

The First Presbyterian Church

300 South Main Street

Greensburg, Pennsylvania

The First Sunday of Advent – December 1, 2024 – 10 a.m.

Simulcast Service

THE GATHERING

GATHERING MUSIC

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

Nun Komm, der Heiden Heiland

Andreas Nikolaus Vetter

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE (*responsive*)

Patrick, Erin, Gillian, Claire & Asher Hresko

We light this candle as a sign of the coming light of Christ.

Advent means coming.

We are preparing ourselves for the days

**when 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.**

✠HYMN 83

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

STUTT GART

✠PRAYER OF CONFESSION (*unison*)

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. Amen.

✠ASSURANCE OF PARDON AND THE PEACE

The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

And also with you.

✠CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE (Hymn 121 – Stanza 4) O Little Town of Bethlehem

ST. LOUIS

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 WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

FIRST READING

1 Thessalonians 3:9-13

CHILDREN'S SERMON

Children are invited to the chancel steps for the children's sermon and then be dismissed to Sunday School.

ANTHEM

Keep Your Lamps!

Andre Thomas

Keep your lamps trimmed and burning, the time is drawing nigh. Children don't get weary 'til your work is done. Christian journey soon be over, the time is drawing nigh.

SECOND READING

Luke 21:25-36

SERMON

Rev. Dr. Martin R. Ankrum

THE RESPONSE

✠**HYMN 103**

Come Now, O Prince of Peace

O-So-So

✠**AFFIRMATION OF FAITH: THE APOSTLES' CREED** (*unison*)

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.

OUR JOYFUL RESPONSE - TITHES & OFFERINGS

OFFERTORY

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

arr. Mark Hayes

✠**RESPONSE**

Doxology (sung to REGENT SQUARE)

text Brian Wren

Praise the Lover of Creation, Praise the Spirit, Friend of Friends, Praise the true beloved, our Savior, Praise the God who makes and mends, strong, surrendered, many-splendored, Three whose Oneness never ends.

✠**PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

The Invitation

The Words of Institution

The Prayer of Blessing

The Distribution of the Elements

The Prayer following Communion (*unison*)

God of grace, you renew us at your table with the bread of life. May this food strengthen us in love and help us to serve you in each other. We ask this in the name of Jesus the Lord. Amen.

✠**HYMN 357**

The Days Are Surely Coming

LLANGLOFFAN

✠**BENEDICTION**

✂POSTLUDE

Savior of the Nations, Come

Paul Manz

✂ *Those who are able to stand comfortably may do so*

WORSHIP LEADERSHIP THIS MORNING:

Rev. Dr. Martin R. Ankrum, Pastor/Head of Staff; Dr. Jeffrey Jones, Minister of Music / Organist; Ms. Robin Jennings, Lector; Chancel Choir; Mrs. Karen Cole, Percussion; Mr. Michael Pascarella, Video Technician.

Music for this morning's service has been made possible, in part, by Edgar and Joanne Highberger and by gifts to the Dr. Edgar S. Highberger Music Fund.

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FIRST NEWS: The News of FPC

PRAYER LIST: Roger Austin, Bob Bark, Tonna Bogac, Lisa Bulger, Gloria Christofano, Roy Clemens, Wayne Clemens, Sandy Cole, Bob Colflesh, Dan & Ginger Collier, Beverly & William Courtney, Edna Mary Cox, Mark Cuneo, Bob Dittman, Karen Dubosky, Michael Felice, Duffy Greba, Edgar and Joanne Highberger, Gretchen Highberger, Lucas James, Lee Jamison, Brett Johnson, Weston Johnson, Heather Jones, Don Kemerer, Jim L., Marge Machesney, George Maser, Joanne McIlhattan, Melanie Murphy, Gary Nicewonger, John Noel, Dan P., Nancy Pallitta, Victoria Piekut, Gerry Pricer, Judy Rugh, Marnie Abraham Russell, Sharyn Sekora, Nancy Skrot, Mary Smith, Jerry Sohick, Nancy Stahl, Dorothy Steele, Eileen Stefl, Crystal Stone, Brooke Stutzman, Sonny & Jo Thomas, Lynda Turin, Linda & Tom Turin, Matt Washil, Doug Wessling, Don Whipkey.

VISITING IN WORSHIP TODAY? If you are visiting in worship today or have been for a while, please sign the Visitor Card found in the pew racks and place in the offering plate or hand to an usher. We would love to be able to contact you and answer any questions you may have about FPC. Please take a moment to greet Dr. Ankrum at the end of the service; he would love to get to know you and welcome you to our faith community.

