

**Covenant Presbyterian Church
Butler, Pennsylvania**



First Sunday of Advent
December 3, 2017

Night draws closer, days grow shorter;
Darkness seems to hem us in.
But the light of Christ is coming,
He will save us from our sin.
So in this first week of Advent,
We will spark one candle's flame.
We remember that first Christmas,
When the lowly Christ child came.

--Rev. Elizabeth Wallace
"Candle Song"

The Rev. Dr. James E. Swanson, Pastor
Pastor's Phone: 724-752-8383 / 724-712-1407
Church Office Phone: 724-287-773
Website: <http://covenantbutler.org>
Social Media: [facebook.com/covenant230](https://www.facebook.com/covenant230)

Order of Service for Worship

December 3, 2017

Eleven O'clock, A.M.



Rev. Dr. James E. Swanson, Pastor
Organist/Music Director: Beverly Antis
Liturgist of the Month: Lars Morrison

THIS IS GOD'S HOUSE ~ ALL ARE WELCOME HERE !

Even as the world seeks to judge or divide us according to our economic, racial and ethnic groups, ages, gender, abilities, preferences, politics and theological positions, we believe that in Christ there should be no such division.

Our congregation is strengthened through difference and diversity, and in the name of our Lord, we welcome all who come seeking refuge and healing from condemnation, prejudice and discrimination.

PRELUDE *Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence* arr. Robert Lau
 Lars Morrison, flute **Beverly Antis**, organ
 Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus arr. Robert Lau

CHORAL INTROIT

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! Amen.*

—Aurelius Clemens Prudentius
Trans. John Mason Neale and Henry Williams Baker

*OPENING HYMN # 2

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus HYFRYDOL

*PRAYER OF ADORATION

LIGHTING OF THE FIRST ADVENT CANDLE

THE CANDLE OF HOPE *Men of the Covenant Choir*

God's promise of hope is for all people;
together, we anticipate the day of his coming.

As the first candle is lit, the ones lighting will say:

Advent is here, and we begin again our wait for the birth of the Christ child. We now light the first candle of our Advent Wreath, a reminder of God's promise of a Savior.

As proclaimed in Jeremiah 33:14-16:

“The Lord said: I made a wonderful promise to Israel and Judah, and the days are coming when I will keep it. I promise that the time will come when I will appoint a king from the family of David, a king who will be honest and rule with justice. In those days, Judah will be safe; Jerusalem will have peace and will be named ‘The Lord Gives Justice.’”

The time is drawing near. Let the light of this one candle shine brightly in our lives, a reflection of God’s promise.

The congregation will pray together:

Holy God, you have promised to bring salvation and justice to your creation. As we wait for the arrival of the Savior, our hearts are glad because we are saved by your grace. May we share that grace with others. 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.**

—Latin, c. 12th century
Trans. John Mason Neale

PSALM OF THE DAY Psalm 80: 1-7, 17-19 (*Pew Bible OT p. 470*)

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

CORPORATE PRAYER OF CONFESSION (in unison)

Eternal God, in whom we live and move and have our being: cleanse us from all our offenses, and deliver us from proud thoughts and vain desires, that with reverent and humble hearts we may draw near to you, confessing our faults, confiding in your grace, and finding in you our refuge and strength; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

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 with peace upon earth and in heaven above.

A FEW MOMENTS FOR SILENT CONFESSION

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Pastor: The Lord is gracious and full of compassion,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.
Through the Holy Spirit, God gives new life
and freedom from the power of sin.

Friends, believe the good news of the gospel:

People: **In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!**

*THE GLORIA PATRI 579

GLORIA PATRI

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

The Apostles' Creed (Traditional)

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.

*GREETINGS OF PEACE AND FRIENDSHIP

SHARING OF JOYS, CONCERNS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHORAL PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION Sarum plainsong, Mode IV

*Creator of the stars of night, Your people's everlasting light,
O Christ, Redeemer of us all, We pray You, hear us when we call.
Amen.*

—Latin, 9th century
Trans. John Mason Neale

FIRST LESSON Isaiah 64: 1-9 (*Pew Bible OT p. 606*)

Liturgist: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

EPISTLE LESSON 1 Corinthians 1: 3-9 (*Pew Bible NT p. 926*)

Liturgist: Here ends the second lesson.

