

WELCOME ALL
TO
SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE



DECEMBER 4, 2022
THE SEASON OF ADVENT

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH | 2408 N. NAVARRO ST. | VICTORIA, TEXAS 77901

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ORDER OF WORSHIP

First Presbyterian Church
December 4, 2022, 10:30 am.
Second Sunday of Advent

Prelude Repent Ye

- John Prindle Scott, 1917

Welcome and Announcements

*Passing of the Peace

One: The peace of Christ be with you.

All: **And also with you!**

Call to Worship

One: Christ, the One who was, and is, and is to come,
welcomes you to this place.

All: **As one body, with one voice,
we honor and glorify the giver of wisdom,
counsel, knowledge, and joy. Amen.**

Prayer of the Day (*unison*)

**O Root of Jesse, O Peace, stir up your power within us,
that in this time we may await with abundant expectation
the fulfillment of your eternal presence in creation,
for you live and reign among us,
Maker, Savior, and Giver of Life,
one God, now and forever. Amen.**

Lighting of the Advent Wreath -

The Bethlehem Candle or the Love Candle

Erica and her children, Karley, Kinley, & Frank

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. *Isaiah 11:6*

*Opening Hymn: "Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus"

No. 2

***Invitation to Confession**

Let us lay before God and one another
the distances between us,
the impatience, idolatries, and lack of compassion
that form our confessions this day.
For if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves.
Yet in mercy, God will forgive us and renew us.

***Prayer of Confession** (*unison*)

**Gracious and welcoming God,
have mercy on your people.
We confess that we do not believe in your incarnation.
We do not heed your word each day in all that we say and do.
We do not see our neighbors, families, and friends
as beloved children whom you have made.
In your mercy, forgive us,
for we repent of our ways
and look to your power
to heal us and raise us up,**

***Kyrie Eleison** (*unison*)

**Lord, have mercy upon us.
Christ, have mercy upon us.
Lord, have mercy upon us.**

***Assurance of Pardon**

The reign of God has come near;
the repentant will be judged with righteousness.
Be filled with hope,
believing in the power of the risen Christ
to bring you to new life.
Believe in God, Friends!
Believe the good news: in Jesus Christ we are forgiven!

***Gloria Patri** (*unison*)

Prayer for Illumination

Your word, Holy God, was written for our instruction.
By your Holy Spirit open our ears
and fill us with the mysteries of your ancient love;
through Jesus Christ we pray. **Amen.**

First Scripture Reading: Isaiah 11:1-10

A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse,
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.
The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him,
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of counsel and might,
the spirit of knowledge and the fear of
the LORD.
His delight shall be in the fear of the LORD.
He shall not judge by what his eyes see
or decide by what his ears hear,
but with righteousness he shall judge for the poor
and decide with equity for the oppressed of the
earth;
he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,
and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the
wicked.

P.P. 640-641 in the Old Testament

Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist
and faithfulness the belt around his loins.
The wolf shall live with the lamb;
the leopard shall lie down with the kid;
the calf and the lion will feed together,
and a little child shall lead them.
The cow and the bear shall graze;
their young shall lie down together;
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.
The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp,
and the weaned child shall put its hand on the
adder's den.
They will not hurt or destroy
on all my holy mountain,
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of
the LORD
as the waters cover the sea.

Anthem: Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

1599 German Church Song

Second Scripture Reading: Matthew 3:1-12

P.P. 2-3 in the New Testament

In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said, "The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord; make his paths straight.'"

Now John wore clothing of camel's hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region around the Jordan were going out to him, and they were baptized by him in the River Jordan, confessing their sins.

But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for his baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Therefore, bear fruit worthy of repentance, and do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor,' for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.

"I baptize you with water for repentance, but the one who is coming after me is more powerful than I, and I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

Sermon: The Sermon in the Wilderness

Rev. Jim DeMent

Matthew 3:1: In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming,
“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.”

Silence and stillness

***Congregational Hymn:** “Wild and Lone the Prophet’s Voice”

No. 409

Presentations of Tithe and Offerings

Offertory: On Jordan’s Bank the Baptist’s Cry

1690 Musical Handbook

***Doxology** (*unison*)

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, all heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

***Prayer of Thanksgiving** (*unison*)

**We give you thanks, Holy One, for all good things:
for this universe and for Earth itself,
for creatures and plants, for water and food, for light and darkness;
for Jesus, who enlarged our vision,
setting himself before us as the bread and wine of abundant life;
and for the Holy Spirit, who comes to us in baptism
and moves in our midst with the power to lead us to you.
Turn our offerings to your good will,
and turn us always to you in gratitude. Amen.**

***Affirmation of Faith** (*unison*)

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 at 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.**

Prayers of the People

The Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper

INVITATION TO THE LORD’S TABLE

GREAT THANKSGIVING

One: The Lord be with you.