NURSERY HOURS! –9 a.m. – 11 a.m. – Drop off care is available in the FPC nursery each Sunday morning for children Birth through Pre/K. Gali Clark is excited to welcome FPC's youngest members and friends for a time of play, music, fun, or a nap! For safety reasons, caregivers are asked to provide their own drinks and snacks for their child. Registration forms can be found in the nursery. See you there! ***Due to plumbing problems, the nursery will not be open Sunday, December 1.***

CHILDREN'S RESOURCE TOTES - First Presbyterian Church also provides a comfort room and age-appropriate worship resource totes for families with young children to use during the service. They are in the narthex, or by asking an usher for assistance. *Children's bulletins are available at Main Street and 3rd Street entrances.*

HAVE YOU CONSIDERED SPONSORING A FELLOWSHIP HOUR? Provide 6 dozen baked goods **or** \$35 donation to cover the cost. Use the sign-up sheet on the Dining Room bulletin board. Hours are held on the first and third Sundays of every month in the Dining Room. Coffee is provided by the Millers of 19 Coffee. ***Cheesecake and strawberries are provided by Sandy Beauregard in memory of her son, Dr. Wesley Beauregard.***

FINANCIAL REPORT:

Year to Date Expenses	\$ 651,520
Year to Date Receipts	\$ 570,741*
Year to Date Deficit	(\$ 80,779)

***This represents \$29,372 for "A Gift for the King"**

(These figures are from last week. Due to Thanksgiving office closures, we were unable to update. Look for revised figures next Sunday.)

DO YOU WISH TO GIVE ONLINE?

To set up your own recurring donations, either visit the church website or scan the QR code with your smart phone, or contact the church office for help. *Starting August 31, 2024, the church will accrue a monthly fee for those who give by credit or debit card. The church currently also incurs a 2.84% fee plus 45 cents on every credit or debit card donation. These fees are not incurred for the church for donations routed through Vanco from a checking account.* Your support of Christ's church in this place is greatly appreciated!

A Gift for the King November 10 – December 31

During this season, the Session of our church is asking that you prayerfully consider giving an additional gift to help our church meet the budget. Currently, we are projecting a shortfall for 2024 that tops \$100,000. The results of such a shortfall can be avoided if we all commit together to follow the example of the Magi (the wise men) and offer an additional, over-and-above the pledge giving during the final weeks of this calendar year.

However, we have great news of a challenge matching pledge to this effort! A member of our congregation has pledged to match, dollar for dollar, (up to \$50,000) the amount we raise through this special effort! This is amazing generosity that certainly is in keeping with fulfilling God's call upon our lives to share our resources for the sake of Christ's church in the world.

Won't you consider giving an extra amount during this season by marking your check 'Gift for the King' or donating through the electronic giving app? We ask you to prayerfully consider it.

STOCKING STUFFER COLLECTION - The Sunday School children are collecting items for a Blessing Bag Mission Project. Socks and personal hygiene items are being collected for distribution to folks at the Union Mission and Welcome Home Shelter. Please consider purchasing one of these items on your next shopping trip. Drop off all items at the church on or before December 15. Collection boxes can be found in the assembly room and the 1st Floor CE building art room, where the children meet for class. **Items are collected for both men and women:** Socks – everyday-wearing type is preferred; Shampoo, Dental Floss, Tissues, Bar Soap, Deodorant, Lip Balm, Toothbrush, Feminine Products, Nail Care, Toothpaste, Comb/Brush, Lotion. **Thank you for assisting the children as they learn how the "fishes and loaves", or in this case, "socks and soap" multiply when love abounds.**

REDSTONE HIGHLANDS CAROLING – Help us spread the joy of Christmas by joining the residents at Redstone Highlands in the Miller Chapel at Redstone for readings and caroling on Sunday, December 15 at 2:30 p.m.

THE SCOTSDALE CONCERT BAND will present their annual Christmas Concert in the church sanctuary on **Friday, December 6 at 7:00 p.m.** A wonderful selection of Christmas and Holiday music, under the direction of Dr. Roderick Todd Booker and Assistant Directors Fred Collins and Lee Matchett. A free-will offering will be collected. For more information call 412-670-3233 or 724-875-2421.

