

First Presbyterian Church

Service for the Lord's Day

First Sunday in Advent

November 29, 2020

10:00 a.m.

ASSEMBLE IN GOD'S NAME

Words of Welcome

Prelude

"Sonatina in a minor HWV 584"

George Frideric Handel

Call to Worship

from Psalm 80

Turn again, O God of hosts;

look down from heaven, and see;

Restore us, O LORD God of hosts;

let your face shine, that we may be saved.

* Hymn 93

"Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates"

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.

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.

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.

* Call to Confession

* Prayer of Confession

God of the future,

you are coming in power to bring all nations under your rule.

We confess that we have not expected your kingdom,

for we live casual lives, ignoring your promised judgment.

We accept lies as truth, exploit neighbors,

abuse the earth, and refuse your justice and peace.

In your mercy, forgive us.

Grant us wisdom to welcome your way,

and to seek things that will endure

when Christ comes to judge the world.

* Silent Confession

* Assurance of Pardon and Passing of the Peace

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Light one candle for hope.

Because the world is broken and the wait is long,
but hope just won't let go.

Hope holds space for all our longings

lingers on the edge of harsh reality

like the dawn gently awakening the sky.

“Keep awake,” she whispers,
“for the world is being made new.”

***So we light one candle, because it only takes one:
Christ with us.***

Instrumental Response

PROCLAIM GOD'S WORD

Prayer for Illumination

Gospel Lesson: Mark 13:24-37

“But in those days, after that suffering, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see ‘the Son of Man coming in clouds’ with great power and glory. Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

“From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

“But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.”

Psalter: Psalm 80 (Hymnal 355)

1 O hear our cry, O Lord; now hear us as we pray.
You guide us as a shepherd leads, so keep us in your way.
O come; Lord, come; restore and save us now.

2 Enthroned above all worlds, you shine with holy light.
Lord, pour your power upon us all and save us with your might.
O come; Lord, come; restore and save us now.

3 O Lord, the God of Hosts, turn not your face away.
Our tears have been both food and drink; foes mock us night and day.
O come; Lord, come; restore and save us now.

4 O Lord, our God, return; bring peace into each home.
So let your face shine on us all; restore us as your own.
O come; Lord, come; restore and save us now.

A Moment with Our Children

Second Lesson: Isaiah 64:1-9

O that you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at your presence— as when fire kindles brushwood and the fire causes water to boil— to make your name known

to your adversaries, so that the nations might tremble at your presence! When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect, you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence. From ages past no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you, who works for those who wait for him. You meet those who gladly do right, those who remember you in your ways. But you were angry, and we sinned; because you hid yourself we transgressed.

We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away. There is no one who calls on your name, or attempts to take hold of you; for you have hidden your face from us, and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity. Yet, O LORD, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand. Do not be exceedingly angry, O LORD, and do not remember iniquity forever. Now consider, we are all your people.

Sermon: "What Happens When God Is Out of Sight"
Advent Series: What Isaiah Could See

Rev. Carter

RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

Hymn 357 "The Days Are Surely Coming"

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.

Affirmation of Faith: A Declaration of Faith (PCUS) 10.2

***In Christ God gave us a glimpse of the new creation
he has already begun and will surely finish.
We do not know when the final day will come.
In our time we see only broken and scattered signs
that the renewal of all things is under way.
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 Christ stands at the center of our history,
we are confident he will stand at its end.
He will judge all people and nations.
Evil will be condemned and rooted out of God's good creation.
There will be no more tears or pain.***

***All things will be made new.
The fellowship of human beings with God and each other
will be perfected.***

Offering
Offertory

“Prelude Opus 11 Number 4 in e minor”

Alexander Skrjabin

Prayers of the People and the Lord’s Prayer

GO IN GOD'S NAME

Hymn 83 "Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus"

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.

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

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

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

Charge and Benediction

Postlude

“Ende vom Lied from Fantasiestücke Opus 12”

Robert Schumann

The flowers have been given in loving memory of my parents, Doris Miller Coyne, and Jack Kaestner by Beverly Bright.

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PARTICIPANTS IN TODAY'S SERVICE

Pastor

Rev. William Carter

Liturgist

Leelah Farrell

Coordinator for Children and
Youth Ministries

Jana Schillinger

Director of Music

Frank Jones

Pianist

Nathaniel Worrell

Usher

Bill Farrell

Church Family Announcements

We welcome all to our worship today. **Please sign in at the Welcome Table.** (In the event of an infection, you will be contacted.)

Our congregation intends to worship God, equips God's people for ministry in the world, and serves God in ways that are faithful to the Gospel.

For those of us in the sanctuary today, there are some details to review in the hope that no virus will be spread due to this gathering.

- All are required to wear face masks, sit only in designated pews, and maintain six feet of distance from people of other households.
- You may participate in the spoken segments of the service, but please do not sing.
- If you would like to visit with other worshippers, do so after exiting the building.
- At present, seating is limited to 50 people in the sanctuary, including worship leaders. Notify the church office (office@fpccs.org or 570-586-6306) by Friday noon when you plan to attend.

Tell us your prayer concerns. Prayer Request Cards are available in the pews. They may be dropped in the offering plates as you enter or exit the sanctuary.

Christian Education for children and youth continues despite the pandemic. See below for offerings. Contact Jana Schillinger for additional information at ce@fpccs.org.

For kids and teens, we offer:

- **Grace & Faith:** children age 4 to grade 5 will have a weekly lesson from our *Growing in Grace & Gratitude* curriculum. We will post a short video, downloadable worksheets, and more at fpccsway-grace.blogspot.com for you to enjoy whenever fits best in your schedule.
- **We Believe:** youth grade 6 and up can visit fpccsway-believe.blogspot.com for a weekly post featuring a Bible passage, reflection, and questions to ponder.

For the adults, **Rev. Carter will lead an Advent Bible study on Wednesdays (2, 9, 16, 23) in December.** Watch for details.

We are being offered two opportunities to share the love of Christ during this Advent.



Pajamas for local children

The mission of the Angel Tree, providing pajamas to Scranton Head-Start programs, is in progress. You may sign up to purchase pajamas for a child by **going to our website**, fpccs.org, or **by calling the church office** on weekdays. When you sign up, you will be given the size and gender of a child that needs warm pajamas for winter.



The second opportunity is brand new! Our Christian Education Committee is offering **Advent Boxes** for our members and friends. The boxes are ready **NOW**, and Advent **starts today**, so check with Jana before you leave.

This Week at a Glance

Today

10:00AM

* Morning Worship

Sanctuary

Monday, November 30

6:00pm

* Girl Scouts

Fellowship Hall

Tuesday, December 1

Wednesday, December 2

Thursday, December 3

8:30AM

* Men's Breakfast

Fellowship Hall

7:00PM

(Z) CE

Zoom

7:30

* A & R rehearsal

Sanctuary

Friday, December 4

Saturday, December 5

Sunday, December 6

Second Sunday of Advent

10:00AM

* Worship - Reserve your seat: office@fpccs.org or 570-586-6306 Sanctuary

* denotes gathering is face-to-face, with masks and socially-distant seating.

(Z) denotes gathering is online using ZOOM. Check our website or call the office for the link.

First Presbyterian Church
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570/586-6306 www.fpccs.org

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