

Morning Worship — 10:45 AM

## PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

*Please be seated by 10:45 for the announcements*

### Silent Preparation

*During the few minutes before the service begins, the congregation is invited to a moment of silent and prayerful preparation for worship.*

### Welcome and Announcements

*Visitors, please fill out the Visitor Card in the rack in front of you and place it in the offering plate during the Collection of Tithes and Offerings.*

### Musical Prelude

## ADORATION OF GOD

**Call to Worship** Isaiah 43:23

**\*Hymn of Praise** The God of Abraham Praise  
*(Trinity Psalter Hymnal #234)*

### \*Prayer of Invocation

**\*Confession of Faith** Luther's Small Catechism, Second Article

*I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary, is my Lord; who has redeemed me, a lost creature, secured and delivered me even from my sins, from death, and from the power of the devil, not with silver and gold, but with his holy, precious blood, and with his innocent sufferings and death; in order that I might be his own, live under him in his kingdom, and serve him in everlasting righteousness, innocence and blessedness, even as he is risen from the dead, and lives and reigns forever. This is most certainly true.*

## CONFESSION OF SIN AND THANKSGIVING

**Scripture Reading** Acts 20:17–38  
*(Pew Bible Page 929)*

**Confession of Sin** Psalm 51

*Have mercy upon us, O God, according to your lovingkindness; according to the multitude of your tender mercies, blot out our transgressions. Wash us thoroughly from our iniquity, and cleanse us from our sin. For we acknowledge our transgressions, and our sin is always before us. Against you, you only, have we sinned, and done this evil in your sight –that you may be found just when you speak, and blameless when you judge. Forgive us, we pray, in Jesus' name. Amen.*

**Assurance of God's Pardoning** Psalm 51:17

The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

\* Congregation Standing

## Welcome New Members and Baptism

*Ian Masters  
Mia Sander*

**\*Psalm of Thanksgiving** Psalm 122  
*(Trinity Psalter Hymnal #122A)*

### Prayer of Dedication

### Collection of Tithes and Offerings

**\*Doxology** *(Trinity Psalter Hymnal #568)*  
*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.*

## PROVISION FOR LIFE AND GROWTH

**Prayer of Intercession** Mr. Ben Badgley  
*Ruling Elder*

**\*Hymn of Preparation** The Sands of Time Are Sinking  
*(Trinity Psalter Hymnal #471)*

**Scripture Reading** Revelation 21:22–22:5  
*(Pew Bible Page 1041)*

### Prayer of Illumination

**Sermon** Rev. Jim Curtis  
*Associate Pastor*

“The Glory of the Lamb”  
*(The Last Advent, 4)*

## RESPONSE AND BLESSING

**\*Hymn of Response** Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah  
*(Trinity Psalter Hymnal #524)*

### \*Benediction

### \*Postlude

\* Congregation Standing

## The Church on Mission

The late Harry Reeder was famous for his oft-quoted vision for the church's calling: “on mission, on message, in ministry.” For the church to stay true to her calling, she must stay focused on the mission God has entrusted to her and resist the near-constant pull to focus on other things. In his lifetime of ministry in the PCA, Dr. Reeder empowered a generation of pastors and churches to focus their ministries through the crucial lens of the mission of the church. To help us stay focused on our mission, I have planned a brief sermon series for the new year that will revisit some of our church's core ministry priorities. In a three-part series entitled *The Church on Mission*, we will explore our mission and how it plays out in our common life together as a church.

Our church's mission is **to gather and grow disciples in Asheville and around the world**. We have received this mission from the Lord, and through it we aim to glorify the Triune God. There are many ways that a church might seek to accomplish this mission, so for us we have defined a specific strategy. The way in which we seek to execute our mission is this: **we depend on the Spirit's power to gather and grow disciples by embracing the Ordinary Means of Grace in our worship, nurture, and witness**. The Ordinary Means of Grace are “the outward and ordinary means whereby Christ communicates to us the benefits of redemption... especially the Word, sacraments, and prayer; all which are made effectual to the elect for salvation.” (Westminster Shorter Catechism Q. 88) In other words, God makes his grace known to us through ordinary ways, and we depend on the Holy Spirit by embracing those ordinary ways of Word, sacraments, and prayer.

That all sounds great, but what does it mean for the life and ministry of our church? Answering that question will be our task in this brief sermon series. We have three areas of ministry focus where we seek to depend on the Spirit by embracing the Ordinary Means of Grace: worship (focusing upwards), nurture (focusing inwards), and witness (focusing outwards), and we will have a sermon devoted to each area.

First, we will look upwards by examining the ministry of **worship** in a sermon on Jesus' words to the woman at the well: “God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.” (John 4:24). At CRCP, we define this ministry as “Bible-filled worship that is expressed in historic and reformed forms.” All true churches worship God, but not all in the same way, so why do we use the forms of worship that we do? What is worship in the first place? How do we expect God to work in and through this ministry of worship? We hope to touch on those questions and more in this sermon.

Second, we will look at the inward ministry of **nurture** through the model of the early church: “And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.” (Acts 2:42) As the church looks inward, our task includes shepherding care, spiritual discipleship, and community fellowship. Using Acts as a springboard, we will review our definition of the ministry of nurture: “Spirit-led community that is served by our members and led by our shepherds.”

