

VALLEY COMMUNITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

NOVEMBER 27, 2022 † 10:00 AM

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Bold Text is spoken/sung by everyone

PASTOR: Rev. Robin Garvin

LITURGIST: Turner Sanderman

MUSICIANS: Thomas Rheingans, Siena Hertafeld, Sanctuary Choir

VIDEO/SOUND: Roger Rees, Hayden Bach, Dean Bridges

GATHER IN GOD'S PRESENCE

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS ELEMENTS AND MUSICAL INTERLUDE

LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLE (Roger and Judy Rothrock)

Today we begin the celebration of Advent, the season in which we prepare ourselves to celebrate anew God's gift of life and love to us in the child born in Bethlehem and renew our faith in the fulfillment of the risen Lord's promise to come again in the fullness of time to complete the work of the world's redemption begun in him. Hear the words of the prophet Isaiah: "Darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the Lord will arise upon you, and his glory will appear over you. Nations shall come to your light and kings to the brightness of your dawn" (Isaiah 60:2,3). We light this candle as a symbol of the light of Christ who has come and continues to come into the world. With Christ comes the light of hope.

All: Let us walk in the light of the Lord. Amen.

ADVENT RESPONSE No. 88 (O Come, O Come, Emmanuel)

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.

♦ CALL TO WORSHIP

We come from a world of darkness

Into Christ's world of light.

We come from a world of weariness

Into God's strength and hope.

We come from a slumbering world

Strengthened by the Spirit, we come to watch with hope for the coming of Christ.

Let us worship God!

♦ OPENING HYMN No. 93 (Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates)

Verse 1: ***Lift up your heads, ye mighty gates; behold the King of glory waits; the King of kings is drawing near; the Savior of the world is here.***

Verse 2: ***Fling wide the portals of your heart; make it a temple, set apart from earthly use for heaven's employ; adorned with prayer and love and joy.***

Verse 3: ***Redeemer, come! I open wide my heart to thee; here, Lord, abide. Let me thy inner presence feel; thy grace and love in me reveal.***

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Merciful God, always with us, always coming, we confess that we do not know how to prepare for your Advent. We have forgotten how to hope in miracles; we have ignored the promise of your kingdom; we get distracted by all the busyness of this season. Forgive us, God. Grant us the simple wonder of the shepherds, the intelligent courage of the magi, and the patient faith of Mary and Joseph, that we may journey with them to Bethlehem and find the good news of a child born for us. Now, in the quiet of our hearts, we ask you to make us ready for his coming. Amen.

CONFSSIONAL RESPONSE No. 92 (While We Are Waiting, Come)

Verse 1: *While we are waiting, come; while we are waiting, come. Jesus, our Lord, Emmanuel, while we are waiting, come.*

Verse 2: *With power and glory, come; with power and glory, come. Jesus, our Lord, Emmanuel, while we are waiting, come.*

Verse 3: *Come, Savior, quickly come; come, Savior, quickly come. Jesus, our Lord, Emmanuel, while we are waiting, come.*

◆ ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Hear the good news: The Lord is merciful and forgiving, a great and compassionate Savior. God rescues us from darkness and frees us from fear. In Jesus Christ we are forgiven and made new. Thanks be to God! The peace of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

◆ RESPONSE OF PRAISE No. 95 (Prepare the Way of the Lord) (Sung 2 times)

Prepare the way of the Lord. Prepare the way of the Lord, and all people will see the salvation of our God.

PROCLAIM GOD'S WORD

SCRIPTURE READING (Isaiah 64:1-9)

CHOIR ANTHEM ("Keep Your Lamps!" (traditional Spiritual) arranged by Victor Johnson)

MESSAGE ("A Hopeful Lament" by Rev. Robin Garvin)

RESPOND TO GOD'S GRACE

◆ HYMN OF RESPONSE No. 83 (Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus)

Verse 1: *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.*

Verse 2: *Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art; dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart.*

Verse 3: *Born thy people to deliver, born a child and yet a king, born to reign in us forever, now thy gracious kingdom bring.*

Verse 4: *By thine own eternal Spirit rule in all our hearts alone; by thine all-sufficient merit raise us to thy glorious throne.*

◆ **AFFIRMATION OF FAITH** (written by Rev. Rebecca F. Harrison)

We are an Advent people, a people of hope. For us, Advent is a time of waiting, and so we wait. We wait for the coming of the One who is the fulfillment of God’s promise, the fulfillment of hope, the declaration that we have been redeemed. Even so, we are not a naïve people. We know that the world in which we live will continue to be filled with pain and sorrow. We know that hatred and violence will continue to exist. We know that death and separation will continue to be a part of our lives. But because we are an Advent people, we know that none of these things will win in the end. The Holy One is coming, to make holy once again all that was, is, and ever will be. And in our waiting and our hoping, we work and worship, pray and play, in all things hoping that peace, love, and joy will reign in our lives and in our world, now and forever.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE LORD’S PRAYER (found on page 35 of the hymnal)

OFFERTORY (“He is King of Kings” (No. 273); Siena Hertafeld, Luke Smith, vocalists)
(Offerings can be mailed to the church office or made online by visiting our website:
www.valleycommunity.org)

◆ **DOXOLOGY**

***Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.***

PRAYER OF GRATITUDE

SHARE THE GOOD NEWS

◆ **CLOSING HYMN** No. 87 (Comfort, Comfort Now My People)

Verse 1: “Comfort, comfort now my people; tell of peace!” So says our God. “Comfort those who sit in darkness mourning under sorrow’s load. To my people now proclaim that my pardon waits for them! Tell them that their sins I cover, and their warfare now is over.”

Verse 2: For the herald’s voice is crying in all the desert far and near, calling us to true repentance, since the reign of God is here. O, that warning cry obey! Now prepare for God a way. Let the valleys rise in meeting and the hills bow down in greeting.

Verse 3: Straight shall be what long was crooked, and the rougher places plain. Let your hearts be true and humble, as befits God’s holy reign. For the glory of the Lord now on earth is shed abroad, and all flesh shall see the token that God’s word is never broken.

◆ **CHARGE AND BENEDICTION**

POSTLUDE

SENDING MUSIC