

FAITH   
COVENANT  

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C H U R C H

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*Spreading A Love for God and His Glory*

*December 4, 2016*



*“Behold, I send my messenger, and he will prepare the way  
before me. And the Lord whom you seek will suddenly  
come to his temple; and the messenger of the covenant  
in whom you delight, behold, he is coming,  
says the LORD of hosts.”  
Malachi 3:1-3*

## WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

### LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

**\*CALL TO WORSHIP:** *Luke 1:46-47, 50; Lamentations 5:19*

Leader: My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God  
my  
Savior.

**All:** You, O LORD, reign forever; your throne endures to all  
generations.

Leader: His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to gen-  
eration. He has shown strength with his arm; he has scat-  
tered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.

**All:** You, O LORD, reign forever; your throne endures to all  
generations.

**\*ANGELS, FROM THE REALMS OF GLORY - Hymn #218**

Angels from the realms of glory, wing your flight o'er all the earth  
Ye who sang creation's story, now proclaim Messiah's birth

*(Chorus)*

*Come and worship, come and worship  
Worship Christ the newborn King*

Shepherds in the field abiding, watching o'er your flocks by night  
God with us is now residing, yonder shines the infant light

*(Chorus)*

Sages leave your contemplations, brighter visions beam afar  
Seek the great Desire of nations, ye have seen His natal star

*(Chorus)*

Saints before the altar bending, watching long in hope and fear  
Suddenly the Lord descending, in His temple shall appear

*(Chorus)*

*Our worship is  
a response to  
God's initiative.*

*The pattern of  
our worship  
reflects the  
gospel.*

#### **God Calls Us**

The Lord sum-  
mons his people  
to worship and  
we respond in  
obedience.

The Lord's call  
is a call to  
action. We  
gather, praise,  
adore, give  
thanks, etc.

The Call to  
Worship is a  
joyful summons  
and a clear  
reminder that  
worship is our  
coming into  
God's presence  
by his command,  
and not our  
command that  
he come into our  
presence.

**\*COME, THOU LONG EXPECTED JESUS - Hymn #196**

Come Thou long-expected Jesus born to set Thy people free;  
From our fears and sins release us, let us find our rest in Thee.  
Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the saints Thou art;  
Dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart.

Joy to those who long to see thee, dayspring from on high, appear;  
Come, thou promised Rod of Jesse, of Thy birth we long to hear!  
O'er the hills the angels singing news, glad tidings of a birth:  
"Go to him, your praises bringing; Christ the Lord has come to earth."

Come to earth to taste our sadness, He whose glories knew no end;  
By his life he brings us gladness, our Redeemer, Shepherd, Friend.  
Leaving riches without number, born within a cattle stall;  
This the everlasting wonder, Christ was born the Lord of all.

Born Thy people to deliver, born a child and yet a King,  
Born to reign in us forever, now Thy gracious kingdom bring.  
By Thine own eternal Spirit rule in all our hearts alone;  
By Thine all sufficient merit, raise us to Thy glorious throne.

**\*PRAYER OF PRAISE**

**\*SCRIPTURE OF PRAISE: Psalm 18:28, 30-31**

All: You, LORD, keep my lamp burning; my God turns my  
darkness into light. Your way is perfect: The LORD's word  
is flawless; he shields all who take refuge in him. For who  
is God besides the LORD? And who is the rock except our  
God?

**Advent**

The word "Advent" comes from the Latin meaning "coming" or "arrival." Advent is a time of preparation for the final coming of Jesus, while we give thanks for the gift of Christ in the past. We meditate on the faithfulness of God to his promises – past, present, and future.

*\*Indicates when to stand.*

**God  
Cleanses Us**

The biblical response to God's call to be in his presence is confessing our sins. We humble ourselves when we approach our God. This is a corporate prayer of all God's people. It is a great privilege of the gospel that we can stand forgiven before the Lord of glory.

**\*BENEATH THE CROSS OF JESUS**

Beneath the cross of Jesus I fain would take my stand,  
The shadow of a mighty rock within a weary land;  
A home within the wilderness, a rest upon the way,  
From the burning of the noontide heat, and the burden of the day.

Upon the cross of Jesus, mine eye at times can see  
The very dying form of One who suffered there for me;  
And from my stricken heart with tears two wonders I confess  
The wonders of redeeming love and my unworthiness.

