

WORSHIP FOR SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 2023

Pacific Presbyterian Church and First Presbyterian Church of Union, Missouri

**'FIRST SUNDAY of ADVENT'**

**GATHERING**

**PRELUDE**

**CALL TO WORSHIP** *(from Psalm 80; Mark 1 & 13)*

One: Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel,  
you who lead Joseph like a flock!

**All: Stir up your might,  
and come to save us!**

One: give us life, and we will call on your name.

**All: Restore us, O Lord God;  
let your face shine, that we may be saved.**

One: Of that day or hour, no one knows, only God. Be alert! Keep awake! The time is drawing near:

**All: The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.**

**\*OPENING HYMN** "People, Look East" GtG 105 *(Verses 1, 2, 4, & 5)*

1. **People, look east. The time is near  
of the crowning of the year.  
Make your house fair as you are able;  
trim the hearth and set the table.  
People, look east and sing today:  
Love, the Guest, is on the way.**
2. **Furrows, be glad. Though earth is bare,  
one more seed is planted there.  
Give up your strength the seed to nourish,  
that in course the flower may flourish.  
People, look east and sing today:  
Love, the Rose, is on the way.**
4. **Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim  
one more light the bowl shall brim,  
shining beyond the frosty weather,  
bright as sun and moon together.**

*(continued...)*

**People, look east and sing today:  
Love, the Star, is on the way.**

- 5. Angels, announce with shouts of mirth  
Christ who brings new life to earth.  
Set every peak and valley humming  
with the word, the Lord is coming.  
People, look east and sing today:  
Love, the Lord, is on the way.**

*Text by Eleanor Farjeon, 1928, alt.*

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*Tune: BESANCON, French folk melody; harm. Martin Shaw, 1928.*

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## **UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

**God-with-us,  
even in Advent,  
we confess that you can seem far away.  
You are hidden when we need you near.  
In our hurt, doubt, and fear,  
we do not try to draw closer to you;  
instead, we lash out—  
against you, our neighbor, even those we love.  
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** *(based on I Corinthians 1 & II Corinthians 5)*

**One:** The grace of God, given to us in Christ Jesus,  
strengthens us to the end  
so that we may be blameless when Christ comes again.

**All:** **Thanks be to God, who is faithful  
and has called us into the fellowship of the Son,  
Jesus Christ our Lord!**

**One:** For if anyone who is in Christ, there is a new creation. The old life has  
gone; a new life has begun. Know that you are forgiven and be at peace.

**All:** **Thanks be to God! Amen.**

## 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

### LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH: The Candle of Hope

One: Advent. Expectation. The coming of the Lord. Hope. We celebrate God's coming to us in a most wonderful way. We celebrate the fruition of God's promise and the people's hope.

All: **God has come to us in the babe born in Bethlehem. God comes to us as we break bread around the table. God will come to us in glory to bring history to its completion.**

One: So we light the first Advent candle, fanning the flame of hope within us, and remembering the sure foundation of our hope in God the Creator. The Messiah comes! "This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes."  
(Psalm 118:23)

Let us pray.

Unison: **Thank you, God, for being present with us and not abandoning us. Your coming to us gives us hope and strength. Help us to share with others the hope in which we abide, that together, all the peoples of the world may await your final coming with joyful and hopeful anticipation. Amen.**

Sing: **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!**

Words: Latin prose, pre-9th cent.; trans. Composite. *Public Domain.*  
Tune: VENI EMMANUEL, Plainsong; adapt. Thomas Helmore, 1852;  
arr. John Weaver, 1988  
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**SCRIPTURE READINGS** Isaiah 64:1-9  
Mark 13:24-37  
I Corinthians 1:3-9

**PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION**

**SERMON** “Deep Need, Deep Hope” by Pastor Bill Vincent

**\*HYMN** “The Days Are Surely Coming” GtG 357

**1. The days are surely coming,  
says God to all the earth,  
when you will see my promise:  
salvation come to birth.  
My righteousness and justice  
will spread throughout the land  
and you will be delivered  
by my almighty hand.**

**2. The days are surely coming,  
says Christ, the promised one,  
when you will read my warning  
in moon and stars and sun.  
Though earth and heaven tremble,  
stand up and do not fear,  
for I am your redeemer,  
and I am drawing near.**

**3. The days are surely coming  
when we will know at last  
the fullness of God’s presence,  
God’s promise, come to pass.  
Then righteousness and justice  
will spread throughout the land  
and we will be delivered  
by God’s almighty hand.**

