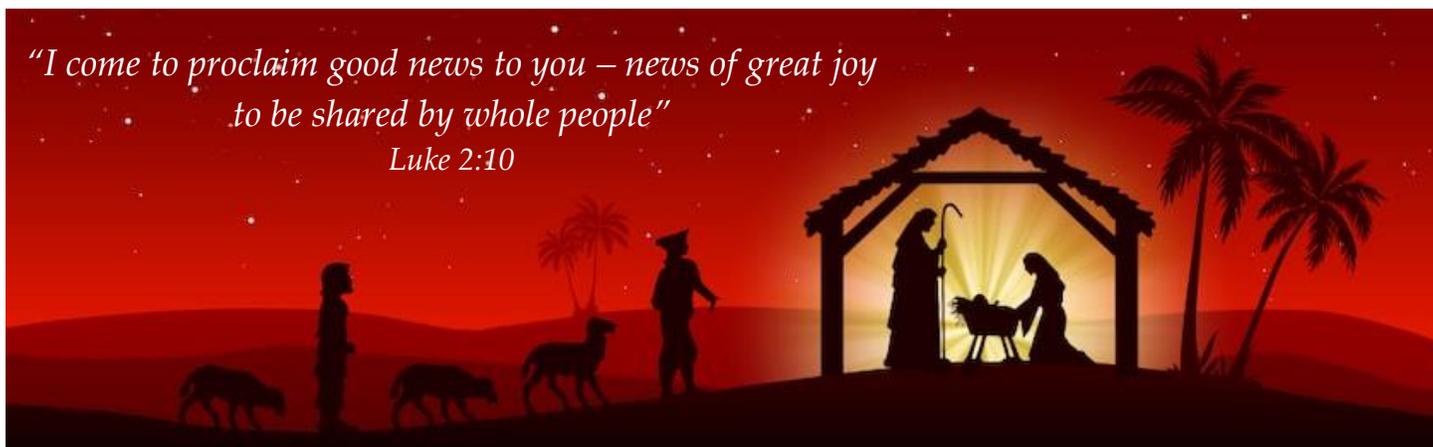


# THE CHURCH OF THE COVENANT

*"I come to proclaim good news to you – news of great joy  
to be shared by whole people"*

*Luke 2:10*



## CHRISTMAS EVE

DECEMBER 24, 2018 | 5:00 PM

### Welcome and Gathering

Welcome! We are glad you are here. Convinced of God's grace, the Church of the Covenant seeks to be a welcoming spiritual home, live God's inclusive love, express Christ's compassion, and do justice in the world. As we gather, we focus our hearts and minds on the One who has called us together. We address the things that keep us from hearing God – the distractions, broken relationships, and secrets eating away at us. Reminded of the fact that God loves us, forgives us, and wants to restore and repair us, we acknowledge the peace that this brings.

PRELUDE / CAROL SING

Jonathan Moyer, piano

SEE SONG PACKETS

WELCOME

THE REV. MELANIE MARSH BAUM

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

THE LEE-ROCK FAMILY: Ken, Jessica, and Cora

OPENING PRAYER

KEVIN J. LOWRY

\* CALL TO CONFESSION

\* CORPORATE PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**Gracious God, It's Christmas Eve again. We're barely ready for it. In the midst of the busyness we sometimes almost miss it: you, coming to earth, Emmanuel—God-with-us. Forgive us for forgetting the magic of this night, for focusing on ourselves and what we need to do instead of on the miracle of Jesus's birth. Help us hear anew your promises of hope, salvation, and love as we sing our familiar carols. Let us hear angel voices, see shepherds hurrying to a stable, feel the baby's soft breath on our cheeks, and ponder in our hearts what all of this means for us and for the world. Be present with us here and now, as we silently confess our sins...**

\* HYMN 44

*O Little Town of Bethlehem*

ST. LOUIS

## Encountering

Called, gathered, forgiven, and at peace, we can now spend time in God's presence, listening for what God might have to say to us as we encounter the Word. We let God know that we're listening and ask God to help us hear. Then we encounter God's Word to us in Scripture, song, a message, a devotion, a special time of prayer. Having encountered the Word, we pray that God seals in our hearts what we have heard, seen, and felt.

