

COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

CINNAMINSON, NEW JERSEY



25th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

10:00 AM

November 19, 2023

Covenant's Mission Statement

"To share God's love with all people, to nurture each other, to serve those in need, and to invite everyone into fellowship and worship as we strive to follow the example of Jesus Christ."

PRELUDE

"It is Well With My Soul"

Phillip Bliss

GREETING AND PRAYER OF PREPARATION

Holy Spirit living within us, guide our hearts and minds as we welcome today all those who worship with us at Covenant Presbyterian Church. Give us discerning hearts so that everyone who crosses our threshold feels welcomed in the spirit of your love. Help us to recognize each person as an individual sent by you who will enrich our lives. And most of all, O God, let this be a place of love and acceptance of all your children; in the name of your child, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

CHORAL INTROIT

"O God, We Do Exalt Your Name"

L. Larson

CALL TO WORSHIP

Chuck Rosica

Leader: Before there was any time,

People: there was God.

Leader: When we wandered the wilderness,

People: God built a way for us.

Leader: When we lived in exile,

People: our homes were built by God.

Leader: When we are overwhelmed life,

People: God unknots the tightness in our shoulders.

Leader: When we seek to serve faithfully,

People: God provides the opportunities.

Leader: When tomorrow comes,

People: we find God awake and waiting for us.

Leader: When time ends,

People: there will still be God.

Leader: With prayer and praise, in scripture and in song, let us worship the Living God!

HYMN

“Come Sing, O Church, in Joy!”

(See page 12)

*If you are able, please stand

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God of promises, you offer us guidance, yet we grasp the hand of the world on our journey. You would nurture us with love and grace, and we feast on the empty calories of success and seduction. You call us to be your faithful people, and we are eager to follow the politicians, the promoters, the petty.

Forgive us, Covenant God. You have not forgotten your promises, nor will you break them. Rather, you come to us so we will know your love. You walk with us, so we will find the way. You redeem us, so we will trust your words which were fulfilled in Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior.

SILENT MEDITATION

LORD HAVE MERCY (3X)

Lord, have mer - cy.

Christ, have mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy on us.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Hear the good news and be a peace with yourself:

In every time, in every place, in every life, God shows compassion and mercy. Thus, we know God has heard our prayers and has filled us with grace and hope.

In this time, in this place, in our lives, our grace and hope are sustained by this abiding love. Thanks be to God, we are forgiven. Amen.

WE ARE FORGIVEN (1X)

Chords: G, Am, D7, Gsus, G, C, G, Am7, Dsus, D, G, Am, D7, Gsus, G, C, G, Am7, D, G

Lyrics:
We are for - giv - en. We are for - giv - en. Thanks be to
God. Thanks be to God. We are for - giv - en.
We are for - giv - en. Thanks be to God. Thanks be to God.

*If you are able, please stand

SHARING THE PEACE

*If you are able, please stand

Since God has forgiven us in Christ, let us forgive one another. The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

And also with you.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chuck Rosica

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

Guide us, O God, by your Word and Spirit, that in your light we may see light, in your truth find freedom, and in your will discover your peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

EPISTLE

Thessalonians 5:1-11

Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers and sisters, you do not need to have anything written to you. For you yourselves know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. When they say, "There is peace and security," then sudden destruction will come upon them, as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and there will be no escape! But you, brothers and sisters, are not in darkness, for that day to surprise you like a thief; for you are all children of light and children of the day; we are not of the night or of darkness. So, then, let us not fall asleep as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober, for those who sleep at night, and those who are drunk get drunk at night. But since we belong to the day, let us be sober and put on the breastplate of faith and love and for a helmet the hope of salvation. For God has destined us not for wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep we may live with him. Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

ANTHEM

"I Will Give Joyful Thanks"

Nolan

PSALM

Psalm 123:1-4

Leader: To you I lift up my eyes, O you who are enthroned in the heavens!

People: As the eyes of servants look to the hand of their master,

Leader: as the eyes of a maid to the hand of her mistress,

People: so our eyes look to the Lord our God, until he has mercy upon us.

Leader: Have mercy upon us, O Lord, have mercy upon us, for we have had more than enough of contempt.