I take, O cross, thy shadow for my abiding place:  
I ask no other sunshine than the sunshine of His face;  
Content to let the world go by to know no gain nor loss,  
*My sinful self my only shame, my glory, all the cross.*

**COMMON CONFESSION OF SIN**

**SCRIPTURE OF EXHORTATION:** *1 John 1:5-8*

This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

**All:** Do not remember against us our former iniquities; let your compassion come speedily to meet us, for we are brought very low. Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of your name; deliver us, and atone for our sins, for your name's sake! (*Psalm 79:8-9*)

**SILENT CONFESSION OF SIN**

**DECLARATION OF GRACE: *Psalm 28:8-9***

The LORD is the strength of his people; he is the saving refuge of his anointed. Oh, save your people and bless your heritage! Be their shepherd and carry them forever.

**\*HOW DEEP THE FATHER'S LOVE FOR US**

How deep the Father's love for us, how vast beyond all measure.  
That he should give his only Son and make a wretch his treasure.  
How great the pain of searing loss; the Father turns his face away;  
as wounds which mar the Chosen One bring many sons to glory.

Behold the man upon the cross, my sin upon his shoulders.  
Ashamed, I hear my mocking voice call out among the scoffers.  
It was my sin that held him there until it was accomplished.  
His dying breath has brought me life; I know that it is finished.

I will not boast in anything, no gifts, no power, no wisdom.  
But I will boast in Jesus Christ, his death and resurrection.  
Why should I gain from his reward? I cannot give an answer.  
But this I know with all my heart,  
*his wounds have paid my ransom.*

**CHRISTIAN BAPTISM OF:**

*Ezekiel James Clark*

## OFFERTORY & RESPONSE

*Diaconal Offering today: Please use the Special Offering envelopes located in the pew racks.*

*Reminder: please sign and pass the Attendance Register down the pew.*

*11 a.m. Service: Children ages 4-6 excused for Children's Church (downstairs in the Corner Classroom)*

### O LOVE THAT WILL NOT LET ME GO

O Love that will not let me go, I rest my weary soul in thee;  
I give thee back the life I owe, that in thine ocean depths its flow  
may richer, fuller be.

O Light that follow'st all my way, I yield my flick'ring torch to thee;  
my heart restores its borrowed ray, that in thy sunshine's blaze its day  
may brighter, fairer be.

### Offering

We give back to  
God a portion of  
what he has  
given us to use  
to declare that  
he is Lord of all.  
(This is part of  
our service as a  
church family,  
and visitors  
should not feel  
obligated to  
participate.)

O Joy that seekest me through pain, I cannot close my heart to thee;  
I trace the rainbow through the rain, and feel the promise is not vain,  
that morn shall tearless be.

O Cross that liftest up my head, I dare not ask to fly from thee;  
I lay in dust life's glory dead, and from the ground there blossoms red  
life that shall endless be.

*Advent: Waiting for Jesus*  
Pastor Lloyd Pierson, Ph.D.  
*Waiting for Jesus with Ruth - Ruth 1 & 4 (NIV)*

<sup>1</sup> In the days when the judges ruled, there was a famine in the land. So a man from Bethlehem in Judah, together with his wife and two sons, went to live for a while in the country of Moab ...

<sup>3</sup> Now Elimelek, Naomi's husband, died, and she was left with her two sons. <sup>4</sup> They married Moabite women, one named Orpah and the other Ruth. After they had lived there about ten years, <sup>5</sup> both Mahlon and Kilion also died, and Naomi was left without her two sons and her husband.

<sup>6</sup> When Naomi heard in Moab that the LORD had come to the aid of his people by providing food for them, she and her daughters-in-law prepared to return home from there. <sup>7</sup> With her two daughters-in-law she left the place where she had been living and set out on the road that would take them back to the land of Judah.

<sup>8</sup> Then Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Go back, each of you, to your mother's home. May the LORD show you kindness, as you have shown kindness to your dead husbands and to me ...

<sup>16</sup> But Ruth replied, "Don't urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. <sup>17</sup> Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. May the LORD deal with me, be it ever so severely, if even death separates you and me. <sup>18</sup> When Naomi realized that Ruth was determined to go with her, she stopped urging her.

<sup>19</sup> So the two women went on until they came to Bethlehem. When they arrived in Bethlehem, the whole town was stirred because of them, and the women exclaimed, "Can this be Naomi?"

<sup>20</sup> "Don't call me Naomi," she told them. "Call me Mara, because the Almighty has made my life very bitter.

<sup>21</sup> I went away full, but the LORD has brought me back empty. Why call me Naomi? The LORD has afflicted me; the Almighty has brought misfortune upon me."

