

Welcome!

Whether you are a long-time member, occasional worshiper, or new visitor with us, we hope that in this service you will encounter the living Christ and be strengthened by God's promises for you. Please visit our website at covenantpresstaunton.org to learn more about our ministries and Covenant life together. We are happy to have you as part of our church family today!

COVENANT CHURCH DIRECTORY

PASTOR.....John C. Peterson
 ASSOCIATE PASTOR.....Rachel Watson
 MINISTER OF MUSIC.....Jeffrey Ryman
 ORGANIST.....Christopher Wszalek
 HANDBELL DIRECTOR.....Lou Dolive
 DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S MUSIC.....Kat McLean
 DEVELOPMENTAL PRESCHOOL DIRECTOR.....Mitzi White
 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT.....Martha Pierce
 TREASURER.....Paul Sorrell
 COVENANT NURSE.....Kathy Henderson
 CUSTODIAN.....Cleo Holly

SESSION MEMBERS

Class of 2023	Class of 2024	Class of 2025
Taylor Chenery	Eileen Cooper	Cindy Bowman
Cora Leigh Clark	Chris Earhart	Brandon Cline-Taskey
Tom Compton	Kristen Lambert	Linda Foster
Michael Gwaltney	Sue Morley	Joan Sayers
Brad Kurtz	Roderic Owen	Randy Smith
Beverly Riddell	Sarah Splaun	B.C. Sommerfield
Janey Terry	Dan Summers-Minette	Seth Ward



Covenant Presbyterian Church

Striving to be Faithful Disciples of Christ:

Worshipping with Joy, Growing in Faith, Serving in Love

DECEMBER 10, 2023

10:30 AM

SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT

*As we prepare our hearts and minds for worship, please silence any mobile devices.
 This service is live streamed on Facebook.*

STRIVING TO BE FAITHFUL DISCIPLES OF CHRIST

PRELUDE.....Cherwien

I Wonder as I Wander

JOYS AND CONCERNS OF THE CONGREGATION

CONGREGATIONAL INTROIT

One: *O Come, Thou Dayspring, come and cheer
 Our Spirits by Thine advent here;
 Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
 And death's dark shadows put to flight.*

All: Rejoice, Rejoice! Emmanuel, shall come to thee, O Israel!

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE — John & Sarah Brodie, Fin Harrison

WORSHIPING WITH JOY

CALL TO WORSHIP (From Psalm 85)

Leader: People of God, let us hear what God will say!

People: For God will speak peace to God's people!

Leader: Open up your hearts and minds!

People: God offers life to all who love the Lord and honor Him with hearts and lives.

Leader: Let us worship God together!

*HYMN No. 93.....TRURO

Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates



2001 NORTH COALTER STREET • STAUNTON, VIRGINIA

(540) 885-2138 • FAX (540) 885-4399

MAILING ADDRESS: P.O. BOX 2948 • STAUNTON, VIRGINIA 24402

*INVITATION TO CONFESSION

*PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Holy God, we confess that we wander from your ways. You call us to prepare a path in the wilderness, but we turn away. We are distracted by glittering gold, plundering the riches of the earth and hoarding our goods. We are lured by our desires, choosing personal comfort and pleasure over justice and love for our neighbors. We have lived for ourselves and apart from you and one another. In your mercy, forgive us. Grant us wisdom to welcome your Way and to prepare a path of peace through the wilderness of our days. Lord, hear our prayer. . . (silent confession) . . . Amen.

*DECLARATION OF PARDON

*CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE — Hymn No. 121, Stanza 4

*O holy child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray;
cast our sin and enter in; be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell.
O come to us; abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel!*

ANTHEM.....Alpha & Omega Choirs

*Shine, Advent Candle, Shine - Omega Choir
Shepherd's Carol - Alpha & Omega Choirs*

GROWING IN FAITH

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

FIRST READING.....Pg. 816 of the Old Testament, Pew Bible
Isaiah 40:1-11

SECOND READING.....Pg. of the New Testament, Pew Bible
Mark 1:1-8

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

SERMON.....RACHEL WATSON

“WALKING IN THE WILDERNESS”

MUSICAL REFLECTION

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH — From the Confession of 1967

In Jesus Christ God was reconciling the world to God’s self. Jesus Christ is God with us. He is the eternal Son of the Father, who became human and lived among us to fulfill the work of reconciliation. He is present in the church by the power of the Holy Spirit to continue and complete his mission. This work of God – the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – is the foundation of all confessional statements about

God, humanity, and the world. Therefore, the church calls all people to be reconciled to God and to one another. To God be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations!
Amen

*HYMN No. 372.....AZMON

O for a World

SERVING IN LOVE

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE WITH THE LORD’S PRAYER (...“sins”)

DEDICATION OF TITHES, OFFERINGS, AND OURSELVES

OFFERTORY.....John Ness Beck

Every Valley

PRAYER

*HYMN No. 106.....BEREDEN VÄG FÖR HERRAN

Prepare the Way, O Zion

*CHARGE AND BLESSING

*CHORAL RESPONSE.....African American Spiritual

Go! Tell It on the Mountain

POSTLUDE.....Clerambault

Basse et Dessus de Trompette

*(Please be seated for the Postlude or exit the sanctuary quietly
while the Postlude is being played.)*

**Those who are able, please stand.*

*Children are always welcome in the Sanctuary during worship.
Children’s worship notebooks are available in the Narthex.
Should you find that your child grows restless, there is childcare
available in the nursery for ages 3 and under.*

(Hymns and streaming used by permission One License A-715880)

HYMN No. 93

Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates

***Lift up your heads, ye mighty gates;
behold the King of glory waits;
the King of kings is drawing near;
the Savior of the world is here.***

***Fling wide the portals of your heart;
make it a temple, set apart
from earthly use for heaven's employ,
adorned with prayer and love and joy.***

***Redeemer, come! I open wide
my heart to thee; here, Lord, abide.
Let me thy inner presence feel;
thy grace and love in me reveal.***

HYMN No. 372

O for a World

***O for a world where everyone
respects each other's ways,
where love is lived and all is done
with justice and with praise.***

***O for a world where goods are shared
and misery relieved,
where truth is spoken, children spared,
equality achieved.***

***We welcome one world family
and struggle with each choice
that opens us to unity
and gives our vision voice.***

***The poor are rich; the weak are strong;
the foolish ones are wise.
Tell all who mourn: outcasts belong,
who perishes will rise.***

***O for a world preparing for
God's glorious reign of peace,
where time and tears will be no more,
and all but love will cease.***

HYMN No. 106

Prepare the Way, O Zion

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

***Fling wide your gates, O Zion;
your Savior's rule embrace,
and tidings of salvation
proclaim in every place.
All lands will bow rejoicing,
their adoration voicing.
Refrain:
O blest is Christ who came
in God's most holy name.***