People: Our soul has had more than its fill of the scorn of those who are at ease, of the contempt of the proud.

GOSPEL

Matthew 23:1-12

Jesus said, "For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. At once the one who had received the five talents went off and traded with them and made five more talents. In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them.

Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.' His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things; I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents.' His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things; I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow and gathering where you did not scatter, so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.' But his master replied, 'You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow and gather where I did not scatter? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest. So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents. For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance, but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Glory to you, Lord Christ.

SERMON

"Rediscovering Ourselves — 3. Using our Gifts"

Rev. Dr. Robert Higgs

PRAYER AND REFLECTION

We pause to reflect on the message.

If you wish, you may want to use the following breath prayer (or any of your choice). The words may be said aloud or in silence.

Breathe in: "I want to know you ...

Breathe out: "... and the power of your resurrection"

HYMN

*If you are able, please stand

"We Praise You, O God"

(See page 13)

BRIEF STATEMENT OF FAITH - PCUSA

In life and in death we belong to God. Through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, we trust in the one triune God, the Holy One of Israel, whom alone we worship and serve.

We trust in Jesus Christ, fully human, fully God. Jesus proclaimed the reign of God: preaching good news to the poor and release to the captives, teaching by word and deed and blessing the children, healing the sick and binding up the brokenhearted, eating with outcasts, forgiving sinners, and calling all to repent and believe the gospel.

Unjustly condemned for blasphemy and sedition, Jesus was crucified, suffering the depths of human pain and giving his life for the sins of the world. God raised this Jesus from the dead, vindicating his sinless life, breaking the power of sin and evil, delivering us from death to life eternal.

With believers in every time and place, we rejoice that nothing in life or in death can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

SHARING OF JOYS AND CONCERNS

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

For the peace from above, for the loving kindness of God, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord:

Lord, have mercy.

For the peace of the world, for the unity of the church of God, and for the well-being of all peoples, let us pray to the Lord:

Lord, have mercy.

For this gathering of the faithful, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord:

Lord, have mercy.

For all the baptized, for all who serve in the church, for elders and pastors, let us pray to the Lord:

Lord, have mercy.

For the rulers of the nations as we pray for Joe our President, Cory and Robert our Senators, Philip our Governor, Andy our Representative, and the Justices of the Supreme Court. Let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For this town of Cinnaminson, for every city and community, and for those who live in them, let us pray to the Lord:

Lord, have mercy.

For seasonable weather, and for abundant harvests for all to share, let us pray to the Lord:

Lord, have mercy.

For the good earth which God has given us, and for the wisdom and will to conserve it, let us pray to the Lord:

Lord, have mercy.

For those who travel by land, water, or air, or through outer space, let us pray to the Lord:

Lord, have mercy.

For the aged and infirm, for the widowed and orphaned, and for the sick and the suffering, let us pray to the Lord:

Lord, have mercy.

For the poor and the oppressed, for those unemployed and the destitute, for prisoners and captives, and for all who remember and care for them, let us pray to the Lord:

Lord, have mercy.

For deliverance in times of affliction, strife, and need, let us pray to the Lord:

Lord, have mercy.

For blessings and mercies we have received and need:

Lord, have mercy.

For all your children to know the peace and joy of your supporting care, let us pray to the Lord

Lord, have mercy.

For all who have died in the hope of the resurrection and are at rest, let us give thanks to the Lord. Eternal God, ruler of all things in heaven and earth, accept the prayers of your people, and strengthen us to do your will; through Jesus Christ. Amen.

CALL TO STEWARDSHIP

OFFERING

OFFERTORY

“Glorify Thy Name”

Donna Adkins

DOXOLOGY

“Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow”

#809

*If you are able, please stand

LORD’S PRAYER

And now as children of God, let us be bold to say:

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.

CLOSING HYMN

“God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending”

(See page 14)

If you are able, please stand

CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

My friends, go out into the world in peace ... Now together, may we all say:
Lord, may You this week open up doors for us to share your Word.

CHORAL BENEDICTION

“Now May the God of Peace”

L. Larson

POSTLUDE

“El Shaddai”

Michael Card

THE CHANCEL FLOWERS presented to the Glory of God by Leslie and Chris Todd in memory of their parents, Tom and Carol LaPorte and William Todd.

