

DECEMBER 2020

# The Caravan

ON THE JOURNEY TOGETHER

Join us for  
at-home  
Christmas  
Eve worship!

Three  
options:



**Two services available on Youtube and our webpage from December 22 onward:**

- A family-friendly service featuring a special Christmas Pageant: "A Light Shines in the Darkness: A COVID Christmas" (traditionally at 5:00 pm)
- A more traditional service with a short sermon and special music: trombone, bassoon, and Covenant's Music Ministry (traditionally at 8:00 pm)

A **Zoom service at 7:00 pm on Christmas Eve** with Pastor Charlie Berthoud, Music Coordinator Melissa Hinz, and Organist Doug McNeel live in the sanctuary

*Each service will conclude with lighting candles and singing "Silent Night" and "Joy to the World."*

CHECK OUR WEBSITE, FACEBOOK PAGE, AND WEEKLY EMAILS FOR LINKS AND INFO.



Covenant  
Presbyterian  
Church

**CHURCH OFFICE**



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## Christmas as Usual

Pastor Charlie

December will be very different this year. Family gatherings will be smaller. Travel will be rare. Shopping at the mall will be quick, if it happens at all. And on Christmas Eve, we will not have hundreds of people in the sanctuary with candles singing “Silent Night” together.

With so many changes and challenges, we will have to do our best to make the most of the situation. We are offering a few special opportunities this year—a carol each day for our “Here We Come a Caroling” series, “Random Acts of Advent” envisioned by the Adult Ed committee, an ongoing puzzle exchange, and more—which you can read about in this issue. We will decorate the sanctuary, even though we won’t be together there in person for worship. Our Advent sermon series invites us to rediscover Jesus.

We invite you to join us on Christmas Eve for at-home worship, with three different options online (see page one and our webpage). You can always worship by phone by calling 608-237-1739.

However, some things are not changing in this crazy year. Throughout Advent, we’ll light candles of hope, peace, joy, and love. We’ll share inspiring music. And we’ll share the good news of Christmas, which is the same, even in this difficult time:

- The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. (John 1:5)
- And the angel said, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord.” (Luke 2:10-11)
- For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all.... (Titus 2:11)

So in a year where just about everything else is in turmoil, we can rejoice in the good news of Christmas, as usual. Jesus is born to offer light, life, and hope to us and to the whole world. Let earth receive her king.

On the journey together,  
Charlie



## Three Opportunities for Offerings!

Stay tuned to learn more about the three opportunities for offerings this month: the ongoing **Generosity Campaign**, the PC(USA) **Christmas Joy Offering**, and the **Christmas Eve Mission Offering!**

## Joys, Cares & Concerns

Prayers continue for the following Covenant families mourning the deaths of loved ones:

**Elmer Douglas Davidson, Sr.**, cousin of Brenda Moten; **Edwin Davidson, Jr.**, grandson of Brenda's cousin; **Jay Brock**, friend of Heather Potter; **Ray Swanson**, father of Beckie Fulton.

## Session

The Session is scheduled to meet on Tuesday, November 24, to discuss allocations for the GMB Peterson Fund and the Christmas Eve Mission Offering recipient, as well as to welcome new members and begin the process of hiring a new financial coordinator.

## Advent & Christmas Worship



### Sunday, November 29

First Sunday of Advent: HOPE

Preaching: Charlie Berthoud

Sermon: "Jesus is King" | Micah 5:2; Matthew 2:2

### Sunday, December 6

Second Sunday of Advent: PEACE; Holy Communion (please have bread & juice available)

Preaching: Charlie Berthoud

Sermon: "Jesus is Prince of Peace" | Isaiah 9:6; John 14:27

### Sunday, December 13

Third Sunday of Advent: JOY

Preaching: Jeff Fox-Kline

Sermon: "Jesus is Savior" | Matthew 1:20-21; Luke 2:10

### Sunday, December 20

Fourth Sunday of Advent: LOVE

Preaching: Chelsea Cornelius

Sermon: "Jesus is Emmanuel" | Matthew 1:23; 28:18-20

### Thursday, December 24

Christmas Eve Services (See cover)

Sermon: "Jesus is the Light of the World" | John 1:1-5; 8:12

### Sunday, December 27

Christmas music, scripture, and prayer



## Happy Birthday This Month to...

\*If we missed your birthday, we apologize! Please contact the church office and we'll add yours for next year. Thank you for understanding!