*Advent: Waiting for Jesus*  
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*Waiting for Jesus with Ruth - Ruth 1 & 4 (NIV)*

Sermon Outline

I. A Bitter Return

II. A Blessed Union

## Sermon Questions for Further Reflection

1. In a sense, Naomi was returning home from exile, and Ruth was entering into an exile. How does this speak of the promises of God to each of them?
2. In what way do we see God's promise to Abraham (Gen 12:3; 18:18) being carried through in Ruth?
3. How is Ruth an intersection of the Gentiles and Jews waiting for the Messiah?
4. In the genealogy of Jesus we find four surprises. Tamar, Rahab, Ruth and Bathsheba are all mentioned. This is rather shocking from a Jewish perspective. What does this tell us about the nature of the gospel in both how it comes to us and to whom it comes?
5. The story of Ruth celebrates God's covenant faithfulness to his people. We see what one author calls "grace at the bottom of the barrel." How is this encouraging to you as you navigate through the trials of your life?
6. Boaz gives us a picture of Jesus as our kinsman redeemer. Ruth gives us a picture of great faith in the Lord. Naomi gives us a picture of most of us—a mixed bag of belief and doubt. In what way does the book of Ruth challenge you in your faith?

**God  
Consecrates Us**  
Consecrate means to make holy, to set apart. The Word of God does that for the lives of believers. Through the sermon, confessions of faith, and the offering we are sanctified for service to our Lord to joyfully offer up our lives to him.

**God Communes  
with Us**

The Lord strengthens and nourishes our faith through a sacramental meal. Through Jesus, communion with God has been reestablished. The covenant has been renewed. The Lord's Supper is the gospel made visible for us and we share in it as the full community of God's people.

**\*SHE MUST AND SHALL GO FREE**

Mercy speaks by Jesus' blood; hear and sing, ye sons of God,  
justice satisfied indeed; Christ has full atonement made;  
Christ has full atonement made.

*(Chorus)*

*"All her debts were cast on me,  
and she must and shall go free." (2x)*

Jesus' blood speaks loud and sweet; here all Deity can meet,  
and without a jarring voice, welcome Zion to rejoice;  
welcome Zion to rejoice.

*(Chorus)*

Peace of conscience, peace with God; we obtain through Jesus' blood.  
Jesus' blood speaks solid rest, we believe and we are blessed;  
we believe and we are blessed.

*(Chorus)*

Should the law against her roar; Jesus' blood still speaks with power,  
"all her debts were cast on me, and she must and shall go free."

*(Chorus)*

**CELEBRATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER**

*Wine is located in the two outer rings; juice is located in the center ring.*

At Faith Covenant, the Lord's Supper is observed each Lord's Day as the climax of our worship service. We invite to the Lord's Table all those who are baptized disciples of Jesus Christ, under the authority of Christ and His body, the Church. By eating the bread and drinking the cup with us as a visitor, you are acknowledging to our church that you are in covenant with God. You also acknowledge that you are a sinner, without hope except in the sovereign mercy of God, and that you are trusting in Jesus Christ alone for your salvation. If you have any doubts about your participation, please speak to the pastor or one of the elders after the service. Wine and bread are the elements of the supper as instituted by Jesus Christ. We recommend the use of wine; however we offer both juice and wine in the tray to allow true liberty of conscience.

## PRAYER FOR THE CONGREGATION

### \*IN CHRIST ALONE

In Christ alone my hope is found, he is my light, my strength, my song;  
This cornerstone, this solid ground, firm through  
the fiercest drought and storm.  
What heights of love, what depths of peace,  
when fears are stilled, when strivings cease!  
My Comforter, my all in all, here in the love of Christ I stand.

In Christ alone who took on flesh, fullness of God in helpless babe!  
This gift of love and righteousness, scorned by the ones he came to save;  
Till on that cross as Jesus died, the wrath of God was satisfied  
For ev'ry sin on him was laid; here in the death of Christ I live.

There in the ground his body lay, light of the world by darkness slain;  
Then bursting forth in glorious day, up from the grave he rose again!  
And as he stands in victory sin's curse has lost its grip on me,  
for I am his and he is mine bought with the precious blood of Christ.

