

# First Presbyterian Church

Service for the Lord's Day

Third Sunday in Advent

December 13, 2020

10:00 a.m.

## ASSEMBLE IN GOD'S NAME

We are glad you are here! To ensure the safety of all present, please take your seat immediately and remain there for the duration of the service. When the service has concluded, kindly depart the building without delay.

Words of Welcome

Prelude

“Tell Out My Soul”

arr. Paul Manz

Call to Worship

from Psalm 47

Sing for joy, O heavens, and exult, O earth;

**break forth, O mountains, into singing!**

For the LORD has comforted his people,

**and will have compassion on his suffering ones.**

\* Hymn 88

"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" (verses 1, 4, 6, 7)

1 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.

4 O come, thou Root of Jesse, free thine own from Satan's tyranny;  
from depths of hell thy people save and give them victory o'er the grave.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

6 O come, thou Dayspring, come and cheer our spirits by thine advent here;  
disperse the gloomy clouds of night, and death's dark shadows put to flight.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

7 O come, Desire of nations, bind all peoples in one heart and mind;  
bid envy, strife, and discord cease; fill the whole world with heaven's peace.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

\* Call to Confession

\* Prayer of Confession

**O Lord our God,**

**you call us to work for a world where all will be fed and have dignity,  
but we find ourselves distracted by our own desires.**

**You call us to seek justice and peace,**

**but we are satisfied with injustice and discord.**

**You call us to bring liberty to the oppressed,**

**but we do not insist on freedom for all.**

**Forgive us, O Lord.**

**Turn us to your will by the power of your Spirit,  
so that all may know your justice and peace;  
through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Savior.**

- \* Silent Confession
- \* Assurance of Pardon and Passing of the Peace

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Light one candle for joy.

Because the world is broken and the wait is long,  
but our joy cannot be contained.

***Like a toddler, toppling the thrones of power with a gleeful swipe,  
Joy pierces our silence with song  
interrupts our sighing with laughter  
unshackles our fumbling feet to dance.***

“My soul magnifies the Lord,” she whispers,  
“and my Spirit rejoices in God my savior.”

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

Instrumental Response

## **PROCLAIM GOD'S WORD**

Prayer for Illumination

Gospel Lesson: John 1:6-8, 19-28

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, “Who are you?” He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, “I am not the Messiah.” And they asked him, “What then? Are you Elijah?” He said, “I am not.” “Are you the prophet?” He answered, “No.” Then they said to him, “Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?” He said, “I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, ‘Make straight the way of the Lord,’” as the prophet Isaiah said. Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They asked him, “Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?” John answered them, “I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal.” This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

Psalter: Psalm 126 (Hymnal 74)

- 1 When God restored our common life, our hope, our liberty,  
at first it seemed a passing dream, a waking fantasy;  
a shock of joy swept over us, for we had wept so long;  
the seeds we watered once with tears sprang up into a song.
- 2 We went forth weeping, sowing seeds in hard, unyielding soil;  
with laughing hearts we carry home the fruit of all our toil.  
We praise the One who gave the growth, with voices full and strong.  
The seeds we watered once with tears sprang up into a song.
- 3 Great liberating God, we pray for all who are oppressed.  
May those who long for what is right with justice now be blest.  
We pray for those who mourn this day, and all who suffer wrong;  
may seeds they water now with tears spring up into a song.

## A Moment with Our Children

### Second Lesson: Isaiah 61:1-11

The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to provide for those who mourn in Zion— to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, to display his glory.

They shall build up the ancient ruins, they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations. Strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, foreigners shall till your land and dress your vines; but you shall be called priests of the LORD, you shall be named ministers of our God; you shall enjoy the wealth of the nations, and in their riches you shall glory. Because their shame was double, and dishonor was proclaimed as their lot, therefore they shall possess a double portion; everlasting joy shall be theirs. For I the LORD love justice, I hate robbery and wrongdoing; I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. Their descendants shall be known among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples; all who see them shall acknowledge that they are a people whom the LORD has blessed.

I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.

Sermon: "Repairing the Ruins"

Rev. Carter

*Advent Series: What Isaiah Could See*

### **RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD**

Hymn 852

"When the Lord Redeems the Very Least"

- 1 When the Lord redeems the very least, we will rejoice.  
When the hungry gather for the feast, we will rejoice.

Refrain: We will rejoice with gladness. We will rejoice.  
All our days we'll sing to God in praise. We will rejoice!