All: **And also with you.**

One: Lift up your hearts.

All: **We lift them to the Lord.**

One: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All: **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is truly right and just to give you thanks
in every time and in every place, almighty God.

We give you thanks for the gift of creation
and especially for the gift of our life.

We are grateful that you have made us in your image
and that you pardon us when we act
as though you have no authority over our lives.

We are grateful that you sustain us in your great love.

And so, with all your people,
with angels, archangels,
and with all the company of heaven
we praise and magnify your glorious name,
joining our voices in the eternal hymn:

SANCTUS (UNISON):

**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.**

You are holy, and blessed is your Son, Jesus Christ,
who was born of Mary and shared the joys and sorrows
of the life that we know.

You anointed Jesus Christ with your Spirit
to preach good news to the poor,
to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives,
to give sight to the blind, and to liberate the oppressed,
proclaiming the year of the Lord’s favor.

In Christ’s baptism, suffering, death, and resurrection
you gave birth to your Church,
and made a new covenant with us by water and the Spirit.

Remembering the grace of your Son 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,
proclaiming the mystery of faith:

GREAT IS THE MYSTERY OF FAITH: *(unison)*

**Christ has died,
Christ is risen,
Christ will come again.**

Gracious God, pour out your Holy Spirit upon your people
and upon these your gifts of bread and wine,
so that the bread we share and the cup we bless
will be for us the body and blood of Christ.

By your Spirit make us one with Christ,
and 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.

Make us one with Christ,
one with our neighbors,
and one in service to all the world.

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.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

BREAKING OF THE BREAD

COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION *(unison)*

One: Eternal God,
we give you thanks for this holy mystery
in which you have given yourself to us.

All: **Grant that we may go into the world
in the strength of your Spirit
to give ourselves for others
in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen**

***Closing Hymn:** "O Little Town of Bethlehem"

No. 44

Charge

Benediction

***Congregational Response** *(unison)*

God be with you until we meet again;
By His counsels guide, uphold you,
With his sheep securely fold you;
God be with you 'till we meet again

-Jeremiah E. Rankin, 1880/William G Tomer, 1880

'Till we meet, 'till we meet
'Till we meet at Jesus' feet;
'Till we meet, till we meet
God be with you 'till we meet again.

Postlude: "The Desert Shall Rejoice"

- J. F Patterson, 1988



We have reproduced below the lyrics of the hymns selected for this morning's worship service. All the hymns below are either in the public domain or have been reproduced, under license, from *The Presbyterian Hymnal* (Westminster/John Knox Press, Louisville: 1990) or from Christian Copywrite Licensing International (*ccli.com*). If you are worshipping with us from home, we encourage you to sing along. Follow the verses in this order:

Verse 1

Verse 2

Verse 3

Verse 4

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

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.

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.

Wild and Lone the Prophet's Voice

Wild and lone the prophet's voice
Echoes through the desert still,
Calling us to make a choice,
Bidding us to do God's will:
"Turn from sin and be baptized;
Cleanse your heart and mind and soul.
Quitting all the sins you prized,
Yield your life to God's control.

"Bear the fruit repentance sows:
Lives of justice, truth, and love.
Trust no other claim than those;
Set your heart on things above.
Soon the Lord will come in power,
Burning clean the threshing floor:
Then will flames the chaff devour;
Wheat alone shall fill God's store."

With such preaching, stark and bold
John proclaimed salvation near,
And his timeless warnings hold
Words of hope to all who hear.
So we dare to journey on,
Led by faith through ways untrod,
Till we come at last like John
To behold the Lamb of God.

O Little Town of Bethlehem

O little town of Bethlehem,
How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
The everlasting light;
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary;
And gathered all above,
While mortals sleep, the angels keep
Their watch of wondering love.
O morning stars, together
Proclaim the holy birth!
And praises sing to God the King,
And peace to all the earth.

How silently, how silently,
The wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts
The blessings of his heaven.
No ear may hear His coming,
But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive him, still
The dear Christ enters in.

O holy Child of Bethlehem,
Descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin and enter in,
Be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels
The great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us,
Our Lord Emmanuel!



