

December 6, 2020

Second Sunday of Advent



Ethiopian Mural, *John Baptizing Jesus*.

We are filled with joy at your presence and hope you experience God's Spirit as you worship and meet with those around you. If you would like more information about RPC, please talk with any Session member or the Pastor.

ORDER FOR THE WORSHIP OF GOD

Bold Letters -- Indicate congregational response

GATHERING

Prelude

Welcome

Lighting of the Advent Candle

We light this candle as a sign of the coming light of Christ.
As the Lord has promised, in days to come . . .

First Candle

The nations shall beat their swords into plowshares,
and their spears into pruning hooks;
nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
neither shall they learn war any more.

Second Candle

The wolf shall dwell with the lamb,
the leopard shall lie down with the kid,
the calf and the lion and the fatling will lie down together,
and a little child shall lead them.

Amen

Gathering Hymn

Come, O Come, Emmanuel

#88 (v 1,2,3)

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.

² O come, thou Wisdom from on high,
who orderest all things mightily:
to us the path of knowledge show;
and teach us in her ways to go.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel.

³ O come, O come, thou Lord of might,
who to thy tribes on Sinai's height
in ancient times didst give the law

in cloud and majesty and awe.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel.

Litany for Advent

O Wisdom,
coming forth from the mouth of the Most High,
pervading and permeating all creation,
you order all things with strength and gentleness:
Come now and teach us the way to salvation.

Come, Lord Jesus.

O Adonai,
Ruler of the house of Israel,
you appeared in the burning bush to Moses
and gave him the law on Sinai:
Come with outstretched arm to save us.

Come, Lord Jesus.

O Root of Jesse,
rising as a sign for all the peoples,
before you earthly rulers will keep silent,
and nations give you honor:
Come quickly to deliver us.

Come, Lord Jesus.

O Key of David,
Scepter over the house of Israel,
you open and no one can close,
you close and no one can open:
Come to set the prisoners free.

Come, Lord Jesus.

O Radiant Dawn,
splendor of eternal light,
Sun of justice:
Come, shine on those who live in darkness
and in the shadow of death.

Come, Lord Jesus.

O Ruler of the nations,
Monarch for whom the people long,
you are the cornerstone uniting all humanity:
Come, save us all,
whom you formed out of clay.

Come, Lord Jesus.

O Emmanuel,
our Sovereign and lawgiver,
desire of the nations and Savior of all:
Come and save us, O Lord our God.

Come, Lord Jesus.

God of grace,
ever faithful to your promises,
the earth rejoices in hope of our Savior's coming
and looks forward with longing
to his return at the end of time.
Prepare our hearts to receive him when he comes,
for he is Lord forever and ever.

Amen

Call to Confession

A voice is crying out in the wilderness:
Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.
Trusting in God's grace, let us confess our sin.

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.

Silence is kept for personal confession

Assurance of Pardon

The wilderness will rejoice; the dry land will blossom. The people of God will return with joy and singing. In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!

Thanks be to God. Amen.

Response in Praise *Our Darkness Is Never Darkness in Your Sight* #678

**Our darkness is never darkness in your sight:
the deepest night is clear as the daylight.**

THE WORD

A Time with the Children

Reading Isaiah 40:1-11 Lay Leader: Aimee Ranaivoarijaona

Comfort, O comfort my people,
says your God.

² Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
and cry to her
that she has served her term,
that her penalty is paid,
that she has received from the LORD's hand
double for all her sins.

³ A voice cries out:
"In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD,
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

⁴ Every valley shall be lifted up,
and every mountain and hill be made low;
the uneven ground shall become level,
and the rough places a plain.

⁵ Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,
and all people shall see it together,
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

⁶ A voice says, "Cry out!"
And I said, "What shall I cry?"

All people are grass,
their constancy is like the flower of the field.

⁷ The grass withers, the flower fades,
when the breath of the LORD blows upon it;
surely the people are grass.

⁸ The grass withers, the flower fades;
but the word of our God will stand forever.

⁹ Get you up to a high mountain,
O Zion, herald of good tidings;^[a]
lift up your voice with strength,
O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings,^[b]
lift it up, do not fear;
say to the cities of Judah,
“Here is your God!”

¹⁰ See, the Lord God comes with might,
and his arm rules for him;
his reward is with him,
and his recompense before him.

¹¹ He will feed his flock like a shepherd;
he will gather the lambs in his arms,
and carry them in his bosom,
and gently lead the mother sheep.

