Covenant Call – December 2026

Dear Covenant Family,

As we step into December, I pray that our hearts are ready for the abiding hope of Advent.

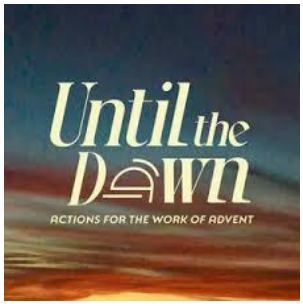
Grounded in Prayer, Moving Toward Action
This fall our congregation sang a magnificent "Chorus of Generosity." We've reflected on our 40 days of prayer (January's Covenant Call will document all our dreams and reflections) and we're wrapping up Session's time in Project Regeneration. As we remember our beloved traditions and the stewardship of our saints, we look toward our upcoming Advent actions which I hope will lay the groundwork for intentional outward-facing ministry in 2027.

Ten Months of Worship, Crafted in the Mountains
At the end of October, I participated in a clergy planning retreat in the mountains of West Virginia with three other female solo pastors. The collaborative, restorative environment was a true blessing. In just 36 hours, I mapped out 10 months of worship! Thank you for the time to step away from the day-to-day rhythm and think creatively and strategically about 2027.





Walking Together Into Advent
As we move through the metaphorical nighttime of Advent toward the dawn of Christ's birth, our Advent worship series, "Until the Dawn: Actions for the Work of Advent," gives us a blueprint for intentional, faithful action. Even when the way forward seems unclear, we remain bound together in Christ's love—called to cry out in hope, start somewhere for peace, speak up for joy, and take courage for love as we carry out God's work into 2027.



I'm grateful to be a part of Covenant's Chorus of Generosity alongside y'all. I pray you find moments of hope, peace, love, and joy this holiday season. And I hope to see each of you, and your families, for our traditional Lessons & Carols Christmas Eve worship at 5pm. Invite a friend, please :)

Peace,
Caitlin

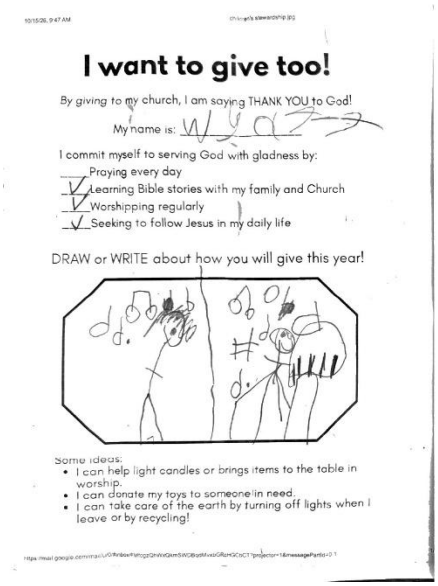
A HUGE THANK YOU to all who participated in our 2027 Stewardship Campaign. We received pledges totaling $148.920.00 to date. Many of you added a little extra in your pledge for 2027. Thank you!!

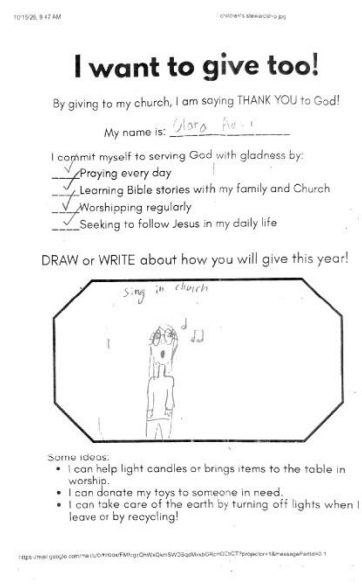
Haven't pledge yet? Pledges can be placed in the offering plate on Sundays, brought to the church office or mailed. If you would like someone to come by and pick up your pledge card, please call the church office. All pledges received by December 31, 2026 will be counted and included in the 2027 budget.

