

THE ORDER OF WORSHIP

December 6, 2020

Second Sunday of Advent

We Gather in God's Name . . .

PRELUDE

PRAYER OF PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

(for silent prayer during the prelude)

God of all peoples, your servant John came baptizing and calling for repentance. Help us to hear his voice of judgment, that we may also rejoice in his word of promise, and be found pure and blameless in that glorious Day when Christ comes to rule the earth as Prince of Peace.¹ Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND GREETING

THE LIGHTING OF THE SECOND ADVENT CANDLE

*LITANY FOR ADVENTⁱⁱ

One: 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.

All: Come, Lord Jesus.

One: 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.

All: Come, Lord Jesus.

One: 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.

All: Come, Lord Jesus.

One: 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 free the prisoners who live in darkness and the shadow of death.

All: Come, Lord Jesus.

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

All: Come, Lord Jesus.

One: 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.

All: Come, Lord Jesus.

One: O Immanuel, our Sovereign and Lawgiver, desire of the nations and Savior of all: Come and save us, O Lord our God.

All: Come, Lord Jesus.

One: 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.

OPENING HYMN: "Spirit Divine, Attend Our Prayers" #325

Spirit divine, attend our prayers, And make this house Your home;
Descend with all Your gracious powers; O come, great Spirit,
come!

Come as the light; to us reveal Our emptiness and woe; And lead us
in those paths of life Where all the righteous go.

Come as the fire and purge our hearts Like sacrificial flame; Let our
whole soul an offering be To our Redeemer's name.

Come as the dove and spread Your wings, The wings of peaceful
love; And let the church on earth become Blest as the church
above.

Spirit divine, attend our prayers; Make a lost world Your home;
Descend with all Your gracious powers; O come, great Spirit,
come!

*CALL TO CONFESSION

Before Jesus began his formal ministry, John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. Let us confess our sin to God, repent of our unfaithful ways, and request God's forgiveness.

*SILENT PRAYER OF CONFESSION

*CORPORATE PRAYER OF CONFESSION (FROM PSALM 85)

**God of mercy and grace, we find ourselves, also, in a wilderness
— a wilderness of a fallen world and a wilderness of a world in**

pandemic. Restore us again, O God of our salvation, and put away your indignation toward us. Do not be angry with us forever; do not prolong your anger to all generations. Revive us again so that your people may rejoice in you. Show us your steadfast love, O Lord, and grant us your salvation. Forgive our sins and restore us, O God. In the name of the one who knew no sin. Amen.

*ASSURANCE OF PARDON

The Psalmist testifies that the Lord is favorable to his land; he restored the fortunes of Jacob. He forgave the iniquity of his people and pardoned their sin. Repent and know that you are forgiven. Amen.

THE PASSING OF THE PEACE

One: The peace of Christ be with you.

All: And also with you.

. . . to Proclaim God's Word

FIRST READING Isaiah 40:1-11 **p. 667**

EPISTLE READING 2 Peter 3:8-15a **p. 238**

***GOSPEL READING** Mark 1:1-8 **p. 34**

SERMON "Agents of Peace" Rev. Andy Smothers

PASTORAL PRAYER AND 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 debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

*CONFESSION OF FAITH *Heidelberg Catechism* (Question 62-64)

One: Why can't our good works be our righteousness before God, or at least a part of our righteousness?

Many: Because the righteousness which can pass God's judgment must be entirely perfect and must in every way measure up to the divine law. But even our best works in this life are imperfect and stained with sin.

One: How can our good works be said to merit nothing when God promises to reward them in this life and the next?

Many: This reward is not earned; it is a gift of grace.

One: But doesn't this teaching make people indifferent and wicked?

Many: **No. It is impossible for those grafted into Christ through true faith not to produce fruits of gratitude.**

... to Give Thanks to God ...

PRAYER OF DEDICATION (IN UNISON)

Merciful God, you are not slow about your promise, but you are patient with each of us. You desire that none should perish and that all would come to repentance. Your patience is beyond ours, O Lord, and your mercy beyond any known in our world. With thanks for your patience, your mercy, and all your blessings, we offer these gifts for your work in the world. Amen.

... and to Be Sent in God's Name.

CLOSING HYMN: "Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us" #387
Savior, like a shepherd lead us, Much we need Thy tender care; In Thy pleasant pastures feed us, For our use Thy folds prepare: Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus, Thou hast bought us, Thine we are; Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus, Thou hast bought us, Thine we are. Thou has promised to receive us, Poor and sinful though we be; Thou hast mercy to relieve us, Grace to cleanse, and power to free: Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus, Early let us turn to Thee; Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus, Early let us turn to Thee. Early let us seek Thy favor; Early let us do Thy will; Blessed Lord and only Savior, With Thy love our bosoms fill: Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus, Thou hast loved us, love us still; Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus, Thou hast loved us, love us still.

***BENEDICTION**

***POSTLUDE**

ⁱ Book of Common Worship, 174.

ⁱⁱ Book of Common Worship, 166-167.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Tues. Dec. 8	PNC Meeting	1:00 PM
Wed. Dec. 9	Evening Prayer	6:30 PM
Thurs. Dec. 10	PW Meeting	10:30 AM
Sun. Dec. 13	Session Meeting	12:30 PM

Welcome to worship this morning! As we continue to social distance, we will not be offering child care for a time. Feel free to keep your children in worship — even if they're a bit noisy. You're also welcome to take them into the coatroom.

Our thanks go to our lay reader Phyllis Hammermeister, The Burditt Family for lighting the Second Advent Candle, and organist Ernestine Olson.

The **Deacons** will be meeting after worship today for an update from business discussed last week and to continue planning.

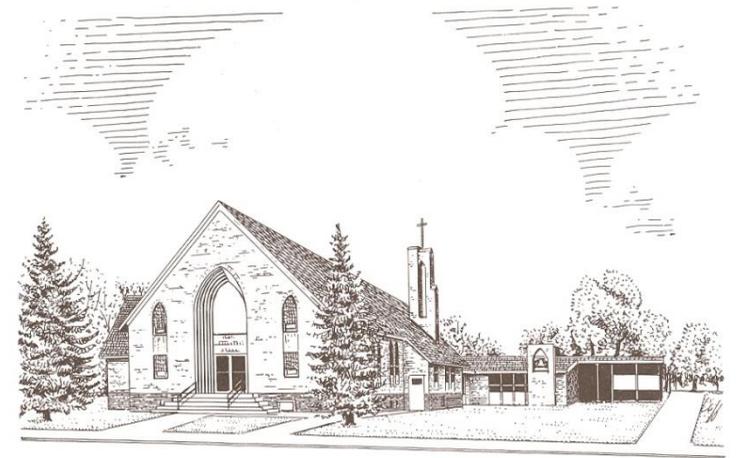
This year's **Christmas Pageant** will be virtual and we would like to include pictures of people from the congregation in front of the Christmas tree in the sanctuary or from your home. We are taking pictures at church again today, Sunday, December 6th. If you are sending a picture in, it must be received by Tuesday, December 8th. Please contact the church office if you have questions.

On December 20th, we will collect the annual **Christmas Joy Offering** for the PC(USA). Proceeds of this offering go to assist current and retired church workers in need and to assist students of color as they pursue their professional goals in presbyterian-related schools and colleges.

Next Sunday, **December 13th**, Ernie and Jean Stordahl will light the Third Advent Candle.

Last week, combined giving was **\$2,276.00**. In order to meet expenses, we need to average **\$2,588.00** per week.

First Presbyterian Church



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