All: **Praise be to you, O Lord.**

*GOSPEL READING Mark 13: 24-37 (*Pew Bible NT p. 826*)

Pastor: The Gospel of our Lord.

All: **Glory to You, O Christ.**

*CONGREGATIONAL CANTICLE NUN KOMM, DER HEIDEN HEILAND

Hymn 14, vs. 1 - *Savior of the Nations, Come*

**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.**

—Ambrose of Milan, 4th century
Para. Martin Luther; Trans. William Morton Reynolds

SERMON

“*ADVENT TIME*”

Pastor Jim

PASTORAL PRAYER & 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.

CHORAL AMEN

Two-Fold Amen

Beverly Antis

PRESENTATION OF TITHES, OFFERINGS & GIFTS

OFFERTORY ANTHEM *Prepare the Way, O Zion* arr. Robert Lau

*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.*

REFRAIN: *O blest is Christ that came
In God's most holy name.*

*He brings God's rule, O Zion;
He comes from heaven above.
His rule is peace and freedom,
And justice, truth, and love.
Lift high your praise resounding,
For grace and joy abounding. REFRAIN*

*Fling wide your gates, O Zion;
Your Savior's rule embrace.
His tidings of salvation
Proclaim in every place.
All lands will bow before him,
Their voices will adore him.* REFRAIN

--Charles Wesley

*ADVENT DOXOLOGY - Hymn #36, vs. 4

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.**

—Christina Rossetti

*UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION

**In gratitude and love, O God, we pour out our thanksgiving
and praise for all your blessings. Receive our gifts and shape
our lives by your grace so we may be messengers of the good
news of your love for all peoples. Amen.**

THE COMMUNION HYMN #5

Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence

PICARDY

THE INVITATION TO THE TABLE

Pastor: Lift up your 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 GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION

CELEBRATION OF THE SACRAMENT (*come forward*)

*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: Let us pray:

People: **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.

*RECESSIONAL HYMN # 11

O Lord, How Shall I Meet You? VALET WILL ICH DIR GEBEN

*THE BENEDICTION

*CHORAL RESPONSE *Come, Lord Jesus* Thomas Olivers
Harm. Ralph Vaughan Williams

*Come, Lord Jesus, Come, Lord Jesus,
Come, Lord Jesus, Everlasting Christ, come down!*

—Charles Wesley

*A TIME OF SILENCE

*CHARGE AND DISMISSAL

Pastor: As we journey through Advent –
Waiting and hoping...
May the God of hope,
who loves us and gave himself for us,
fill us with joy as we trust in Him,
so that in believing, we may abound in hope.
Now let us go in peace, and serve the Lord !

People: **Thanks be to God!**

*POSTLUDE *Prepare the Way, O Zion* arr. Robert Lau

* Those who are able, please stand

YOU WERE GREETED TODAY BY *Connie Brown.*



THE POINSETTIA PLANTS IN THE SANCTUARY

TWO LARGER PLANTS

Given by Helen Ferguson
*“In Honor of the Covenant Choir &
Beverly Antis, Choir Director”*

PLANTS ON THE RISER

Given by Members and Friends
in Honor and/or Memory of Loved Ones



It is not too late to order your plant!



***A form for Christmas Flowers
is enclosed.***

*Please make checks payable to:
Covenant Presbyterian Church
marked “Flower Fund” in the memo*

A complete list of donors will be published in the Christmas Eve
Lessons & Carols bulletin, on Sunday, December 24th.

JOIN US FOR FELLOWSHIP TIME !

Hosting Today: *Brian Graff*
*Holiday-Themed Fellowship today
featuring Hot Cocoa
with Marshmallows ... & more!*



*Best (or Worst)
Holiday Sweater contest
Prizes for 1st place & runner up.*

*A fun way to mark the beginning of Advent!
(sweaters optional)*

A time for fellowship immediately follows this morning's
worship service...downstairs in the Assembly Room.

Everyone is Invited!

Today is the perfect day to go home, pull out your advent wreath and refurbish it however you like!