No guilt in life, no fear in death, this is the pow'r of Christ in me;  
From life's first cry to final breath, Jesus commands my destiny.  
*No pow'r of hell, no scheme of man, can ever pluck me from his hand.  
Till he returns or calls me home, here in the pow'r of Christ I'll stand.*

### \*BENEDICTION

*If you are in need of personal prayer, an elder is available up front after the service.*

### God Commissions Us

Having been richly blessed by the Lord in our worship, we are sent forth as his ambassadors of reconciliation into the world. Our worship of God as his people now extends into our lives throughout the week. We are to offer ourselves as living sacrifices to him in all areas of our lives.

#### Leaders & Staff

Senior Pastor Lloyd Pierson, Ph.D. & Associate Pastor Taylor Clark

Staff: Kristin Bay, Hanni Hanson, Carlynn Stahlberg, Kelly Brown, Sara Motley (Nursery)

Elders: Grady Bennett, Tom Jentz, Don Olmsted, Matt Riley, Micah Tinkham, Steve Thompson,

Deacons: Terry Falk, Micah Hill, Mike Stahlberg, Bruce Tulloch

To be added to church enews, and prayer lists, please contact us at [office@faithcov.com](mailto:office@faithcov.com).  
For more about Faith Covenant and the Presbyterian Church in America, go to [faithcov.com](http://faithcov.com).

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**LOCAL OR REGIONAL MINISTRY TO PRAY FOR:** Hope Church, Kalispell,  
Pastor Lance Dannic

**MISSION PROJECT OR MISSIONARIES TO PRAY FOR:** Pray for Tim Bentson with  
MTW in Japan working at Genesis International College and a church plant in Osaka.

**DIACONAL OFFERING:** This morning we share in worshipping through our diaconal  
offering for those needing assistance in our church and community. Please use the Spe-  
cial Offering envelopes located in the pew racks.

**LADIES' CHRISTMAS LUNCH:** Ladies 5 to 95 are invited to Christmas lunch Sunday  
Dec. 11, at 12:30 in the fellowship hall. We will enjoy lunch and assemble Christmas gift  
baskets for the Refuge clients so, if you're able, bring a small gift item (or several) to  
contribute. Please RSVP by signing up in the foyer.

**CHRISTMAS EVE** Candlelight Services will be held this year at 5 and 8 p.m.

**CHRISTMAS DAY:** On Sunday, Dec. 25, there will be one service at 10 a.m. and no Sun-  
day School or Children's Church on Dec. 25 or Jan. 1.

### **GENERAL OFFERING SUMMARY THRU NOVEMBER 27:**

Targeted Budget = \$337,636.62; Offerings received = \$312,388.22

**FIVESOLA.MUSIC:** Associate Pastor Taylor Clark is a member of the Nashville Song-  
writers Association and recently released an acoustic album, "Reflections of the Run-  
away," under his publishing company, FiveSolaMusic. For more information go to  
[www.fivesolamusic.com](http://www.fivesolamusic.com).

**NEIGHBORS IN NEED CHRISTMAS BENEFIT CONCERT:** NIN is hosting its an-  
nual holiday concert with guitarist John Floridis at the Whitefish United Methodist  
Church on Sunday, Dec. 4 at 4 p.m. The concert is free, but 100% of the donations go to  
support people in need in our communities.

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**SERVING:** November Deacon: Micah Hill

### **WEEKLY/MONTHLY**

#### **Today (1st service/2nd service)**

Ushers: Mike & Carlynn Stahlberg/Joe & Kelly Swenson

Children's Church: Sharon Salyer

Nursery 8:15 a.m.: Bennetts

Nursery 11 a.m.: Olmsted/H.Hanson

Fellowship Hosts: Laura Pierson

Communion Prep/Cleanup: Gloria Hanson/Mark Rice

#### **Next Sunday - December 11th**

Ushers: Mike & Carlynn Stahlberg/Joe & Kelly Swenson

Children's Church: Sharon Salyer

Nursery 8:15 a.m.: Hobus

Nursery 11 a.m.: Longenecker/Falk

Fellowship Hosts: Gloria Hanson & Donelle Holderbaum

Communion Prep/Cleanup: Eileen Pierson/Benni Tulloch

#### **Worship Services**

Sundays 8:15 & 11 am

#### **Sunday School**

Sundays 10 pm

#### **Music Practice**

Tuesdays 5:30 pm

#### **Trustees**

1st Tuesdays 5:30 pm

#### **Elder/Deacon Meeting**

3rd Tuesdays 7 pm

#### **Elizabeth Women**

2nd & 4th Tuesdays noon

#### **Sr. & Jr. Youth Groups**

Wednesdays 7 pm

#### **College/Career Small Group**

Wednesdays 7 pm