

Covenant United Presbyterian Church

107 Staley Ave. Butler, PA 16001

724-287-7731 covenantoffice@zoominternet.net

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



1 John 4:9-10 (NLT) *"God showed how much he loved us by sending his one and only Son into the world so that we might have eternal life through him. This is real love—not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins."*

Advent IV - Love

December 21, 2025, 11:00 AM

Pastor: Rev. John C. R. Silbert

TV Producer: Brian F Graff, C.P.

Worship Leader: Mary Reefer

Music Director: Dominico Reyes

Lighting the Love Candle: Ione & Rev. Bob Mathias

~ Order of Worship ~

** = Please stand, as able

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

** OPENING PRAYER

**OPENING HYMN 105

People, Look East

BESANÇON

LIGHTING OF THE FOURTH ADVENT CANDLE ~ The Candle of Love

We love because he first loved us.

Rev. Bob & Ione Mathias

Ione: We light these candles as signs 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.

The second candle calls us to seek peace. The third candle calls us to find joy in the Lord's presence! This fourth candle calls us to love as God loves us.

Bob: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life." Hear these words of the Lord Jesus to the disciples: "I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

Both: Let the light of this fourth candle shine brilliantly in our lives, reminding us to love others as Christ loves us! Let us walk in the light of the Lord.

Congregation: **Loving God, we thank you for your gift of love shown to us perfectly in Jesus Christ our Lord. Help us prepare our hearts to receive Him. Bless our worship. Help us to hear and do your word. We ask it in the name of the one born in Bethlehem. Amen.**

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE

VENI EMMANUEL (O RADIX JESSE)

***O come, O Branch of Jesse's stem,
unto your own and rescue them!
From depths of hell your people save,
and give them victory o'er the grave.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Immanuel
shall come to you, O Israel***

INVITATION TO CONFESSION & CORPORATE PRAYER CONFESSION

Shepherd of our souls, we anticipate your coming but do not feel ready. We have done too much, and not done enough. We have focused too much on ourselves, and not enough on others. Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we might be saved.

A TIME OF SILENT CONFESSION & ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Pastor: Yeshua -- Jesus did not come into this world to condemn, but to save.
People: **God does not come to imprison us, but to set us free.**
Pastor: Through the abundant love of Emmanuel, we are forgiven.
People: **Thanks be to God!**

**CONFESSION RESPONSE 581

Glory Be to the Father

GLORIA PATRI (Creatorex)

***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, Peace, Joy & Love of Advent be yours all through the year.
The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.
People: **And also with you.**

NOISY OFFERING OF LOOSE CHANGE

The Word

**ILLUMINATION B14 v.4 *Savior of the Nations, Come*

NUN KOMM, DER HEIDEN HEILAND

***Brightly does your manger shine, Glorious is its light divine.
Let not sin o'er-cloud this light; Ever be our faith thus bright.***

HT LESSON Isaiah 7: 10 –16

Pew Bible P.554

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

SCRIPTURE HYMN 91 *(Matthew 1: 23 & Isaiah 7:14) Come, Come Emmanuel*

Congregational Refrain: ***Come, come Emmanuel. Come, Emmanuel.***

- Choral Verses: 1. For the Lord of creation will...
2. O the son of Mary will...
3. See God's marvelous deed and...
4. For God chose us, and so we will...
5. For the angel proclaims he will...
6. As the servant of God we...

NT LESSON Romans 1: 1 – 7

Pew Bible P.913

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

****GOSPEL LESSON** Matthew 1: 18 – 25

Pew Bible P.783

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

CANTICLE 84 v.4

Creator of the Stars at Night

CONDITUR ALME SIDERUM

***To God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit, Three in One,
praise, honor, might, and glory be from age to age eternally. Amen.***

THE MESSAGE

Advent IV: Love

PASTOR JOHN

****AFFIRMATION OF FAITH IN SONG**

Hymn 108

Of the Father's Love Begotten

DIVINUM MYSTERIUM

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

****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** ☩

Faithful God of unfolding plans, when our certainty falters and our expectations collapse, you are still at work, inviting us into grace that redefines and redeems. Like Joseph, we bring our gifts and lay down our plans, trusting that your Spirit can shape our offering into something greater than we imagined. Let these gifts and our lives be signs of obedience,

humility, and hope. May they help carry Christ into a world still longing for peace, hungry for love, and needing redemption. We pray in the name of the one who is Emmanuel—God with us. Amen.

The Sending

MINUTE FOR MISSION

Glade Run Warming Center

GINA LOEBELL

**HYMN 110

Love Has Come

BRING A TORCH

**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

✠ *The Prayer of Dedication is from the United Methodist Church discipleship ministries, prepared for this Sunday, Advent IV (A).*

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



Wait! Don't Go Yet! Join us for conversation and food in fellowship hall right after the service.

Thanks to *Linda Peters & Friends* for hosting today! Note: December 28 – January 25 will be light snacks in the Sanctuary. Regular fellowship returns February 1st.

Donations: "Tithely" at covenantbutler.org or "Tithley" Smartphone App

Christmas Joy Offering: The final PC(USA) Special Offering of the Year supports church leaders in our area and in the world. Offering envelopes are available on the bulletin table in the Sanctuary. Collection is TODAY during our offering time.

Year-End Celebrations:

December 27th Jane Hall's Birthday! (100)

December 29 Lars Morrison's Birthday

December 31st Connie Swartzfeger's Birthday



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

Please Pray for:

David Blewett, who has had frequent hospital visits in the past month.

Brenda, Virginia Lokovich's daughter, for healing after neck and spine surgery on November 25.

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 Morrison'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

Bring a Guest(s)!



* CANDLELIGHT SERVICE *

Isaiah 7: 10 – 16

S D H K N X E V I L T Z W E D
A R G N G H R H Y B I H A H R
I O I O I L O O K R O T A H E
D L H W S U F N H S A B T T A
L V M S S N E N E V A E H L D
I S E E O I R Y A Y M F W L E
H R M S N M E O R T O O E A D
C N I O L M H U B H R R V H A
A H T O O A T R O E T E I S V
G I G H E N C W D N A L G A I
A M O C H U U W I L L R N R D
I S O W S E R E F U S E U E K
N E D B T L D N A M O W O K I
A L E S U I S A I A H I Y O N
M F E D E T R E S E D T U P G
E T P T S S A Y I N G H O S S

Word List

THEREFORE IMMANUEL DESERTED MORTALS HIMSELF SAYING REFUSE LITTLE ISAIAH
HEAVEN CHOOSE BEFORE YOUNG WOMAN WHOSE WEARY SPOKE SHEOL SHALL
KNOWS KINGS HOUSE HONEY DREAD DAVID CURDS CHILD AGAIN YOUR WITH
WILL TIME THEN THAT TEST SIGN SAID NRSV NAME LORD LOOK LAND HIGH
HEAR GOOD GIVE EVIL DEEP BEAR ALSO AHAZ TWO TOO SON PUT NOT LET
HOW GOD EAT BUT ASK ARE MY BY

(Isaiah 7:10-16) Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz, saying, (11) Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven. (12) But Ahaz said, I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test. (13) Then Isaiah said: "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also? (14) Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel. (15) He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. (16) For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted. (NRSV)