**December 4**  
Sally Davis  
Ashlin Uselmann

**December 10**  
Jim Angevine  
Nancy Crabb  
Louis Hinshaw

**December 17**  
John Daly  
Cindy Lovell  
Donita O'Donnell  
Jacob Stadler

**December 22**  
Trevor Brown  
Joan Colburn  
Gianna Fussell  
Mary Harkness  
Bill Lawrence

**December 28**  
Mollie Moore  
John Schilling  
Margaret Schroeder

**December 5**  
Steve Whayland

**December 11**  
Marilyn Wedberg

**December 18**  
Kody Durand  
Grace Sommers

**December 24**  
Amelia Brigham  
Nolan Durand  
Noel Pearson

**December 29**  
Evan Antony  
Bill Breuch  
Bob Richardson  
Jan Swartz

**December 6**  
Michael Curtis

**December 12**  
Brad Schmidt

**December 19**  
Katie Herringa  
Steve Larson

**December 25**  
Bob Aune

**December 30**  
Ernie Madsen

**December 7**  
Anne Lawrence  
Gary Pivotto

**December 15**  
Mary-Beth Rolland

**December 20**  
Frank Balistreri  
Don Schalch

**December 27**  
Laverne Josse  
Honner Cooper

**December 31**  
Natalie Sanders  
Ann Seybold  
Matt Vande Sande

**December 8**  
Norah Brigham  
Miriam Cerveny  
Ken Yuska

**December 16**  
Ashlyn Brigham  
Laurie Fox  
Dervon Parchment

## Children's Ministries

### Mobile Ministry for Families Web Page

Check out the Sunday school lessons and Advent and Christmas ideas and resources on the Mobile Ministry for Families page of our website. Visit [covenantmadison.org/mobileministry](http://covenantmadison.org/mobileministry).

For more information, please contact Children's Ministries Coordinator Donna Monson ([dmonson@covenantmadison.org](mailto:dmonson@covenantmadison.org)).

## Youth Connection

When meeting at Covenant, we will utilize our upstairs areas, which are bigger and better ventilated than the Youth Suite. **Masks are always required.** Youth will not be meeting December 20 & 27. They will resume on Zoom on Jan. 3.

### Middle School (Grades 6-8) Youth Connections

#### Sunday, December 6

We will gather via Zoom at 4:00. It will be good to spend this time together in the community of Christ, regardless the means. The Zoom link will be sent to parents that week.

#### Sunday, December 13

Plans are in the works!  
Details will be sent to parents.

### Hat & Mitten Tree!

Our Middle School Youth Connection will again be sponsoring our "Hat & Mitten Tree" to benefit the children clients of The River Food Pantry. We're collecting items a bit differently this year:

- Donations of new hats, mittens, gloves, and scarves will be collected the week of **December 6-13**.
- Donations may be brought to the church and placed in the blue bin under the overhang. This bin will be checked daily and donations will be hung on the tree just inside the doors.
- Contact Youth Ministries Coordinator Steve Royalton if you need to make special arrangements for a front porch pick-up that week.

## High School (Grades 9-12) Youth Connections

### Sunday, December 6

We will gather at 6:30 via Zoom. Grab something to munch on and join us! The link will be sent out that week to parents and teens.

### Sunday, December 13

#### "Shop & Wrap" for The River

We will continue the tradition of supporting clients of The River Food Pantry by purchasing gifts for 30 children and teens. We will do this project a bit differently than in years past. Those wishing to shop will meet at **Target Hilldale at 1:00**, at the bottom of the escalators just off the parking lot. This should take about an hour. Further details will be sent out that week. Money for this project is coming from our March 2020 "Trash & Treasure Sale."

### Tuesday, December 29

#### The River Food Pantry

Serving from **10:15-1:00**. Masks required. Clients stay in their cars. They do have a strict dress code, which will be shared with participants via email. Participants will meet directly at The River located at 2201 Darwin Road and will need to be picked up. Sign up with Steve Royalton by Dec. 27. Typically, they serve over 1,100 families per week with a drive-thru system.

### Wednesday, December 30

#### Second Harvest at The Alliant

Serving from 12:15-4:00. Masks and gloves required. They have gloves to wear, or you can bring your own. Please sign up with Steve Royalton by Dec. 27. Second Harvest does practice social distancing in this warehouse environment.

### Confirmation is Zooming Along!

Our 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> grade confirmation class is meeting on Sunday mornings via Zoom. The class is co-taught by Youth Ministries Coordinator Steve Royalton and Pastor Jeff Fox-Kline.

