First Presbyterian Church of Bethlehem

Third Sunday of Advent

Traditional Service

December 12, 2021



The Service for the Lord's Day

WE GATHER

PRELUDE "Pastorale", Sonata No. 1 in A — Alexander Guilmant

ADVENT WREATH LIGHTING — Jean and Bob Hunsicker and grandchildren

Leader: We wait for the coming of the Lord, who brings joy to the world!
People: Let every heart prepare him room, and heaven and nature sing!
Leader: Joy is feeling found when you thought you were lost.
People: Joy is making it home when the journey is long.
Leader: So today we light the Candle of Joy, for the welcome that God has for us is one of pure joy.
People: We rejoice that we are close to home. Let us worship God!

ADVENT WREATH LIGHTING RESPONSE — #9

O Come, O Come Emmanuel — Verse 3 — VENI EMMANUEL

3 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.

Refrain:
Rejoice! Rejoice!
Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

OPENING HYMN — #1

Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus — STUTTGART

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

WE CONFESS

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Gracious and Loving God, we know that the church is yours, the house of the Lord, and your house has room for everyone. Yet, too often, instead of setting the table for our neighbors, we judge others by our own standards. Instead of sharing our second coat, we hide it away, holding on to fear instead of letting go with love. Forgive us, Lord, and remind us that your home is a home for all, that truth requires hard work, that truth requires uncomfortable justice. Help us to be bold enough to see it and brave enough to live it.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

WE LISTEN

CHILDREN'S SERMON

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE Luke 3:7-18 Bob Hunsicker

Leader: The word of the Lord

People: Thanks be to God

SERMON The Rev. J.C. Austin

"Close to Home: A Full House"

WE RESPOND

HYMN #11

O Lord, How Shall I Meet You? VALET WILL ICH DIR GEBEN

1 O Lord, how shall I meet You,
How welcome you aright?
Your people long to greet You,
My Hope, my heart's Delight!
O kindle, Lord most holy,
A lamp within my breast,
To do in spirit lowly
All that may please You best.

2 Love caused Your incarnation,
Love brought You down to me;
Your thirst for my salvation
Procured my liberty.
O love beyond all telling,
That led you to embrace
In love all loves excelling
Our lost and fallen race.

3 A glorious crown You give me,
A treasure safe on high,
That will not fail nor leave me
As earthly riches fly.
My heart shall bloom forever
For You with praises new,
And from Your Name shall never
Withhold the honor due.

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (the Apostles' Creed)

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 Ghost; the holy catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE 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.

CALL FOR OFFERING

Call to Give

Offertory Jesus Christ, the Apple Tree — Elizabeth Poston

Chancel Choir

*Response - #592 — OLD HUNDREDTH

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him, above ye heav'nly host;
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost

*Prayer of Dedication

CLOSING HYMN #20

Watchman, Tell Us of the Night ABERYSTWYTH

1 Watchman, tell us of the night,
What its signs of promise are.
Traveler, o'er yon mountain's height,
See that glory-beaming star.
Watchman, does its beauteous ray
Aught of joy or hope foretell?
Traveler, yes; it brings the day,
Promised day of Israel.

2 Watchman, tell us of the night;
Higher yet that star ascends.
Traveler, blessedness and light,
Peace and truth its course portends.
Watchman, will its beams alone
Gild the spot that gave them birth?
Traveler, ages are its own;
See, it bursts o'er all the earth.

3 Watchman, tell us of the night,
For the morning seems to dawn.
Traveler, darkness takes its flight,
Doubt and terror are withdrawn.
Watchman, let thy wanderings cease;
Hasten to your quiet home.
Traveler, lo! the Prince of Peace,
Lo! the Son of God is come!

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE Echo Noel (Excerpt) Claude Daquin

Flowers in the Chancel are in memory of
Husband, Hugh Spicer from Fran Spicer and
Jacob and Marigold Burkholder and Harold and Elma Shunk,
parents of Ginny and Fred Shunk

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Offertory

Jesus Christ, the Apple Tree **Elizabeth Poston**

Chancel Choir

The tree of life my soul hath seen,
Laden with fruit and always green:
The trees of nature fruitless be
Compared with Christ the apple tree.

His beauty doth all things excel:
By faith I know, but ne'er can tell
The glory which I now can see
In Jesus Christ the apple tree.
For happiness I long have sought,
And pleasure dearly I have bought:
I missed of all; but now I see
'Tis found in Christ the apple tree.

I'm weary with my former toil,
Here I will sit and rest awhile:
Under the shadow I will be,
Of Jesus Christ the apple tree.

This fruit doth make my soul to thrive,
It keeps my dying faith alive;
Which makes my soul in haste to be
With Jesus Christ the apple tree.