Thanks be to God, we are forgiven! Amen.**

\*\*CONFESSION RESPONSE 581

*Glory Be to the Father*

GLORIA PATRI (Greatorex)

***Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;***

*as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,  
world without end. Amen, amen.*

**\*\*THE PEACE OF CHRIST**

Leader: May the Hope of Advent be yours all through the year. The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

People: **And also with you.**

**The Word**

**\*\*ILLUMINATION B14 v.1** *Savior of the Nations, Come* NUN KOMM, DER HEIDEN HEILAND  
*Savior of the nations come, Virgin's Son, make here Your home.*  
*Marvel now, O heaven and earth, That the Lord chose such a birth.*

HT LESSON Isaiah 2: 1 –5 *Pew Bible P.550*

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord. People: **Thanks be to God!**

SCRIPTURE HYMN 350 *Keep Your Lamps Trimmed and Burning* KEEP YOUR LAMPS

NT LESSON Romans 13: 11 - 14 *Pew Bible P.923*

Leader: Here ends the reading of the Epistle. People: **Praise be to You, O Lord!**

**\*\*GOSPEL LESSON** Matthew 24: 36 – 44 *Pew Bible P.806*

Pastor: The Gospel of Our Lord. People: **Glory to You, O Christ!**

CANTICLE 84 v.1 *Creator of the Stars at Night* CONDITUR ALME SIDERUM

*Creator of the stars at night, your people's everlasting light,  
O Christ, redeemer of us all, we pray to you, hear us when we call.*

THE MESSAGE *Advent I: Hope* PASTOR BRIAN

SERMON RESPONSE 108 v.1 *Of the Father's Love Begotten* DIVINUM MYSTERIUM

*Of the Father's love begotten, ere the worlds began to be,  
he is Alpha and Omega, he the source, the ending be,  
of the things that are, that have been, and that future years shall see,  
evermore and evermore. Amen.*

**\*\*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH IN SONG**

Hymn 129 *Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming* ES IST EIN ROSE

THE PASTORAL PRAYER with 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.**

## **The Eucharist**

### **PRESENTATION OF OFFERINGS & GIFTS**

**OFFERTORY ANTHEM**                      *Is Your Heart Prepared for a King? ~ 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?*  
*Is the babe of whom we sing (Will you watch?)*  
*born to be our God and King? (Will you pray?)*  
*Is your heart prepared, Is your heart prepared,*  
*is your heart prepared for a King?*

**\*\*DOXOLOGY 144 v.4**                      *In the Bleak Midwinter*                      CRANHAM  
***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.***

### **\*\*CORPORATE PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

**Thank you, God of hope, for the promise of this season. We are grateful for the generosity aroused in us by Christ's coming into the world. May these gifts represent a new spirit of joyous sharing among us, for the sake of all your children everywhere. Amen.**

## **The Sending**

**\*\*HYMN 93**                      *Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates*                      TRURO

### **\*\*THE CHARGE & BENEDICTION**

**\*\*CHORAL RESPONSE**                      *Comfort, Comfort Now My People ~ GENEVEN 42*  
*"Comfort, comfort now my people; tell of peace!" So says our God.*  
*"Comfort those who sit in darkness mourning under sorrow's load.*  
*To my people now proclaim that my pardon was for them!*  
*Tell them that their sins I cover, and their warfare now is over."*

## POSTLUDE

Wait! Don't Go Yet! Join us for conversation and food in fellowship hall right after the service. Thanks to today's host *Mother Hubbard's Snacks & Left-Overs*.

### Membership at Covenant United Presbyterian Church

If you are reading this information in our Worship Bulletin, you already belong here at Covenant United Presbyterian Church. Here, all are welcome, and membership in the congregation is not required to participate in any of our activities and ministries. By becoming a member, you will have voice and vote in congregational meetings and can better express your commitment to Jesus Christ through this church. Welcoming people as members helps us to get to know them better and to support you more fully – letting all of us stay engaged and grow in faith together. Individuals may join the church by Profession of Faith and Baptism (for those who have never been baptized), by Reaffirmation of Faith (for those who are not currently active members of another Christian church), or by Transfer of Church Letter (for those on the active roll of another church.) Contact Pastor John to find out more.



## Church Announcements



Donations: "Tithely" at [covenantbutler.org](http://covenantbutler.org) or "Tithley" Smartphone App

Christmas Poinsettias: Memorial (or in Honor of) poinsettia orders will be due on Wednesday, December 3 by 12:00 PM. Please hand in directly to the church office. Please do not put them in the offering plate. The big plants for the chancel have been provided for already. Of course, if you still want a large plant, please do order one.

Angel Tree: **DUE DEC 7** - Help kids in need by sponsoring an angel and buying gifts for someone from the Northwest Elementary School. Pick a student, see their requests, buy items on their list. Questions, see Barb Leffler of Trinity PC.

Christmas Party Fellowship: **December 7 12:10 PM** Great food, door prizes, & fun. **Bring a wrapped gift (\$5-\$10) for our game!**





Prayer List: If you have a prayer request, please contact the Prayer Cordon: Virginia Lokovich 724-287-3920, Jane Hall 724-287-5410, Pastor John 412-779-6148, or [covenantoffice@zoominternet.net](mailto:covenantoffice@zoominternet.net)

Please Pray for:

**Brenda**, Virginia Lokovich's daughter, having surgery this Tuesday, Nov. 25, to repair discs in her neck/spine.

**Sammy Peters**, step-son of Linda Peters, came through heart surgery well; continued prayers for healing.

**Bonnie Readett**, Pastor John's sister in East Greenwich, RI, for relief from right shoulder and back pain.

**Pam Patterson**, residing at Concordia Cabot – Please note her room is #2510.

**Jane Faulkner**, Ann Morrison's sister in CA, that the FEMA Congressional Affairs Office will be open to taking over management of her housing application.

**Scotty McAliley**, Ann Morison's cousin in NC, is in stable condition while being treated for cancer.

Covenant United Presbyterian Church  
December 24, 2025  
4:00 PM



Christmas  
Eve

Preludes at 3:40 PM



\* CANDLELIGHT SERVICE \*