**For more information or to sign up for any of the Youth Connections events, please contact Youth Ministries Coordinator Steve Royalton ([sroyalton@covenantmadison.org](mailto:sroyalton@covenantmadison.org)).**



# Random Acts of Advent

COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

This Advent, the Sunday morning Adult Education classes will teach us how the Bible integrates themes of hope, peace, joy and love. The "Random Acts of Advent" calendar below encourages you to put the themes into action throughout Advent. We invite you to join with your Covenant family as we learn about these important aspects of our faith while forming stronger bonds through action and reflection!

### Ways to be involved:

- Join us on Sunday mornings for Adult Ed classes at 10:00 am: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83189424277>
- Check-in at **1:00 pm M-W-F** via Zoom with Jeff Fox-Kline for short, weekly Acts of Advent activities. On Mondays we'll be journaling, on Wednesdays we'll have scripture readings, and on Fridays we'll share a prayer together: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82345355509>
- Sign up to write letters to Covenant members: <https://tinyurl.com/y5ux2dx6>
- Sing at home with your church family for the **Christmas Hymn Sing-Along** on December 20 at 10:00 am
- Try out one or 27 of the Random Acts of Advent Calendar ideas below!
- Post pictures of your Random Acts of Advent and use the hashtag #CovenantActsofAdvent, or email photos to [jfoxkline@covenantmadison.org](mailto:jfoxkline@covenantmadison.org).

### Sundays

Join Adult Ed on Zoom at 10 am and reflect on these themes with us:

### Mondays

Start your week by journaling.

### Tuesdays

Write a letter to...

### Wednesdays

Read scripture and tell someone what it means to you.

### Thursdays

Commit to a simple act of service.

### Fridays

Pray for...

### Saturdays

Your choice! Commit to a random act of Advent.

29 <b>HOPE</b>	30 What do you hope for this week?	1 5 members or friends of Covenant	2 Romans 8:18-25	3 Make a meal for someone in need	4 People suffering from COVID	5
6 <b>PEACE</b>	7 How can you make your space feel more peaceful?	8 5 members or friends of Covenant	9 Isaiah 32:16-20	10 Put together a donation bag for Goodwill	11 Our country	12
13 <b>JOY</b>	14 Reflect on a joyful memory you have or look forward to.	15 5 members or friends of Covenant	16 Luke 2:8-15	17 Donate food, money, or your time to a food bank.	18 Patience and acceptance	19
20 <b>LOVE</b> Christmas Hymn Sing-Along via Zoom at 10 am!	21 What is a beloved Christmas tradition that you can adapt this year?	22 5 members or friends of Covenant	23 1 John 3:18-24	24 Send a surprise gift to someone	25 Covenant! 	



## Volunteer Opportunity with the Road Home

In 1999, Covenant Presbyterian joined a coalition of about 40 area churches and synagogues, led by the group called **Interfaith Hospitality Network (IHN)**, to provide shelter to families with children. Four times a year, we would host 14 -16 people in our classrooms. **IHN** changed its name to **The Road Home (TRH)** several years ago and has recently transitioned from providing shelter to providing long-term housing.

Things have come a long way since we started working with TRH, but our help is still needed! Now we go to the families. In May 2019, TRH opened **HEALING HOUSE** along with Just Dane. It is an eight-bed facility, providing 24/7 recuperative care by medically trained staff and volunteers up to 28 days. Our initial coalition now provides meals to the residents each night of the week.

On October 22, 2020, TRH hosted the “Annual Breakfast for Families” virtually. We saw a 28-minute video that explained how the program is working. We encourage you to look at TRH website: [trhome.org](http://trhome.org)

For Christmas this year we are providing \$50 gift certificates and grocery gift cards to 9 families in the TRH program, and look forward to continuing our work with TRH. If you would like to learn more or volunteer for any of the activities we are involved in, please contact Nan Schaefer.



## Matthew 25

The Matthew 25 Program of the Presbyterian Church is an ongoing invitation for churches to wrestle with three important focuses: congregational vitality, dismantling structural racism, and eradicating systemic poverty. The Mission Committee has engaged in some Bible study around Matthew 25 with an eye towards those three focuses and will continue to wrestle with this scripture passage and Covenant’s work in the future. But we don’t do this journey without you.

**Please take a moment to read through Matthew 25:31-45.** What does it mean to you? What does this stir in your heart? Where do you see God calling Covenant through this scripture? If you would like, email Pastor Jeff with your thoughts.