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Tune: LLANGLOFFAN, Welsh folk melody; Llywybrau Moliant,  
1872; harm. The English Hymnal, 1906. Public Domain*

**\*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH** (from “*A Declaration of Faith*”)

**All that we can ever hope for  
was present in Christ.**

**In Christ God gave us a glimpse of the new creation  
God has already begun and will surely finish.**

**But the work of God in Christ is not over.  
God calls us to hope for more than we have yet seen.**

**We do not yet see the end of cruelty and suffering  
in the world, the church, or our own lives.**

**But we see Jesus as Lord.**

**As he stands at the center of our history,  
we are confident he will stand at its end.**

**The hope God gives us is ultimate confidence  
that supports us when lesser hopes fail us.**

**The people of God have often misused God's promises  
as excuses for doing nothing about present evils.**

**But in Christ the new world has already broken in  
and the old can no longer be tolerated.**

**We know our efforts cannot bring in God's kingdom.**

**But hope plunges us into the struggle  
for victories over evil that are possible now  
in the world, the church, and our individual lives.**

**Hope gives us courage and energy  
to contend against all opposition,  
however invincible it may seem,  
for the new world and the new humanity  
that are surely coming.**

**Jesus is Lord!**

**He has been Lord from the beginning.**

**He will be Lord at the end.**

**Even now he is Lord.**

“A Declaration of Faith” is Copyright 1977, 1991, the Office of the General Assembly, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); adopted (1977) “as a contemporary statement of faith, a reliable aid for Christian study, liturgy, and inspiration, with the clear understanding that” it is not approved as a part of the *Book of Confessions*.

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

**One:** Let your face shine upon us, O God...

**All:** ...and awaken us to your presence.

## THE EUCHARIST

### OFFERING

*Invitation*

*Reflection*

*\*Unison Prayer of Dedication*

**Christ calls us to live generous and grateful lives. O God, we come with our gifts to be molded in accordance with your purposes; we offer ourselves to be shaped by your will. Make us wake-full and watchful for opportunities to make a difference, to help others be alert for your presence, that our lives may be an outpouring of your goodness and compassion in service to your coming in glory. 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* (Contemporary)

**Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.**

**Give us today our daily bread.**

**Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those who sin against us.**

**Save us from the time of trial  
and deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours  
now and 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.)

**Sing** “Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence” GtG 347 (*Verses 1-3*)

1. **Let all mortal flesh keep silence,  
and with fear and trembling stand;  
ponder nothing earthly minded,  
for with blessing in His hand  
Christ our God to earth descendeth,  
our full homage to demand.**
  
2. **King of kings, yet born of Mary,  
as of old on earth he stood,  
Lord of lords, in human vesture,  
in the body and the blood,  
he will give to all the faithful  
his own self for heavenly food.**
  
3. **Rank on rank the host of heaven  
spreads its vanguard on the way,  
as the Light of light descendeth  
from the realms of endless day,  
that the powers of hell may vanish  
as the shadows clear away.**

Words: From Liturgy of St. James, 4<sup>th</sup> cent.; trans. Gerard Moultrie, 1864, alt.  
Tune: PICARDY, French melody; arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1906  
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*Prayer*

**SENDING**

**\*CLOSING HYMN** “O Lord, How Shall I Meet You” GtG 104

1. **O Lord, how shall I meet you,  
how welcome you aright?  
Your people long to greet you,  
my hope, my heart’s delight!**

*(continued...)*

**O kindle, Lord most holy,  
a lamp within my breast,  
to do in spirit lowly  
all that may please you best.**

**2. Love caused your incarnation;  
love brought you down to me;  
your thirst for my salvation  
procured my liberty.  
O love beyond all telling,  
that led you to embrace  
in love, all loves excelling,  
our lost and fallen race.**

**3. You come, O Lord, with gladness,  
in mercy and goodwill,  
to bring an end to sadness  
and bid our fears be still.  
In patient expectation  
we live for that great day  
when your renewed creation  
your glory shall display.**

Words: Paul Gerhardt, 1653; trans. Catherine Winkworth and others, 1863, alt.  
Tune: VALET WILL ICH DIR GEBEN, Melchior Teschner, 1614; harm.  
William Henry Monk, 1861  
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**\*CHARGE AND BLESSING**

**One:** ...And let the gathered people of God say...  
**All:** ...Amen.

**POSTLUDE**

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