



First Presbyterian

CHURCH OF EASTON



A Service for the Worship of God

November 28, 2021

The First Sunday in Advent: Hope

**Indicates an invitation to rise in body and/or spirit as you are able.*

WE GATHER TO WORSHIP GOD

GATHERING MUSIC

TOWER BELLS

PRELUDE

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel (Hymn 9)

arr. Peeters

ANNOUNCEMENTS

WE GIVE THANKS TO GOD

CALL TO WORSHIP

Watch and wait, for Christ is coming!

Let us light candles of hope, peace, joy, and love.

The simple beauty in these candles reminds us of the hope we have in Christ.

We watch and wait for Christ's coming! And we rejoice!

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING

Caitlin Akpor-Mensah

We light this candle in hope. Jesus, the Light of the World, shines for us.

Let us pray: Faithful God, renew us in hope that we may be alert to the growing of Christ's light among us. God of promise, God of hope, into our darkness come.

O come, O come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel!

WE PREPARE TO HEAR GOD'S WORD

PRAYER OF PRAISE

God of light and love, our praises and prayers overflow with hope as the season of Advent opens. You come to your people to dwell with us. You come with power – not to dominate, but to transform. You come with promises – not to give us what we want, but to make all things new.

You come with truth – shattering lies and setting your people free. You come with signs of your deep love for the world. Your coming is our hope, and so, we offer you our worship in gratitude and anticipation. Come into our lives again, O God, and show us how to hope in the face of all that is discouraging, for we gather in the name of Hope made flesh, Jesus Christ, your promise and our desire.

*HYMN 41 (V.1-3)

O Come, All Ye Faithful

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem!
Come, and behold Him, born the King of angels!
O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him, Christ, the Lord!

Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, born this happy morning,
Jesus, to Thee be all glory given;
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing!
O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him, Christ, the Lord!

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation!
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God, all Glory in the highest!
O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him, Christ, the Lord!

PRAYER OF FORGIVENESS

Surprising God, forgive our sleepiness in the presence of your splendor. Forgive us if we yawn when you present us with life-changing possibilities. Forgive us for abandoning hope so quickly, and expecting the same old thing in the same old way. Forgive us for underestimating your power to do a new thing. Awaken us to your holy, hopeful presence. Awaken us so we may watch and wait for you, Lord Jesus Christ. Come, Lord Jesus, come.

Silent prayer

Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

The One who comes with justice also comes with mercy. The God of Judgment is truly the Christ of compassion. God offers you forgiveness today. In the hope, receive it gladly.

*RESPONSE OF PRAISE (HYMN 31, V.1)

Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King.
Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!"
Joyful, all ye nations, rise, join the triumph of the skies;
With the angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

SCRIPTURE READING

Jeremiah 33:14-16

SERMON

Rev. Stefanie Muntzel

ANTHEM

Lo, How a Rose

arr. Deborah Govenor

Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming from tender stem hath sprung!
Of Jesse's lineage coming, as those of old have sung.
It came, a floweret bright, amid the cold of winter,
When half spent was the night.

Isaiah 'twas foretold it, the Rose I have in mind;
With Mary we behold it, the Virgin Mother kind.
To show God's love aright, she bore to us a Savior,
When half spent was the night.

This Flower, whose fragrance tender with sweetness fills the air,
Dispels with glorious splendor the darkness everywhere;
True man, yet very God, from sin and death He saves us,
And lightens every load.

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

We make our offering today with hopeful hearts, trusting that the Holy One who comes to us will bless our gifts and our lives, to make us signs of hope in the world God loves.

Please leave your offering in the plate in the back of the sanctuary or make your gifts online or via mail.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Holy and Righteous God, we offer our gifts with humble hearts, knowing the need in our world is great and our gifts alone will never fit that need. We offer our gifts in hope that you will bless them and use them to help fulfill your purpose revealed in Jesus Christ, Savior of us all.

Amen.

*HYMN 44 (V.1-4)

O Little Town of Bethlehem

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light;
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary; and gathered all above,
While mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wondering love.
O morning stars, together proclaim the holy birth!
And praises sing to God the King, and peace to all on earth.

How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of His heaven.
No ear may hear His coming, but in this world of sin,
Where meek souls still receive Him, still the dear Christ enters in.

O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin and enter in, be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel!

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

O Spirit of Hope, when the world is confusing and bleak, you pierce the despair with your Word, and renew our vision of God's possibilities for our lives. Thank you for lessons learned, for changes of heart, for new discoveries made and hope restored, even as the pandemic stretches on. As the world around us prepares for the long, cold sleep of winter, we pray for those who feel the burden of loneliness and isolation. We remember those without homes to shelter in, and those forced to leave their homes through conflict, natural disaster or political upheaval.

Spirit of Hope, shelter all these under your wings. Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.

O God of Peace, there is strife and disagreement all around us these days, sometimes in our own lives and relationships, and in many nations and neighborhoods in the news. We pray for places where violence and cruelty appear to win the day, thinking of situations globally and closer to home.

God of Peace, work for just and peaceful resolutions to prevail. Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.

O Creator of Joy, we give you thanks for moments of joy and celebration in our lives, for pleasure given and received, for quiet times of reflection and conversation, and for the many ways that allow us to keep in contact with those we love. As the days grow colder, we remember those who feel bitter while others rejoice, those who grieve the loss of loved ones, and those who face a bleak winter for any reason.

Creator of Joy, bring them light and warmth in the season ahead, and let your joy shine through us as compassionate companions. Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.

O Love Divine made flesh in Christ, you call us into communion with you and community with one another. We pray for your church and our congregation, that love will guide all your people as we plan for our life and mission. We remember before you our families, whether we are close or estranged; for our friends, whether nearby or far away.

Love Divine, bless each one with your love and help us express our gratitude and concern for each other in word and action. Lord, in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

We sum up all our prayers, spoken and unspoken, in the words Jesus taught us to say:

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.

WE GO IN GOD'S NAME

A HOPEFUL BENEDICTION

Be people of hope.

Let hope live in your heart.

Look for signs of hope everyday, in the most humble and common of things.

Share the hope of Christ with all you meet.

And may the Hope of Christ fill you and lift you this day.

Amen.

POSTLUDE

Of the Father's Love Begotten (Hymn 309)

arr. Weston

~*~*~

Worship Leaders

Rev. Stefanie Muntzel

Gloria Snyder, Organist

Elizabeth Campbell, Chancel Choir Director

The Chancel Choir

Peter Becker, Liturgist

Tech Support: Jacob Van Norman, Bill Bartlett, Rich Linnell, Kimberly Rausch, Pat Koefoed, Luke McGloughlin

* Music reprinted with permission under ONE LICENSE. All rights reserved. License #A-719535

Jeremiah 33:14-16

The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. And this is the name by which it will be called: "The LORD is our righteousness."