### THE WORD OF GOD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

THE PROPHECY

*Christ's birth and kingdom are foretold by Isaiah.*

ISAIAH 40:3-5

*Keasia Jones*

THE BIRTH OF JESUS

*Luke tells of the birth of Jesus.*

LUKE 2:1-7

*Samuel Moyer*

\* HYMN 25

*Away in a Manger*

MUELLER

THE SHEPHERDS

*The shepherds go to the manger.*

LUKE 2:8-16

*Christopher Moyer*

THE WISE MAGI

*Wise men are led by the star to Jesus.*

MATTHEW 2:1-11

*Violet Marsh*

THE INCARNATION OF THE WORD OF GOD

*John unfolds the great mystery of the Incarnation.*

JOHN 1:1-14

WOULD YOU LIKE TO HOLD THE BABY?  
(THE NATIVITY STORY RETOLD)

REV. MELANIE MARSH BAUM  
KEVIN J. LOWRY

## Sacred Scribble

*How do you encounter God in your life?*

## Responding

Having encountered God, we now respond. Through creeds and prayers, we tell God and one another stories that remind us both of who we are and why we trust God. We offer everything to God – ourselves, our concerns, our time, our money, our gifts, and our service, and we are invited to a meal of remembrance at God's table

### \*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

**We believe in God whose light shines in the darkness, and the darkness can never smother it. We believe that on a night like this night in Bethlehem there was born a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. We believe in the Word who has become incarnate, our very flesh and blood, yet full of grace and truth. We believe in the blessed appearing of the salvation of our God, that is for the happiness of all people. We believe in his name as Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace; of the increase of his rule and of his unique peace, there will be no end. We believe that the zeal of the God of hosts will do this.**

### OFFERTORY

*Es ist ein Ros' entsprungen, Op. 122*

Johannes Brahms

### SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

Invitation

Rev. Melanie Marsh Baum

The Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

Rev. Amy Starr Redwine

One: The Lord be with you.

**All: And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts,

**We lift them up to God.**

Let us give thanks to God.

**It is right to give both thanks and praise....**

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 Words of Institution

Communion

*All who are able are welcome to come forward to receive communion. After receiving communion, please take a candle with you back to your seat. Servers will bring the elements to those who are unable to come forward. The wine of communion is unfermented grape juice. Gluten-free bread is in the paper cup.*

Prayer after Communion

KEVIN LOWRY

## Sending

This conversation with God in worship is drawing to an end. Having gathered in response to God's call, restored our relationship with God in confession and forgiveness, and encountered and responded to God in many ways, we head back out into our daily lives. As we go, we are given both a gift and a purpose—a reminder to participate in what God is doing, that God is with us in all situations, and a calling to participate in God's work in the world.

HYMN 60

*Silent Night, Holy Night*  
Verses 1 and 4

STILLE NACHT

*Please remain seated. During the introduction to "Silent Night," candles are lit from the Christ candle. Throughout the candle lighting, the person holding an unlighted candle tilts it toward the lighted candle.*

BENEDICTION

REV. MELANIE MARSH BAUM

*All are invited to extinguish their candles, stand and sing.*

\* HYMN 40

*Joy to the World*

ANTIOCH

POSTLUDE

*Christmas Intrada*

DAVID CONTE  
Jonathan Moyer, piano



Ministers

*All the members of the church*

The Rev. Amy Starr Redwine, Pastor, [ASRedwine@CovenantWeb.org](mailto:ASRedwine@CovenantWeb.org)

The Rev. Melanie Marsh Baum, Associate Pastor, [MBaum@CovenantWeb.org](mailto:MBaum@CovenantWeb.org)

Mr. Kevin J. Lowry, Interim Director of Students and Families, [KLowry@CovenantWeb.org](mailto:KLowry@CovenantWeb.org)

Dr. Jonathan W. Moyer, Organist, [JMoyer@CovenantWeb.org](mailto:JMoyer@CovenantWeb.org)

Dr. Matthew Garrett, Director of Music, [MGarrett@CovenantWeb.org](mailto:MGarrett@CovenantWeb.org)

Dr. Kaori Hongo, Director of Music for Children and Youth, [KHongo@CovenantWeb.org](mailto:KHongo@CovenantWeb.org)

Mr. George Leggiero, Carillonneur, [GLeggiero@CovenantWeb.org](mailto:GLeggiero@CovenantWeb.org)

11205 Euclid Avenue ☞ Cleveland, Ohio 44106

216.421.0482 ☞ [CovenantWeb.org](http://CovenantWeb.org) ☞ [Covenant@CovenantWeb.org](mailto:Covenant@CovenantWeb.org)