Some of you volunteered to take on extra tasks and your names will be passed onto the Team Leaders. I particularly want to thank Clara and Wyatt for their pledges for 2027 (see below)

Gratefully yours
Hille Blackshaw, Financial Secretary




I want to give too!
By giving to my church, I am saying THANK YOU to God!
My name is:
I commit myself to serving God with gladness by:
Praying every day
Learning Bible stories with my family and Church
Worshipping regularly
Seeking to follow Jesus in my daily life
DRAW or WRITE about how you will give this year!
Some Ideas:
- I can help light candles or brings items to the table in worship.
- I can donate my toys to someone in need.
- I can take care of the earth by turning off lights when I leave or by recycling!


I want to give too!
By giving to my church, I am saying THANK YOU to God!
My name is:
I commit myself to serving God with gladness by:
Praying every day
Learning Bible stories with my family and Church
Worshipping regularly
Seeking to follow Jesus in my daily life
DRAW or WRITE about how you will give this year!
Sing in church
Some Ideas:
- I can help light candles or brings items to the table in worship.
- I can donate my toys to someone in need.
- I can take care of the earth by turning off lights when I leave or by recycling!

Advent Worship and Education

Until the Dawn
ACTIONS FOR THE WORK OF ADVENT

Sunday, November 29th @ 11am – 1st Sunday of Advent worship and Hanging of the Greens w/pizza!

Sunday, December 6th @ 11am - 2nd Sunday of Advent Joint Communion Worship w/EIPC

Sunday, December 13th @ 11am – 3rd Sunday of Advent Worship w/a Christmas Participation Story in costume

Sunday, December 20th @ 11am – 4th Sunday of Advent Worship

Thursday, December 24th @ 5pm – Christmas Eve Lessons & Carols worship service

Friday, December 25th around 12pm – EIPC invites Covenant to join them for a Christmas Day worship service

Sunday, December 27th @ 11am – 1st Sunday of Christmas Worship via Zoom only

Sunday, January 3rd @ 11am – Epiphany Sunday worship led by Rev. Caitlin and her dad, Rev. Dr. Richard Culp

Sundays @ 10am in-person – Children's Sunday School in the Sunday School room

Tuesdays @ 10am via Zoom – Zoom Bible Study focusing on Visio & Lectio Divina

Thursdays @ 12pm via Zoom – Zoom devotionals

Hanging of the Greens after Worship on November 29

What better way to usher in the Christmas season than to join your church family and our EIPC siblings in Christ for the annual "hanging of the greens"! This year there will be a few special additions to the traditional decorations to go along with the Advent theme, "Until the Dawn." Come be among the first to spy the new embellishments, hang a few wreaths and Chrismons, and enjoy pizza and conversation with friends immediately after worship on the first Sunday of Advent, November 29.



Lectio Divina and *Visio Divina* at Advent Bible Study



Heavens Torn & Transformed by Lisle Gwynn Garrity

When you look at this painting, what do you see? What is your eye drawn to? Does it bring any scripture to mind? If you could place yourself in this scene, where would you stand and why?

Some of us are familiar with the spiritual practice of *Lectio Divina*, or "sacred reading"—the slow, prayerful immersion in a scriptural passage. *Visio Divina* is a similar practice with art or nature, something you experience through your eyes. This Advent season, Tuesday Morning Bible Study will be making use of both practices to dive deeply into the scriptures for Advent. Intrigued? Join us on Zoom at 10 am Tuesdays beginning December 1. Watch for the Zoom link in Covenant's Thursday emails, or contact Susan Tarr at starr4321@aol.com.

Last Supper Working Session

Come to Covenant's Fellowship Hall on Thursday, December 3rd from 10am-12pm to be in conversation and community – prepare your Advance Directive for Health Care with our Death Doula, Kristen, who's a certified facilitator or plan your memorial service with Rev. Caitlin.