- 2 When the Lord restores the sick and weak, we will rejoice.  
When the earth is given to the meek, we will rejoice. (Refrain)
- 3 When the Lord revives the world from death, we will rejoice.  
When the word of God fills every breath, we will rejoice. (Refrain)
- 4 When the Lord returns in victory, we will rejoice.  
When we live in glorious liberty, we will rejoice. (Refrain)

**We believe:**

**that God has revealed himself as the one who wishes  
to bring about justice and true peace among people;  
that God, in a world full of injustice and enmity,  
is in a special way the God of the destitute, the poor and the wronged  
that God calls the church to follow him in this;  
for God brings justice to the oppressed and gives bread to the hungry;  
that God frees the prisoner and restores sight to the blind;  
that God supports the downtrodden, protects the stranger,  
helps orphans and widows and blocks the path of the ungodly;  
that for God pure and undefiled religion is  
to visit the orphans and the widows in their suffering;  
that God wishes to teach the church to do what is good and to seek the right;  
that the church must therefore stand by people  
in any form of suffering and need,  
that the church must witness against and strive against any form of injustice,  
so that justice may roll down like waters,  
and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.**

Offering

Offertory

"O Come, O Come Emmanuel"

arr. Charles Callahan

Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer

**GO IN GOD'S NAME**

Hymn 107

"Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn"

- 1 Awake! Awake, and greet the new morn, for angels herald its dawning.  
Sing out your joy, for soon he is born, behold! the Child of our longing.  
Come as a baby weak and poor, to bring all hearts together,  
he opens wide the heavenly door and lives now inside us forever.
- 2 To us, to all in sorrow and fear, Emmanuel comes a-singing;  
his humble song is quiet and near, yet fills the earth with its ringing;  
music to heal the broken soul and hymns of loving-kindness.  
The thunder of his anthems rolls to shatter all hatred and violence.
- 3 In darkest night his coming shall be, when all the world is despairing,  
as morning light so quiet and free, so warm and gentle and caring.  
Then shall the mute break forth in song, the lame shall leap in wonder,  
the weak be raised above the strong, and weapons be broken asunder.
- 4 Rejoice, rejoice, take heart in the night. Though dark the winter and cheerless,  
the rising sun shall crown you with light; be strong and loving and fearless.  
Love be our song and love our prayer and love our endless story;  
may God fill every day we share and bring us at last into glory.

Charge and Benediction

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### **PARTICIPANTS IN TODAY'S SERVICE**

Pastor	Rev. William Carter
Liturgist	David Naeher
Coordinator for Children and Youth Ministries	Jana Schillinger
Director of Music	Frank Jones
Organist	Kay Ten Eyck
Usher	Drew Taylor

### **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](mailto: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.

**The January-February Upper Rooms** have arrived at the church. You may pick one up on the literature rack in the Narthex, or call the church office and leave a message requesting that one be mailed.

**Christian Education for children and youth** continues despite the pandemic. See below for offerings. Contact Jana Schillinger for additional information at [ce@fpccs.org](mailto: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](http://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](http://fpccsway-believe.blogspot.com) for a weekly post featuring a Bible passage, reflection, and questions to ponder.
- The Adults are invited to participate in an Advent Bible Study, led by Rev. Carter, that will take place **Wednesdays, December 16 and 23, at 7:00 p.m. on Zoom.**

**Looking ahead:**

**Friday, December 18, 7:00 p.m.,** there will be a live concert in our sanctuary that will be filmed for streaming on the following Sunday afternoon. Reservations are required for the Friday, in-person concert. The Three Divas, a powerhouse trio, plays jazz with boundless musical joy. The New York Times describes them as “Blistering Hot!” **Be sure to make reservations!**

**On Monday, December 21** we are planning a **Blue Christmas service** for 7:00 p.m., both in person and live-streamed. If there ever was a year to pray for peace and consolation, this is it.

**Below is a list of services for Christmas Eve**

**Family Service at 4:00 p.m.** - We will gather outside on the back parking lot (adjacent to Fellowship Hall). This will be a simple service, socially distanced and masked. We will sing some favorite carols, hear a brief message, pray, and praise. Dress warmly, suitable for the weather. **Reservations are required.**

**Lessons and Carols at 8:00 p.m.** - Drawing on the musical talent of our church family, this service will feature scripture readings and musical selections on the theme of light in the darkness. It will take place in the sanctuary for an audience of 50, with overflow seating for 50 in Fellowship Hall. **Reservations are strictly required.** The service will be live streamed on our church YouTube page and available for later viewing online.

**Jazz Christmas Eve at 11:00 p.m.** - The Presbybop Christmas Eve Band will offer a musical service in the sanctuary for an audience of 50, with no overflow seating. **Reservations are strictly required.** The service will be live streamed on our church YouTube page and available for later viewing online.

**Please note:** All services are subject to last minute changes, depending on the recommendations of the state health department and our local situation. We will not jeopardize the health of our church family in any way. If you are worried or concerned, even at the last minute, we recommend staying home and worshiping with us on the internet. Latest details will always be posted at [www.fpccs.org](http://www.fpccs.org).

**This Week at a Glance**

**Today**

10:00AM	* Morning Worship	Sanctuary
11:00	* Special Session Meeting	Sanctuary

**Monday, December 14**

6:00 PM	* Girl Scouts	Fellowship Hall
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**Wednesday, December 16**

7:00PM	* Bell Choir Rehearsal	Sanctuary
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**Friday, December 18**

7:00PM	* Arts Series: 3 Divas live concert. Reservations required.	Sanctuary
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**Sunday, December 20**

10:00AM \* Worship - **Reserve your seat:** [office@fpccs.org](mailto:office@fpccs.org) or 570-586-6306 Sanctuary  
3:30PM \* Recital 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**  
**300 School Street, Clarks Summit, PA 18411**  
**570/586-6306**      [www.fpccs.org](http://www.fpccs.org)

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