The Lighting of the Advent Candles



The second candle on the Advent Wreath is known in various traditions as the “Bethlehem Candle” or the “Love Candle.” Whatever designation is used for each of the candles lit in sequence during the four Sundays of Advent, the participation of the congregation together with specific members in the lighting of the candles is intended to commemorate the unfolding story of the Advent Season—the story of our redemption through God’s grace made manifest in his only begotten Son, Our Lord and Savior.

Come Lord Jesus, come!

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION CALLED FOR DECEMBER 11, 2022

The Session has called a Special Meeting of the Congregation to be held at the conclusion of the worship service on Sunday, December 11, 2022. During this brief meeting, the Chair of the Congregation Nomination Committee, Dawn Neel, will bring a follow-up report on a recommendation of the CNC, specifically that Camille Miller be elected to serve on the Session for a three-year term (the Class of 2025) commencing January 1, 2023. The election of a third Elder to serve on the Session in the Class of 2025 will complete the election of the number of Elders needed to fill that Class, given that two members of the Class of 2025 were elected at our Congregational Meeting held on November 27, 2022.

The Moderator will invite additional nominations from the floor, if there be any. Before submitting someone to be considered for election to the Session, however, please confirm with that individual the he or she would be willing to service if elected.

At the end of such discussion as the Congregation may desire, a vote will be taken to elect the third member of the Session Class of 2025. May God grant us and our new leaders strength and wisdom as First Presbyterian Church continues *Our Journey Forward*, and as we enter a new year of hope, promise, and continued service to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Caregiving Concerns and Prayer Requests

Gloria Aouelle	Bette Austin	Kay Edwards	Nathan Galvan (Son of Leila Galvan)
Kathleen McCameron	Linda Patterson	Maria Pezeski (Mother of Leila Galvan)	Mikey Ruddock
Carol Wisdom (Daughter of Lea Lenz)			

For caregiving concerns—please contact:
Lynn McAuley (979.248.6238); or Gayla Whitaker (361. 935.0950)

FPC Opportunities for Worship & Service

Tuesday December 6
11:30 AM Presbyterian Women Coordinating Meeting
Wednesday December 7
4:00 PM Worship Committee Meeting
Thursday December 8
9:30 AM Presbyterian Women Adele Circle
4:00 PM Finance Committee
6:30 PM PDS Christmas Program
Friday December 9
10:00 AM One Great Hour of Caring
Sunday, December 11
9:30 AM "Reflections on the Season of Advent"
Nellie Hudson Adult Sunday School Class
10:30 AM Worship Service
Congregational Meeting
Lighting of the Third Advent Candle

FPC Victoria Servant Leadership

Session Members

Jim DeMent, Moderator
Francis Byrne, Mission & Outreach
John Horadam, Buildings & Grounds
Lynn McAuley, Asst. Clerk, Caregiving & Fellowship
Dawn Neel, Finance, Assistant Treasurer, Worship
Patrick Patterson, Buildings and Grounds
Becky Richter, Christian Education, Personnel
Suzanne Salinas, Mission & Outreach, Worship
Gayla Whitaker, Caregiving & Fellowship
Bonnie Wilkinson, Clerk of Session, Personnel

Other

Lynn McAuley, Presbyterian Women
Melissa Samudio, Presbyterian Day School
Jim Stokes, Treasurer
Henry Hauschild, Historian

Pastor's Notes

The painting on our Bulletin cover, “The Preaching of St. John the Baptist,” is on oil-on-canvas by Giovanni Batista Gualli (1639-1709). The original is in the Louvre Museum.

Rendered in the High Baroque style in which the artist was skilled, the painting fails to capture the harshness and vividness of Matthew’s description of where and how John preached. The painting, replete with verdant mountains and lush forests, is not at all a faithful depiction of the “wilderness of Judea” (Matt 3:1), an arid landscape with little to no vegetation. In the painting, John is well kempt and gently preaching to a well-dressed crowd, when in fact John did not mince words and those who flocked to him were not members of Jerusalem’s upper class.

Artists may take such liberties, but we Christian must not whitewash the intensity of John’s preaching. John is preaching consequences for sinful behavior and urging us to repent (through baptism) in order to be spared those consequences. The judgment for our behavior rests with God alone, but John reminds us that God does care how we behave. Christ shows us the way to salvation, not through our acts, but in a loving response to follow in his way in gratitude for the great gift of salvation which God has promised us through his Son. We must leave judgment to God, but we must also accept responsibility for our behavior, and when that behavior is sinful, we must repent and seek Christ’s mercy which, when sought, is freely given.

Clergy, Music, and Administration

Rev. Jim DeMent, Interim Pastor
Robert Wyatt, Organist/Choirmaster
Erica Colding, Office Administrator

Office Hours

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