Finally, we will turn our focus outwards with a sermon on Jesus' final words to his disciples: “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” (Acts 1:8) We call this outward ministry **witness** because it includes how we are called to bear witness both in our local outreach focus, and in our support of international mission efforts. We define the witness ministry as “Church-focused evangelism and mission that is faithful to the Great Commission.”

Our church is committed to this mission and vision, so it is my hope that by returning to these first principles we can refocus and press on in faith to stay on mission and see God work mightily in our midst.

**Welcome Visitors!** We extend a warm welcome to all who are worshipping with us today. We are delighted you are here and we are available to answer any questions you may have about our worship service, our church, or even the gospel of Jesus Christ. If you have children they are most welcome in our worship service, and we also provide a nursery for children up to 3 years of age. **Please fill out the Visitor Card located in the rack in front of you and place it in the offering plate when it comes by later in the service.**

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Advent Sermon Series:** Today we conclude our sermon series through Revelation 21–22 entitled “*The Last Advent.*”

**Next Sunday:** We will serve the Lord’s Supper next Sunday morning, January 5. There will be no evening service.

**Fellowship Meal:** We will gather next Sunday, January 5, after morning worship for a fellowship meal. The church will provide lasagna and beverages, please a side dish and/or dessert to share.

**ABCCM Collection:** Remember to bring canned goods and staples for Asheville Buncombe Community Christian Ministry next Sunday, to put in the collection box by the door in the Fellowship Hall.

**Thank You!** As a church staff, we want to thank you for your selfless generosity towards us in the form of the Christmas gifts we received from the church this week. You have so many people to consider for gifts at Christmas and we are honored and humbled that you would think of us. It is a joy to serve you and this church, and we are grateful for your caring support.

**No Wednesday Night Prayer Meeting:** We will resume meeting in January, 2025.

**December Schedule:** The church offices will be closed through January 1.

**Men’s Breakfast:** Join us on Saturday, January 11, from 8:00-10:00am for our new Men’s Breakfast ministry. We will enjoy a hot breakfast and a message from our guest speaker and former intern, Wilson Goins. This monthly gathering on the second Saturday is open to all men young and old, so please make plans to join us as we grow together.

**2025 First Sunday Schedule:** In the coming year, we will have church-wide quarterly Fellowship Meals following morning worship on January 5, April 6, July 6, and October 5. Our Shepherding Groups will also meet quarterly on February 2, May 3, August 2, and November 1.

**English as a Second Language (ESL) Update:** After a great fall semester, the ESL class that meets at our church on Monday nights is taking a break for a few weeks. Classes will start back on Monday, January 6. Please be in prayer for this ministry, and if you would like to learn more or find out ways you can volunteer, contact Carol Dangerfield (caroldangerfield@gmail.com).

**Please Excuse Our Mess:** Our deacons are coordinating a church building “refresh” that will take a few weeks of landscaping, painting, carpeting, etc.

## THIS WEEK’S CALENDAR

### Sunday, January 5

**9:30 am:**  
Sunday School  
**10:45 am:**  
Morning Worship  
**12:15 pm:**  
Fellowship Meal



**COVENANT**  
REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (PCA)

### CURRENT AND UPCOMING VOLUNTEERS

#### Sunday, December 29

**Greeters:**  
Lannae Graham & Nancy Little

**Security:**  
Jerry Golden

**Nursery:**  
**10:45 am:**  
Danette & Jim Lowery  
Emerson Tannenbaum

#### December Deacons on Duty:

Rich Bishop  
Noe McHone  
Jeff Greene (Usher)

#### Sunday, January 5

**Greeters:**  
Anne Moss & Ron McEwen

**Security:**  
Carl Tannenbaum

**Nursery:**  
**9:30 am:**  
Theresa Wallace  
Madeleine Curtis

**10:45 am:**  
Dorothy Dillingham  
Lucy McCann  
Marjorie Dillingham

#### January Deacons on Duty:

Grey Dixon  
Drew Lefevre  
Carl Tannenbaum (Usher)

Submit bulletin items to [office@covenantreformed.net](mailto:office@covenantreformed.net) by noon on Thursdays

If you have a prayer request, please speak to a pastor or elder, call the church office at 828-253-6578, or e-mail [ceb392@mac.com](mailto:ceb392@mac.com) and it will be added to our church prayer list.

**Senior Pastor:** Sean McCann  
**Associate Pastor:** Jim Curtis  
**Pastoral Interns:** Micaiah Liner, David Livernois  
**Administrative Assistant:** David Livernois  
*Office Hours: 9 a.m.—4:30 p.m., Tuesday—Friday*  
**Elders:** Ben Badgley, Rob Cook, Clay Dangerfield, Gordon Meiners, Tom Voigt, Tim Wallace. *Emeritus: Mike Cate*  
**Deacons:** Rich Bishop, Grey Dixon, Jeff Greene, Drew Lefevre, David McCullough, Noe McHone, Carl Tannenbaum.  
**Deacons’ Helper:** Zach Voigt  
**Nursery Coordinator:** Rebekah Woodard

# THE LORD’S DAY DECEMBER 29, 2024

*To all who are spiritually weary and seek rest;  
to all who mourn and long for comfort;  
to all who struggle and desire victory;  
to all who sin and need a Savior;  
to all who are strangers and want fellowship;  
to all who hunger and thirst after righteousness;  
and to whoever will come—  
this church opens wide her doors  
and offers her welcome  
in the name of the Lord Jesus*

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