Immanuel Presbyterian Church invites Covenant to their Blue Christmas Service



Congregational Meeting

On Sunday, December 6th at 12pm (right after worship) we will meet to amend our bylaws to be that we have a minimum of 4 ruling elders on session.

Join us for Christmas Caroling on Sundays, December 13th and 20th



Poinsettia Donations for Christmas Eve Worship



Once again, poinsettias will adorn Covenant's sanctuary for Christmas Eve. This year's design will require at least 4 each of the white, pink and red varieties. Please place your order with Marita Dillery, specifying your preferred color, no later than December 19. The price will be available by early December. Checks can be made

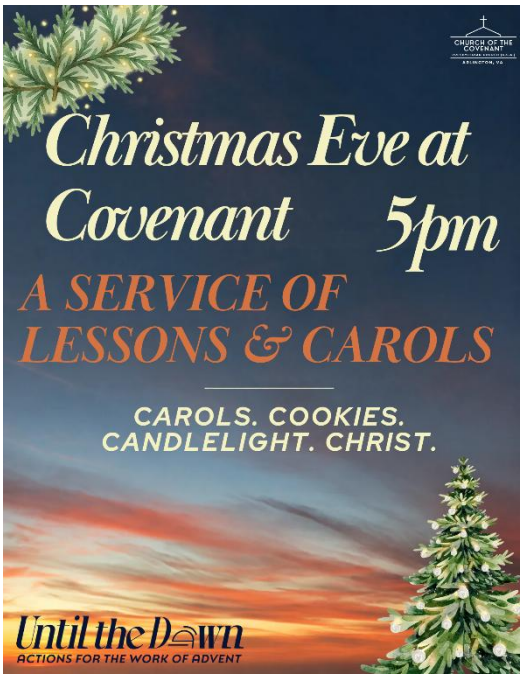
out to the church and placed in the collection plate, placed in the church office, or given to Marita.

Christmas Eve Lessons & Carols Worship

People arrived to celebrate Jesus' birth when they could, each on their own timeline. With that spirit in mind, we're trying out a different Christmas Eve worship time this year at Covenant. **We'll gather for our traditional Christmas Eve Lessons & Carols at 5pm.**

Nothing about Covenant's traditional Christmas Eve worship itself will change except for the time, in an effort to make room for folks that might find an earlier worship service more accessible, like perhaps families with young children.

Covenant's Session and staff understand that holiday traditions are sacred. We recognize this change may come as a surprise as you think about when your family will eat dinner and how long-standing routines will fit together. We're committed to being with you in that space as those questions arise.



Ultimately though, we hope this earlier worship service time will give your family the flexibility to honor your cherished traditions while bringing our whole church family, and hopefully some outside visitors, together to celebrate the birth of Christ.

Like the shepherds, wise men, and neighbors, we gather to celebrate Love showing up in unexpected ways --- drawing us closer to God and to one another. No matter what time we gather, the miracle we celebrate is unchanged: Christ is born, hope is alive, and there is room for all of us at the manger. We hope you and your family will join us on Christmas Eve at 5pm to proclaim this truth.

We're glad you were born! Covenant sends Happy Birthday wishes to:

December 18 – **Madeleine Kelleher**
December 19 – **Henry Vogel**
January 19 – **Susan Tarr**
January 25 – **Roger Hirschy**
January 30 – **Patrice Fetter**



Special Events at Covenant

Check your weekly Thursday emails for all important upcoming events!

