

WORSHIP FOR SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 2020

First Presbyterian Church of Union, Missouri

FIRST SUNDAY of ADVENT

GATHERING

PRELUDE

Lighting the First Advent Candle

One: We shall light the Advent candles/place this candle ring,
praying that our preparation for Christmas may help us
to look outward in love,
and look forward in hope.

**All: Living Christ, light of the world,
give us the warmth of your love.**

One: There are five candles.
We shall light a new candle each Sunday from now until Christmas.

Candles are useful.
They give light and warmth when electricity fails.

Candles are simple, yet ingenious.
They show us the inventiveness of people in the past
and connect us with generations before us.

Candles are special.
In the dark, they give bright light and warm shadows.

Candlelight brings us together
as we talk and laugh and listen.
**All: Living Christ, light of the world,
give us the warmth of your love.**

One: In Isaiah, chapter 64, a prophet cries out to God:
O that you would tear open the heavens,
and come down, . . .
to make your name known. . . .
You have hidden your face from us. . . .
Yet . . . we are the clay, and you are our potter;

we are all the work of your hand.

We light our first candle
as a prayer for our suffering world,
that God, who is often hidden,
may be revealed to us and to all.

Living God, come to our world.

**All: When you hide your face, help us,
to trust your promises and wait in hope.**

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Immanuel:

All: God with us.

One: Incarnation:

All: God in the flesh.

One: Into this world...

All: ..God comes, with us, in us, for us.

One: Come, let us worship the God who comes.

OPENING HYMN “Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates” GtG 93

One: Lift up your heads, ye mighty gates;

All: behold, the King of glory waits;

One: the King of kings is drawing near;

All: the Savior of the world is here.

One: Fling wide the portals of your heart;

**All: make it a temple, set apart
from earthly use for heaven's employ,
adorned with prayer and love and joy.**

One: Redeemer, come!

**All: I open wide
my heart to thee;**

One: here, Lord, abide.

**All: Let me thy inner presence feel
thy grace and love in me reveal.**

(Public Domain)

UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God-with-us,

even in Advent,

we confess that you can seem far away.

We have blamed you for hiding from us,

rather than admitting we have failed to see you
in the thousands of ways you are revealing yourself every day.
We have not called on you,
and we have not listened for your call to us.
Without you, we have become tiny islands of self-concern.
Forgive us, we pray, and come to save us!
Let your face shine until our tears are dried,
our sins are faded, and our hope is restored.
After all, we belong to you,
and in your hands, we can be made new.
In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

SILENT CONFESSION

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

One: His name is Jesus, "for he will save his people from their sins."
All: **This is indeed "good news of great joy for all the people."**
One: So rejoice and be glad, for in Jesus Christ we are forgiven.
All: **Thanks be to God!**

THE PEACE

One: The peace of Christ be with you.
All: **And also with you.**

(From your seat, a brief sign of peace may be shared: a wave of the hand, a nod of the head, etc.)

THE WORD

SCRIPTURE READINGS *(selections from...)*

Isaiah 64:1-9
Psalm 80:1-7,17-19
I Corinthians 1:3-9
Mark 13:24-37

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SERMON "In Tension...and Intention" by Pastor Bill Vincent

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,**

suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come again to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

(Today's version of the Apostles' Creed is reprinted by permission from Book of Common Worship, copyright 1993 Westminster/John Knox Press.)

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Pastor: Let your face shine upon us, O God...
People: ...that we might be saved.

THE EUCHARIST

OFFERING

Invitation

Reflection

Unison Prayer of Dedication

God of unchanging truth, your promise is eternal, your benevolent care spans the ages. We offer our gifts to be molded in accordance with your purposes; we offer ourselves to be shaped by your will. Fill us with wisdom, and make us vessels of your truth. Make all that we do an outpouring of your goodness, spreading compassion on the afflicted and care to all who may be in need. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

Invitation to the Lord's Table

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Leader: The Lord be with you.
People: **And also with you.**
Leader: Lift up your hearts.
People: **We lift them to the Lord.**
Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: It is right to give our thanks and praise.
(The prayer continues...)

The Lord's Prayer (Traditional)

**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.**

Breaking of the Bread

Communion of the People

(Please hold the bread so that we might partake of it together, to remind us of our participation in this sacrament as a community. Please drink the cup as you are served, reminding us of our individual participation in this sacrament and our personal commitment to our Lord.)

Prayer

SENDING

CLOSING HYMN "Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus" GtG 82

One: Come, thou long-expected Jesus,
born to set thy people free;
**All: from our fears and sins release us;
let us find our rest in thee.**
One: Israel's strength and consolation,
All: hope of all the earth thou art;
One: dear desire of every nation,
All: joy of every longing heart.

One: Born thy people to deliver,
born a child and yet a king,
born to reign in us forever,
All: now thy gracious kingdom bring.

One: By thine own eternal Spirit
rule in all our hearts alone;
**All: by thine all-sufficient merit
raise us to thy glorious throne.**

(Public Domain)

CHARGE AND BLESSING

One: Be alert and watchful, serving faithfully day by day.
All: We will look around us for signs of God's presence.
One: Use the gifts you have been given to the glory of God.
All: We will open our eyes to ways to be helpful.
One: Grace to you and peace, from God and Jesus Christ.
Know that God is faithful and Christ walks with you.
And let the gathered people of God say...
All: ...Amen.

POSTLUDE

Lighting the First Advent Candle is from Brian Wren, *Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany: Liturgies and Prayers for Public Worship* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008) and is reproduced by permission. Copyright © 2007 by Brian Wren.

The Prayer of Confession and Prayers of the People (adapted) are reprinted by permission of Westminster John Knox Press from *Feasting on the Word® Worship Companion*. Copyright 2014.

The Prayer of Confession and Charge and Blessing are reprinted by permission of United Church Press from *Led by Love* by Lavon Bayler. Copyright 1996 by United Church Press.

The Prayer of Dedication is used by permission from *When We Gather Year B* by James G. Kirk. Copyright 1984 The Geneva Press.