MINISTERS: Chuck Rosica and Steve Salmon (Ushers), Nancy Perritt (Refreshments), Sandi Pascone (Flower Delivery)

WE THANK: Dave May for sharing his music with us.

MONTHLY MEETINGS AND SCHEDULES

Women’s Bible Study – Mondays 11:00 AM

Choir Rehearsal – Sundays 11:00 AM

Bell Rehearsal – Mondays 7:00 PM

Christian Education (Bonnie Cain and Amanda Rosica) – as needed

Deacons – 2nd Tuesday, 7:00 PM

Fellowship (Amanda Rosica) – 3rd Wednesday, 7:00 PM

Finance and Stewardship (Mike Martin) – 2nd Monday, 7:00 PM

Men’s Breakfast -Tuesdays, 7:00 AM

Membership (Nancy Perritt) – as needed

Mission (Mary Lou Newborg) – as needed

Music and Worship (Leslie Todd) – November 19, after worship, lounge

Property Care (Chuck Rosica and Bob Jeffries) – determined by chairperson

Session – 4th Thursday, 7:30 PM



ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. POINSETTIA FORM

If you are interested in dedicating a poinsettia to a loved one, please fill out the form and return it to the church office no later than December 10. Forms will be available in the Narthex by next week.

2. LADIES TEA

Ladies Christmas Tea is December 2nd at 12:30PM (Tea at 1PM) - an elegant afternoon with full tea service, Christmas decor, and fellowship. Ages 5 and up welcome. Tickets on sale Nov. 5th.

3. SUNDAY SCHOOL

Attention all children starting at age 4. Covenant will be hosting Sunday School during the 10am Church Service on the following dates: November 19th, December 17th.

4. YOUR PARTICIPATION IS NEEDED! Members are invited to participate in our services. Please contact Bonnie Cain or Greg DiBona if you are interested in reading scripture or leading our worship services. We are also in need of more volunteers to operate the camera and soundboard. Please contact the church office if you are interested.

5. BIBLE STUDY The Bible Study will be located in the lounge on Mondays at 11AM. All are welcome!

6. STEWARDSHIP: Total Income for 11/12: Total Income: \$7445.00, Envelope Giving: \$2895.00, Deacons:\$250.00, Capital Improvements Fund: \$10.00.



POINSETTIA FORM

I wish to purchase _____ POINSETTIA PLANT (s) at \$11.00 each.

The Christmas Eve Bulletin will include a listing of names of donors (if desired) and mention the names of those in whose memory or in whose behalf the poinsettia plants are presented.

Mr./Mrs./Family

In memory/gratitude

Enclosed please find my check for the sum of \$ _____

Signed

_____ Phone _____

Please return form to the church office no later than Sunday, December 10, 2023.

POINSETTIAS MAY BE PICKED UP AFTER THE DECEMBER 24TH CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE

PLEASE CHECK ONE!

_____ I will pick up my poinsettia

_____ I would like the Deacons to deliver my poinsettia to someone special

Prayer List

Thankful prayers for Pastor Bob's strong and informative sermon. Thankful prayers to Mary Lou Newborg for her participation in the service and leading us in call to worship and announcements. A very good brunch was had by all with homemade soups, salads and desserts. Thank you!

Please continue to pray for world peace and for peace in our communities.

Keep our Covenant families and friends in your prayers:

Betty Graham - continued rest and healing

B. Ann and Dave DuBois - continued care and good treatment for health concerns for both

Kathy Hood - very good care and peace of mind

Bobbie Bechtel - continued healing of her ribs and feeling good

Terri Bell - able to rest in comfort and gather strength from the good care by Ken

Etna Kessler - good care at memory care facility

Emily Busby - good care at nursing facility

Barbara Van Tassel's friend, Betty McCord, hospitalized for undisclosed illness that she receives excellent diagnosis and care

Mary Lou's friend, 2-year-old Logan, that he is receiving excellent care and hopefully relief from cancer

Karen Schwartz's grandson, Lucas - recovering from two broken bones in his leg that he will heal completely

Betty's friend, Bill - getting stronger following intense treatment

Denise - uplift in spirit and benefiting from Bible study and good friends

Bruce, Dawn and Erin - finding an apartment soon and good care for Bruce's health concerns

Rita DiBona – Greg's grandmother – healing after a fall

809 Praise God from Whom All Blessings

The musical score is written for two voices, Treble and Bass, in a 4/4 time signature with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody is simple and homophonic, consisting of quarter and eighth notes. The lyrics are printed below the notes, with some words hyphenated across lines. The piece concludes with a double bar line and a final chord.