Worship & Christian Formation Team Mtg: Tuesday, December 1st @ 7:30pm via Zoom

Congregational Care & Membership Team Mtg: Wednesday, December 2nd at 12:30pm in-person

"The Last Supper" Working Session In-Person: Thursday, December 3rd @ 10:00am-12:00pm

Congregational Meeting: Sunday, December 6th @ 12pm

Session Meeting: Sunday, December 13th @ 9:00am - In Person

Christmas Caroling: Sunday, December 13th @ 12:30pm to our Covenant Members & Friends

Christmas Caroling: Sunday, December 20th @ 4:30pm to Covenant's neighbors

Christmas Eve Lessons & Carols Worship Service: Thursday, December 24th @ 5pm

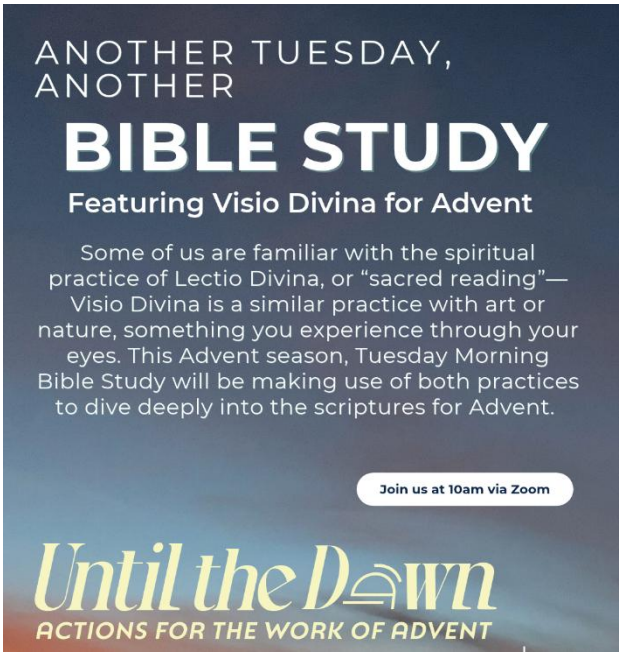
Walking Group & Zoom Worship: Sunday, December 27th @ 8:00am & 11:00am, respectively

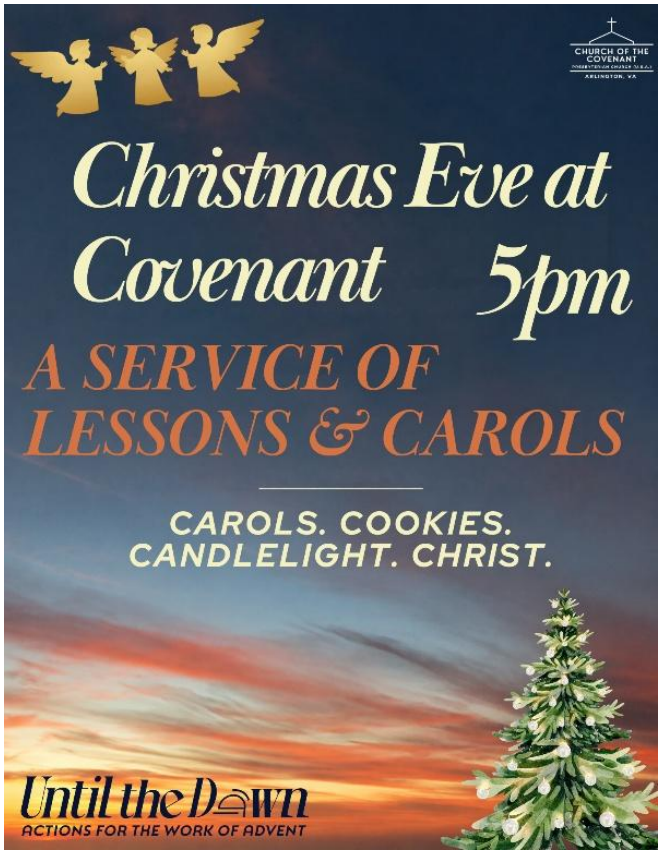
THE CHURCH OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED DEC. 28 - JAN 1

Flyers to Share with Your Friends and Family:











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Office Hours: Tues, Weds, Thurs: 10am-3:00pm