

**LORD'S DAY**  
**December 26, 2021**



COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
*A Congregation of the Presbyterian Church in America*  
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*Upon entering the sanctuary, please be sensitive  
to the congregation's preparation for worship, and please make sure  
all electronic devices are turned off or set to silent mode.*

**-DRAWING NEAR TO GOD-**

**Welcome and Silent Prayer**

Almighty God, whose glory is above the heavens, praise waits for you in Zion! Out of your great mercy you have gathered us into your church. Receive the adoration of our hearts this day, and grant that we may so honor you, both in spirit and in outward form, that your name may be glorified through the worship of our lips and our hearts; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

**\*Call to Worship**

Psalm 89.5-8, 14-18

**\*Prayer of Adoration**

**\*Song of Praise to God**

*Hymn No. 92*

*A MIGHTY FORTRESS IS OUR GOD*

## **-HAVING OUR HEARTS CLEANSED-**

### **Confession of Sin**

O Lord, all that we are is laid bare before you. What could be hidden within us, even if we were unwilling to confess it? We would be hiding you from ourselves, not ourselves from you. And we make our confession not in words alone, but with the voice of our soul and in our thoughts which cry aloud to you. When we are evil, making confession to you is simply to be displeased with ourselves. When we are good, it is to make no claim on our own behalf, for without you we can do nothing. And so we confess our many sins of thought, word, and deed. We love you and so we are ashamed of ourselves and, once again, choose you and your will. Forgive us and help us to seek no pleasure for ourselves except that which is also pleasure for you; in Jesus' name. Amen.

— Adapted from Augustine's *Confessions*

*Silently add your own confession of sin.*

### **Assurance of Pardon**

Micah 7.18-19

### **\*Song of Praise to Christ**

*Hymn No. 167*

*WHEN MORNING GILDS THE SKIES*

## Confession of Faith

What benefits do believers receive from Christ at death?

**The souls of believers are at their deaths made perfect in holiness,<sup>1</sup> and do immediately pass into glory;<sup>2</sup> and their bodies, being still united to Christ,<sup>3</sup> do rest in their graves<sup>4</sup> till the resurrection.<sup>5</sup>**

—The Westminster Shorter Catechism, No. 37

## Prayer for the Church and the World

### -ATTENDING TO THE WORD-

#### Sermon

“The Shadow is Cast”

Luke 2.21-38

Rev. Ron Gonzales

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<sup>1</sup> “...and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect...” (Heb 12.23).

<sup>2</sup> “For we know that if the tent that is our earthly home is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens...So we are always of good courage. We know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord...Yes, we are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord” (2 Co 5.1, 6, 8). “I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better” (Ph 1.23). “And he said to him, ‘Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise’” (Lk 23.43).

<sup>3</sup> “For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep” (1 Th 4.14).

<sup>4</sup> “...he enters into peace; they rest in their beds who walk in their uprightness” (Is 57.2).

<sup>5</sup> “And after my skin has been thus destroyed, yet in my flesh I shall see God, whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another” (Job 19.26-27).

**\*Song of Response**

*Hymn No. 196*

COME, THOU LONG-EXPECTED JESUS

**Worship of God with Tithes and Offerings**

*\*DOXOLOGY*

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow;*

*Praise Him, all creatures here below;*

*Praise Him above, ye heav'nly host;*

*Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

Words Thomas Ken, 1709; music Genevan Psalter, 1551; Public Domain

**-OBSERVING THE SACRAMENT-**

**The Lord's Supper**

We celebrate the Lord's Supper by coming forward (generally from the back of the sanctuary to the front, though you may commune at any time) and partaking of the bread and the cup. Wine is served in the inner ring of each tray; grape juice in the outer ring. We warmly invite to the Table all baptized Christians, who are living under the authority of Christ and his body, the Church. By eating the bread and drinking of the cup, you are acknowledging that you are a sinner, without hope except in the sovereign mercy of God, and that you are trusting in Christ alone for salvation. If this does not describe you, we are glad you are here and commend to you the following prayer for your use during this time.

*A Prayer for those Searching for the Truth*

Jesus, you claim to be the way, the truth, and the life. Grant that I might be undaunted by the cost of following you as I consider the reasons for doing so. Guide me, teach me, and open to me the reality of who you are. Give me an understanding of you that is coherent, convincing, and leads to the life you promise. Amen.