Boxed sets of Advent candles will be available today during Fellowship Hour, as well as a couple of wooden bases. Please check with Ione or Bob Mathias for information and encouragement!



Upcoming Committee Meeting—

Worship & Music Committee

This Thursday, December 7th @ 1:00pm
(Assembly Room)

*Thursday meeting this month instead of Wednesday



Celebrating Our Heritage

Final Installment: You will find the last installment - #31 - of the book “*Through Succeeding Years*” - an historical account of the history of First Presbyterian Church from 1813-1938 in this morning’s bulletin. *(Back issues are available in the narthex.)*

Below are names that were handwritten notations in the book’s left-side margin that exceeded our copy range. The names identify members of the congregation from the late 1930s who portrayed characters in an historical dramatization:

- (J. Campbell Brandon) FATHER: Can we realize...
- (Mrs. C. W. Reichard) MOTHER: I was thinking...
- (Thomas Gaiser) SON: Mother, did I...

PLEDGE CARD 2018 REMINDER

If you have not had an opportunity to return your 2018 pledge card, extra cards are available in the narthex.



Please place your completed pledge card in the envelope provided and place it on this morning’s offering plate or mail it to the church. *If you have already submitted your completed pledge card for 2018 ... THANK YOU!*

Available in the narthex beginning today!

PITTSBURGH THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Weekly Advent Devotionals

Each Sunday a new weekly booklet of *free*
Devotional Readings will be available.

(If you miss a Sunday, or wish to have a weekly
installment in advance, contact Elsie in the office)

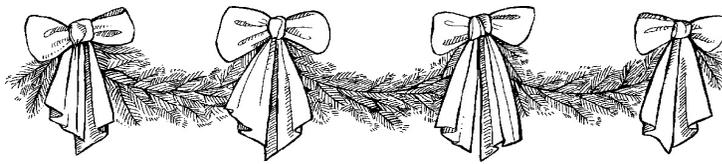
The New Flower Chart for 2018

... **NOW POSTED** on the Assembly Room
bulletin board. Please sign up for any open Sunday.
The cost is currently \$35 for two vases.



Please make checks payable to Covenant Presbyterian
Church. Flowers are ordered through the church office
unless otherwise requested.

*Flower forms are available in the narthex.
Please submit payment with your order. Thank you.*



Worship Schedule

Sunday, December 10, 2017

2nd Sunday of Advent ~ 11 am Worship

Leanne & Bob Heaton ~ Lighting Second Advent Candle

Sunday, December 17, 2017

3rd Sunday of Advent ~ 11 am Worship

Betty Butler & Family ~ Lighting Third Advent Candle

Sunday, December 24, 2017 (morning service)

4th Sunday of Advent ~ 11 am Worship

Women of the Covenant Choir ~ Lighting Fourth Advent Candle

Christmas Eve

Sunday, December 24, 2017

“A Service of Lessons & Carols”

With Communion (*seated*) and Candle Lighting

Lighting the Christ Candle:

Jim & Karen Swanson & Family

7:00 pm ~ Festival Music

7:30 pm ~ Worship Service

December 31, 2017 ~ 1st Sunday After Christmas Day

Two Worship Services ~ Sanctuary

@ 11:00 AM ~ MORNING WORSHIP SERVICE & FELLOWSHIP

@ 3:00 PM ~ ALL AREA CHURCH WORSHIP SERVICE

Service & Music based on the style of Lessons & Carols— but less formal. Covenant and other church choirs (including bell) as well as clergy and musicians from area churches will be participating in this joint collaboration in the Sanctuary.

There will be no reception following the service so that those attending New Year’s Eve celebrations can be home in time to celebrate the evening!



**ARTISAN MARKETPLACE
TO CLOSE DECEMBER 23RD**



Sale runs from Dec 4th – Dec 23rd

Each week in December you receive a bigger discount:

Week 1	Dec. 4 th – Dec. 9 th	10% discount on everything
Week 2	Dec. 11 th – Dec. 16 th	15% discount on everything
Week 3	Dec. 18 th – Dec. 23 rd	20% discount on everything

**The Artisan Marketplace shop is located
at 134-B South Main St in Zelienople, PA**



Prayer Concerns

Diane Dancik ~ friend of Mary Reefer who has been diagnosed with cancer which has spread to her liver and bowels

Donna Hobaugh ~ keep her in prayer; Donna has Alzheimers and lives at 100 Newhaven Lane, Rm. 6-B

Allen Kitchen (husband of Rev. Mary Kitchen) ~ now faces surgery at Cleveland Clinic on December 11th

Others:

Clyde Hilliard (Betty Butler's 91 yr. old brother),
Ray Blaine, Pat Foringer, Bill & Jennie Jamieson,
Rose Curry, Ruth Lugibihl



Happy Birthday!