Second Reading

Mark 1:1-8

The beginning of the good news^[a] of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

² As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,
“See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way;

³ the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:
‘Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight,’”

⁴ John the baptizer appeared^[e] in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵ And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁶ Now John was clothed with camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷ He proclaimed, “The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. ⁸ I have baptized you with^[f] water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

Sermon

Comfort, O Comfort

Hymn of Unity

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

#82

**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.**

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

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

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

Together, We Confess Our Faith

The Apostle's Creed (Traditional)

**I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, And in
Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost,
born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified,
dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again
from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of
God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick
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.**

RESPONDING

Invitation to Present Our Tithes and Offerings

Offertory

Doxology

Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow

#606

Prayer of Dedication

Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things.
Through your goodness

you have blessed us with these gifts:
our selves, our time, and our possessions.
Use us, and what we have gathered,
in feeding the world with your love;
through the one who gave himself for us,
Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

Communion Hymn

Come to the Table of Grace

#507

**1 Come to the table of grace.
Come to the table of grace.
This is God's table; it's not yours or mine.
Come to the table of grace.**

**2 Come to the table of peace...
Come to the table of peace...
This is God's table; it's not yours or mine.
Come to the table of peace.**

**3 Come to the table of love...
Come to the table of love
This is God's table; it's not yours or mine.
Come to the table of love**

Invitation to The Lord's Table

Prayer of Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is truly right and our greatest joy
to give you thanks and praise,
O Lord our God, creator and ruler of the universe.
You formed us in your image
and set us in this world to love and serve you.
When we were captives in slavery,
you delivered us to freedom,
and made covenant to be our sovereign God.
When we were stubborn and stiff-necked,

you spoke to us through prophets
who looked for that day
when justice shall triumph
and peace shall reign over all the earth.
Therefore we praise you,
joining our voices with the celestial choirs
and with all the faithful of every time and place,
who forever sing to the glory of your name:

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might.

Heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Hosanna in the highest.

You are holy, O God of majesty,
and blessed is Jesus Christ, your Son.
You sent him into this world
to bring freedom to the captives of sin,
and to establish justice for the oppressed.
He came among us as one of us,
taking the lot of the poor,
sharing human suffering,
dying an unjust death.

We rejoice that in his dying and rising again,
you set before us the sure promise of new life,
the certain hope of a heavenly home
where we will sit at table with Christ our host.

Remembering your gracious acts in Jesus Christ,
we take from your creation this bread and this wine
and joyfully celebrate his dying and rising,
as we await the day of his coming.

With thanksgiving we offer our very selves to you
to be a living and holy sacrifice,
dedicated to your service.

Great is the mystery of faith:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen,

Christ will come again.

Gracious God,
pour out your Holy Spirit upon us

and upon these your gifts of bread and wine,
that the bread we break
and the cup we bless
may be the communion of the body and blood of Christ.
By your Spirit make us one with Christ,
that we may be one with all who share this feast,
united in ministry in every place.
As this bread is Christ's body for us,
send us out to be the body of Christ in the world.
Strengthen us, O God, in the power of your Spirit
to bring good news to the poor
and loose the chains that bind.
Keep us faithful in your service
until Christ comes in final victory,
and we shall feast with all your saints
in the joy of your eternal realm.
Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all glory and honor are yours, almighty God,
now and forever.

Amen.

Lord's Prayer

**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 sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead
us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory, forever. Amen.**

Breaking the Bread

Communion

*Please partake of the communion elements at home as the participants in
the sanctuary partake.*

Prayer after Communion

SENDING

Opportunities for Service and Fellowship

1 Soon and very soon we are going to see the King.
Soon and very soon we are going to see the King.
Soon and very soon we are going to see the King.
Hallelujah, hallelujah,
we're going to see the King!

2 No more crying there: we are going to see the King.
No more crying there: we are going to see the King.
No more crying there: we are going to see the King.
Hallelujah, hallelujah,
we're going to see the King!

3 No more dying there: we are going to see the King.
No more dying there: we are going to see the King.
No more dying there: we are going to see the King.
Hallelujah, hallelujah,
we're going to see the King!

4 Soon and very soon we are going to see the King.
Soon and very soon we are going to see the King.
Soon and very soon we are going to see the King.
Hallelujah, hallelujah,
we're going to see the King!

Blessing and Charge

May the God of peace make you holy
and the power of the Spirit sustain you
until the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.
Prepare the way of the Lord!

Thanks be to God, Amen

Response

Wait for the Lord

#90

**Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.
Wait for the Lord; be strong; take heart!**

Postlude