**\*Song of Thanksgiving**

*Hymn No. 689*

BE STILL, MY SOUL

## -GOING FORTH TO SERVE-

### **Benediction**

2 Corinthians 13.14

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### **Gatherings**

*A Children's Catechism Class*, taught by Pastor Ron and Elder Jacob Schroeder, meets every other Wednesday afternoon, from 3:30 to 5:00 PM, at the church. This fall the class is studying Qs 38-52 of the New City Catechism. For more information, talk to Pastor Ron.

*Home Fellowship Group* is on break for the holidays. It will resume its study of 2 Kings on January 18, at 6:00 PM, at the Leinweber's.

*The Men's Group* meets Fridays, from 6:00 to 7:00 AM, in the Coffee Hour room. They are going through a series, led by Kirk Alden, entitled "Leading by the Book," in which fifty-two leadership principles related to personal development, relationships, and life skills are studied from a biblical perspective. All men and older sons are invited.

*A Men's Leadership Bible Study*, led by Kirk Alden, meets at Tate's Umapine Mercantile on Thursdays, from 6:30 to 7:30 PM. All men are invited. For more information, talk to Kirk.

*Prayer Meeting*: We meet the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month, at 5:15 PM in the sanctuary, to pray for one another, for the kingdom, and the world. Please join us.

*Sunday Evening Worship & Cultural Engagement*: On the second Sunday of each month, we gather from 6:00 to 7:15 PM for a brief time of worship followed by teaching and discussion of issues relevant to our society's cultural moment. Pastor Ron and Elder Jacob Schroeder have just begun a study on human sexuality, based on the report adopted by our General Assembly this past June. Reports can be found on the literature table. We meet in the sanctuary, and children are welcome.

*The Covenant Women's Study* is on break for the holidays. We will begin a new study January 12 on 2 Corinthians. Please read 1 Corinthians over the holidays in preparation. We will continue to meet on Wednesdays from 3:30 to 5:00 PM.

**Sermon Notes: "The Shadow is Cast" (Luke 2.21-38)**

## **Prayer Concerns**

*A Divine Stronghold:* David prayed, “The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?” (Ps 27.1) In addition to strength and healing, pray that *Sandy Cupolillo, Mike Givens, Tom Manning, Rick & Vickie Myers, Joel Smith* and *Wayne Snavely* know God’s mighty presence and shielding care in the week ahead.

*The Dodge/Schroeder Family:* Pray that Samantha and her family know God’s peace amidst the recent loss of her dad. May his presence with the Lord be a great comfort to them all.

*The Persecuted Church:* There are 3.6 million Christians out of 4.8 million people in *The Central African Republic*, making Christianity the main religion. Most of the country, however, is occupied by armed militia, with numerous groups targeting Christians. Over the last two years, tens of thousands have been displaced from their homes and those who have denounced the violence have suffered greatly. Pray that these Christians know God’s peace and provision amidst the chaos and uncertainty. Pray for God’s protection over their leaders as they minister to their congregations. And pray for the new believers who endure threats by their families and communities.

*Redeemer Presbyterian Church:* Pray for Rev. Jeff Glover, our church planter in Soldotna, AK as he shepherds the flock and trains men as officers who will help him do the same.

## **Announcements**

*Daily Bible Reading:* Reading through the Bible regularly is vital to our spiritual growth. Many of us will be doing so again in 2022 using M’Cheyne’s daily schedule, which is available on the literature table. Please consider joining us.

*High Tea:* Our Covenant Women’s Event for January will be a High Tea on Saturday, January 22, at 3:00 PM, at the church. We are looking for table hostesses. Please let the Women’s Ministry Team know if you would like to host a table. If you plan to attend, please RSVP by January 9.

*Sunday School* for all ages resumes January 9, from 9:00 to 9:45 AM.

### **Explanation of the Cover Symbol**

The anchor is an ancient Christian symbol for hope. It is derived from Hebrews 6.19: “We have this hope as an anchor for the soul...” When combined with a cross it makes plain that Christian hope is in Christ and His redemption. The symbol was frequently used in this sense in the catacombs of ancient Rome.