Thomas Burkley & Andrew Burkley (*Dec. 10*)
(*twin sons of Linda & Tom Burkley of Harrisburg, PA*)

Offering Envelopes for 2018

...now available in the narthex.

Envelopes are arranged alphabetically. If you do not see your name or are new to offering envelopes, please see Tom Davidson, Church Treasurer or call the church office (724-287-7731).

PRAYER CORDON: Tuesdays at 12 noon in the Church Library.
To request prayer, contact Virginia at 724-287-3920.



Reflections on Advent “Time”

--by Karoline Lewis
Luther Seminary
(Saint Paul, Minn.)

I think this first Sunday of Advent is a reminder that our time is not our own. We like to pretend that it is; that we can manage it efficiently, plan accordingly. That by our sheer determination we can will it to bend to our needs and desires. We strive to turn it back, and for so many reasons. To re-experience time with someone we love. To relive time with someone we've lost. To recreate a moment in time we want to remember again or that we wish we had handled differently. We wonder if we can alter time in some way, change the course of time.

The charge to keep awake during this Advent season is not just about waiting and anticipation. It is not just about getting ready or being ready because can you ever be ready for Christ's coming? Can we ever be ready for God entering into humanity, into our sinfulness and brokenness, into our pain and loss, into our joy, into our love, into our longing?

The answer is no, and Advent will never be long enough. That's the point. God arrives, regardless of our readiness. God shows up, despite our determination toward manifesting our own destiny. God will come, no matter what kind of stipulations or conditions or provisions we make to persuade God of our timeliness.

And so we wait and pray: “Come, Lord Jesus, Come!”

Christmas, the Real Deal

*“The Ancient of Days is Born as a
Baby: Christmas, the Real Deal”*

A multimedia presentation

By Father Bogdan Bucur



Saturday, December 16th @ 10AM

(Ukrainian Hall, Lyndora)

Santa and Rudolph and the elves are cute—but Christmas is about far deeper things. Come and learn about the authentic, undiluted theology and spirituality. Question & answer session follows the presentation.

Lunch for all attendees provided by:
Lyndora chapter of the Ukrainian Orthodox League



Slippery Rock University

presents Menotti's...

“Amahl and the Night Visitors”

Saturday, December 16

@ 7:30PM

Slippery Rock United Methodist Church
130 Franklin St. in Slippery Rock, PA



Amahl and the Night Visitors is a family-favorite one-hour-long opera in English that highlights a stop on the journey of the three kings.

Tickets available at the door—

\$15 – General Admission

\$10 – Senior

\$5 – Students

Craig Joseph, STAGE DIRECTOR

Joel Goodloe, CONDUCTOR

Resonance Chamber Orchestra

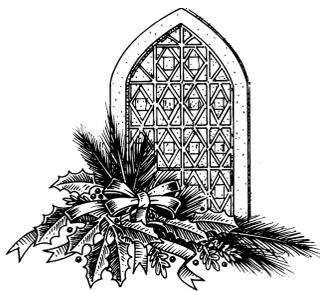
Slippery Rock University Chamber Singers*

Directed by Christopher Scott

In collaboration with Resonance Works / Pittsburgh

**Nathan Turley, Gideon Zoeller and Frank Paden, SRU Music students who also sing in the Covenant Choir, have parts in this production! (Nathan plays “Page”; Gideon and Frank are in the shepherds’ chorus.)*





*The Sacred Music Choir 2017
Christmas Concert of Sacred
Choral, Organ and
Handbell Music*

Friday, December 15, 2017 at 7:30 pm

*Saint Peter's Anglican Church
218 E. Jefferson St. Butler, PA 16001*

Reception and free will offering.