

Eastminster Presbyterian Church

SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY

Second Sunday of Advent

December 6, 2020-11:00 a.m.

OPENING PRAYER

God of hope be with us in our Advent journey to the stable and beyond; be with us in our meeting and in our travelling together; be with us in our worship and our praying together; be with us in our Advent journey to the stable and beyond; be our God of hope. Amen

VOLUNTARY

Ave Maria

Franz Peter Schubert

Carlos Vargas, Cello and Melody Davis, Piano

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;

those who lived in a land of deep darkness on them light has shined.

The light grows gradually brighter as we move through Advent together.

The candle of Hope already burns bright. Today, we light the candle of Peace.

The coming Christ desires us all to thrive, patiently wanting us to turn from the ways of sin and death. As we wait for the coming of the day of God, we want to be ready.

Seeking a straight path, we light this candle to guide our steps. Together, we prepare the way and strive to lead lives of holiness, goodness, and peace.

OPENING HYMN 82 *O Come, O Come Immanuel* (verses 1-4, 7)

CALL TO CONFESSION

We need God to speak to us because we have, each in our own way, forgotten God's unending forgiveness for us that we might forgive others. Through God's son, Jesus, we can be found, we can be saved, we can be forgiven.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION AND GOD'S ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

Come, Lord Jesus, forgive us and restore us. Come, Lord Jesus, guide us and deliver us. Come, Lord Jesus, teach us and renew us. We come before the Lord with grateful hearts. At the beginning, at the end, and in every time between, the good news speaks to us of God's tender mercy and love for us. God comes, not to punish, but to gift us with peace, not to judge, but to save us. Thanks be to God. Amen.

RESPONSE 137 *He Came Down* (verse 3-peace)

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

God, as we come into your Word, we pray that you will open our hearts to what we need to hear. Wherever we are in our journey with you, whatever we're carrying in our hearts, there is something, Lord, that we believe that you can speak to us and so we pray that you do that. For we ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT READING (*Pew Bible*, page 667)

Isaiah 40: 1-11

Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. ²Speak 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. ³A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. ⁴Every 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. ⁵Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.” ⁶A voice says, “Cry out!” And I said, “What shall I cry?” All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field. ⁷The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the LORD blows upon it; surely the people are grass. ⁸The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand forever. ⁹Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, do not fear; say to the cities of Judah, “Here is your God!” ¹⁰See, the Lord GOD comes with might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. ¹¹He 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.

ANTHEM

Prepare Ye!

Marc Robinson

Sean Turner, Soloist and Sanctuary Choir

EPISTLE READING

2 Peter 3:11–13 ¹¹ Since

all these things are to be dissolved in this way, what sort of persons ought you to be in leading lives of holiness and godliness, ¹² waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set ablaze and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire? ¹³ But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home.

NEW TESTAMENT READING (*Pew Bible, page 34*)

Mark 1: 1-8

The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. ²As it is written in the prophet Isaiah, “See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way; ³the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,’” ⁴John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵And 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. ⁶Now John was clothed with camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷He 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. ⁸I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

HYMN 92 *While We Are Waiting, Come*

SERMON

Pointing the Other Direction

Sherry Holloman

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We believe in God, who is love, whose love is manifest in all creation, in our lives, and in all people. We follow Christ, who embodied God's love. In his life and ministry, his death and resurrection, and his granting to us of his Spirit, he filled us with that love as well. We live by the Spirit, the presence of God's love in us. In that love we participate in the Church, Body of Christ, in loving God by loving our neighbors through our prayers, our presence, our gifts and our service. Love is our faith, and it is a gift from God. We thank God, and ask God's blessings, that we may love in the name of Christ and the power of the Spirit, to God's glory. Amen.

OFFERTORY SENTENCE

For all the good things our God has given, is giving and will give us, may we offer our gratitude through the gifts of our resources and our lives.

PRESENTATION OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

Come, Lord Jesus
Sanctuary Choir, Bass and Drums

Carlton Young

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Holy God, we offer these gifts, this time of worship, and the service of our lives in the hope that they will be pleasing to you. Amen.

RESPONSE

Old Hundred Tune

O Glorious God to you we bring all that we are as offering.
Spirit of peace, among us dwell, come, Jesus, our Emmanuel. Amen

THE SERVICE OF HOLY COMMUNION

THE INVITATION

Jesus' love knows no bounds. We are invited, as guests, to come just as we are to this feast...forgiven sinners, ready to be strengthened by this bread and this cup. We come remembering the night Jesus took a loaf of bread, gave thanks to God, broke it and said, "This is my body given for you. Do this in remembrance of me. We come remembering the night Jesus took the cup, saying, "This is my blood shed for you, a sign of a new covenant. Do this in remembrance of me. For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

THE 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.

This is the name by which we know you: Lord, Creator of all. We were shaped in your image, to see that justice and righteousness were lived out. But we wandered down the wrong paths. Night and day, you longed for our return, sending teachers named prophets to fulfill your promises, and we let their words pass away in our hearing. So, you sent your Son, Jesus to strengthen our hearts in holiness. So, with all the saints, those in heaven and those around us, we lift our praise of joy to you:

Holy, holy, holy, Lord, God of power and might. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

This is the name by which we know you: Lord, our Redeemer. In the days of our bitterness, Jesus came, so we might abound in your love. In the long nights of our loneliness, he came, so we might live in the community of the saints. At that time, when our lips were filled with fears, worries, and doubts, he came to teach us the vocabulary of grace. At that time, when we weakly submitted to sin, he came to strengthen us with life so we might stand redeemed and whole before you. As we begin our journey to Bethlehem, as we prepare to celebrate his birth, we proclaim that mystery called faith:

Christ is dead; Christ is risen! Christ will come again!

This is the name by which we know you: Lord, our Sustainer, who pours out your Spirit upon the gifts of the Table: that Bread, broken and crumbled, which will strengthen us with wholeness; that Cup, brimming with hope, which will teach us your ways. And when heaven and earth pass away, at that time we will gather with all

the saints of every age and place, standing before you through all eternity, forever returning the joy you have given us.

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

Loving God, we await the birth of your Holy Child with excitement in our hearts. We are called again and again to trust that the Christ child is the source of all joy and is our eternal hope. So, like our Lord, fill us this day, with compassion for one another as we lift before you, in the silence of our hearts, our prayers...**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.**

BREAKING OF THE BREAD AND POURING OF THE CUP

RECEPTION OF THE SACRAMENT

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

God of new beginnings, you draw near to us in word and sacrament to strengthen and renew us; kindle in us the fire of your Spirit, and may your light so shine through us that all may welcome your Son at his coming. We ask this in the name of Jesus Emmanuel. Amen.

DISMISSAL AND BENEDICTION

Be people of peace.

Let peace live in your heart and share the peace of Christ with all you meet.

Share peace by acting out of compassion and not fear.

Share peace by listening to all sides of the story.

Share peace by praying for our world.

In this Advent season, we need to see, feel, and share peace.

As you go out into the wonder of God's creations, share peace and hope with those you meet. Amen.

CLOSING HYMN 105 *People Look East*