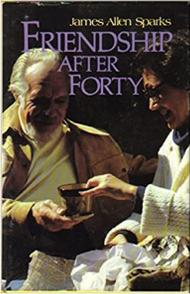


## Here We Come A-Caroling!

Join the musical ministries of Covenant, Westminster, Christ and the Pres House as we celebrate the carols of Advent and Christmas! Every day in Advent, there will be a video of a carol posted to a playlist on Covenant’s YouTube channel with links on our website and Facebook page. The music will be presented by the music ministry of one of the four churches listed above, and will include a brief history of the carol as well as the carol text so that you may sing along. We pray this collaborative music project will be a blessing to you as you celebrate this Advent and Christmas season! O, come let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

## A Thank You from the Virtual Guatemala Auction Committee

Thank you to the many donors, bidders and participants in Covenant’s Virtual Guatemala Auction that took place October 18-25. Although the committee set an optimistic goal of \$5,000, you helped to raise over \$6,000 for student scholarships in the Santo Domingo region of Guatemala! Forty-three individuals donated a wide variety of items for the auction, many of which were creative or unique. At least 86 people registered to bid on the auction site, and 69 individuals were successful in becoming winning bidders. Thank you also to those who made financial donations to this endeavor or who increased their winning bids by rounding up when they made their payments. We are grateful to you all for helping to make the auction successful during a challenging time.



## Book Review: *Friendship After Forty*

Written by James Allen Sparks and Reviewed by Jan Minardi

The introduction to Jim Sparks' *Friendship After Forty* says: "This book will probably make you smile and feel uncomfortable at the same time." Sounds like the Jim I worked with at a Presbyterian youth summer camp on Onaway Island one week in 1959 when he was a young pastor on staff and I was a high school senior and camp counselor. His sense of humor and serious focus were still there when we reconnected at Covenant decades later.

Jim's training and experience in the church and at the UW extension as chair of Mental Health Continuing Education are both valuable here. He starts with several scenarios for us to ponder as we read on: As a participant, what are your choices, their implications, and their risks? The reader then brings the insight of each chapter's focus to help see how these could develop.

Sparks explores different types of friendship and how they develop, such as professional, sentimental, acquaintances, special interests, close living arrangements, need for care and help, shared joys and concerns. He also addresses what barriers can arise in friendship, what holds friendship together, and the role that community can play (like church/synagogue and mutual help groups). Readers are reminded that criticism can be a problem, and listening plays an important role.

*Friendship After Forty* definitely encourages discussion throughout and closes with suggestions and plans for six sessions for a group study. The final chapter, "Putting Friends First," includes headings that seem to me to be encouragement and marching orders! For example: "Take some positive action today," "Find people with similar interests," "Reach out boldly," and "Don't be put off by failure."

**Read more library book reviews from fellow Covenant members at  
[covenantmadison.org/bookreviews](http://covenantmadison.org/bookreviews).**

## A Moment for Generosity

By Laurie Jones

There was a headline in the Wisconsin State Journal one Sunday declaring "Generosity is needed now more than ever." The headline rang true to me on many fronts, not just in the upcoming holiday season of gift giving.

Our generosity extends who we are as people of faith. We are called by God to be generous with our time, our talents, and our treasure. Covenant has many individuals who use their time and talent to knit hats and mittens to keep people warm; makers who provide items for sale in the Guatemala auction to provide scholarship money for children in Guatemala; people who know about woodworking and mechanics who keep our building running smoothly; people who serve on committees or as Deacon or Elder to make the church operate smoothly; people who sing and make music; and people behind the scenes we never see sharing their gifts.

Treasure is another way in which we can give of ourselves. We all give as we are able, but all gifts work together for the kingdom through Covenant Church. We bring these gifts, whether financial or of our time and talent, as our portion to help those less fortunate than ourselves. Our resources together make us stronger and more effective.

So yes, Generosity is needed now more than ever. If you have sent in your commitment card to the office, thank you. If you have not, please consider doing so soon. Let us live in the spirit of generosity every day and do what we can to make life a little better all around.



Stop by the church courtyard to take a puzzle and leave a puzzle! Look for the cabinet under the overhang by the picnic tables.

December 20 at 2:00 pm

# Blue Christmas Prayer & Fellowship

We have never seen a holiday season like this. Many this year are mourning the loss of normalcy, as plans have changed and family becomes even more distant. For some, this is magnified by the loss of a loved one. While this is a season of joy, for many it can seem heavier than other times of the year.

Covenant will once again be offering a special virtual afternoon gathering where, together, we will remember those things that are heavy on our hearts: the loss of loved ones, the loss of opportunities, the shifting of hopes and dreams. We will give thanks for the strength and support we have in each other and in Jesus Christ.

Give yourself a gift this Christmas: Recognizing that not all in our lives is merry and bright, let us worship our God, together, on Sunday afternoon, December 20 at 2:00pm. Pastor Jeff Fox-Kline will lead the short service and fellowship time to follow. Please feel free to invite a friend; all are welcome.

Zoom Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83814619214>