Praise God from whom all bless-ings flow; praise him, all crea-tures here be - low;
praise him a - bove, ye heaven-ly host: praise Fa-ther, Son and Ho - ly Ghost. A - men.

WORDS: *Doxology*, Thomas Ken, 1709
MUSIC: *Genevan Psalter*, 1551, alt.

OLD HUNDREDTH
L.M.

305 Come Sing, O Church, in Joy!

1 Come sing, O church, in joy! Come join, O church, in song!
 2 Long years have come and gone, and still God reigns su - preme,
 3 Let cour - age be our friend; let wis - dom be our guide,
 4 Come sing, O church, in joy! Come join, O church, in song!

For Christ the Lord has led us through the a - ges long!
 em - power - ing us to catch the vi - sion, dream the dream!
 as we in mis - sion mag - ni - fy the Cru - ci - fied!
 For Christ the Lord has tri - umphed o'er the a - ges long!

In bold ac - cord, come cel - e - brate the jour - ney now and praise the Lord!

This text was the winner in a hymn competition sponsored by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Bicentennial Committee for the 1988–1989 observance, which had the theme “Celebrate the Journey.” The late 18th-century tune (first used with Psalm 148) is appropriately celebratory.

We Praise You, O God 612

1 We praise you, O God, our Re - deem - er, Cre - a - tor;
 2 We wor - ship you, God of our fa - thers and moth - ers;
 3 With voic - es u - nit - ed our prais - es we of - fer

in grate - ful de - vo - tion our trib - ute we bring.
 through tri - al and tem - pest our guide you have been.
 and glad - ly our songs of thanks - giv - ing we raise.

We lay it be - fore you; we kneel and a - dore you;
 When per - ils o'er - take us, you will not for - sake us,
 With you, Lord, be - side us, your strong arm will guide us.

we bless your ho - ly name; glad prais - es we sing.
 and with your help, O Lord, our strug - gles we win.
 To you, our great Re - deem - er, for - ev - er be praise!

The author wrote this text when only nineteen years old in response to a request from the organist of the Brick Presbyterian Church in New York City, who wanted another Thanksgiving text to sing to this Dutch tune. He regarded the usual text (see no. 336) as too full of conflict.

God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending 716

Capo 3: (D) F (Bm) Dm (G) B \flat

1 God, whose giv - ing knows no end - ing, from your rich and
 2 Skills and time are ours for press - ing toward the goals of
 3 Trea - sure, too, you have en - trust - ed, gain through powers your

(D) F (Bm) Dm

end - less store, na - ture's won - der, Je - sus' wis - dom, cost - ly
 Christ, your Son: all at peace in health and free - dom, rac - es
 grace con - ferred: ours to use for home and kin - dred, and to

(G) B \flat (D) F (A) C

cross, grave's shat - tered door: gift - ed by you, we turn
 joined, the church made one. Now di - rect our dai - ly
 spread the gos - pel word. O - pen wide our hands in

(Bm) Dm (F \sharp m) Am (Bm) Dm (G) B \flat (A) C (D) F

to you, of - fer - ing up our - selves in praise; thank - ful song shall
 la - bor, lest we strive for self a - lone. Born with tal - ents,
 shar - ing, as we heed Christ's age - less call, heal - ing, teach - ing,

(Bm) Dm (G) B \flat (D) F

rise for - ev - er, gra - cious do - nor of our days.
 make us ser - vants fit to an - swer at your throne.
 and re - claim - ing, serv - ing you by lov - ing all.

Guitar chords do not correspond with keyboard harmony.

This text on stewardship was one of about 450 submissions in a search for such hymns conducted by the Hymn Society of America in 1961. These words are well grounded by their musical setting, an early American shape note tune named for a Baptist church in Harris County, Georgia.