THE WESTMORELAND CHORAL SOCIETY presents the second of its Kaleidoscope of Song concerts -- "Music Through a Frosted Windowpane." This year's Christmas holiday concert will be held at **6 p.m., Sunday, December 8** in our beautiful sanctuary amid decorations of the season. Tickets are available at the door: Adults \$15, Seniors \$10 and Students \$5.



Sunday Morning Worship in Advent:

December 1 - 'Near' - Communion Service

December 8 - 'In Time & Space'

December 15 - 'Good News'

December 22 - 'The Magnificat'

Rev. Dr. Martin R. Ankrum, preaching

Wednesdays in Advent – 7:00 p.m. – The Chapel and on Facebook

Three Wednesday evenings in Advent will feature our mid-week service in celebration of the season. Advent is a time of both expectant anticipation and faithful meditation upon the great news of God's coming to us in Jesus Christ. The services on Wednesday evenings will be comprised of scripture, prayer, a brief homily and music that accentuates the season and God's call to us during this time. Join us Wednesdays December 4, 11 and 18 at 7 p.m. in our beautiful chapel in the CE Wing of the church building or on Facebook simulcast.

2024 Advent Devotional: 'Amazingly Unexpected'

Each Advent season, Dr. Ankrum produces a daily devotional to assist the congregation in our observation of this holy time. This year, Dr. Ankrum's devotions will be based upon a collection of sermons written by Eugene Peterson, Presbyterian pastor and Bible translator. The collection is entitled: 'Lights a Lovely Mile.'

Christmas Poinsettias for the Sanctuary!

Prepaid Orders Due: Sunday, December 15, 2024

If you wish to place one or more plants in the Sanctuary for Christmas week services, including the Christmas Eve Festival of Lessons & Carols, please return this form to the church office with \$11.00 for each plant desired. You may, if you wish, place your poinsettias "In Memory Of" and/or "In Honor Of" loved ones. Deadline for orders is **Sunday, December 15, 2024. Poinsettias may be picked up following the last service on Christmas Eve. Otherwise, the poinsettias will be distributed to those partaking in the Christmas Day Dinner.**

POINSETTIA ORDER FORM

Name _____

Enclosed is \$ _____ for _____ poinsettias.

"In Memory of" _____

"In Honor of" _____

83 Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

1 Come, thou long - ex - pect - ed Je - sus, born to set thy peo - ple free;
2 Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion, hope of all the earth thou art;
3 Born thy peo - ple to de - liv - er, born a child and yet a king,
4 By thine own e - ter - nal Spir - it rule in all our hearts a - lone;

from our fears and sins re - lease us; let us find our rest in thee.
dear de - sire of ev - ery na - tion, joy of ev - ery long - ing heart.
born to reign in us for - ev - er, now thy gra - cious king - dom bring.
by thine all - suf - fi - cient mer - it raise us to thy glo - rious throne.

With its opening "Come," this hymn sounds the note of entreaty and invitation that characterizes the Advent season (from the Latin *adventus* = "coming"). Its blending of memory and hope helps us to give voice to our present faith as we stand between the past and the future.

TEXT: Charles Wesley, 1744
MUSIC: Witt's *Psalmodia Sacra*, 1715, alt.

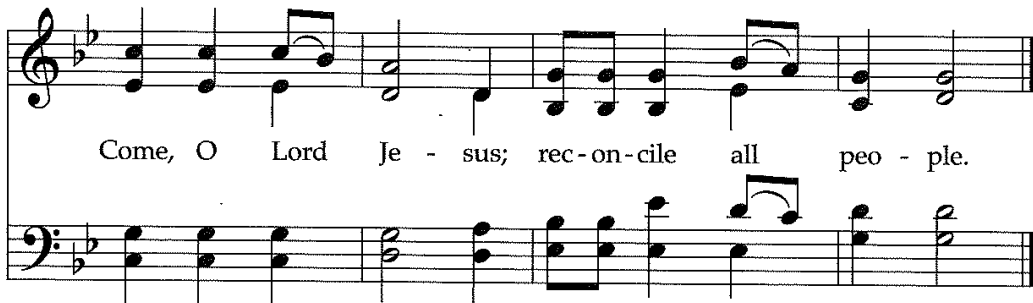
STUTT GART
8.7.8.7
(alternate tune: HYFRYDOL, 82)

103 Come Now, O Prince of Peace

오소서



1 Come now, O Prince of Peace; make us one bod - y.
2 Come now, O God of love; make us one bod - y.
3 Come now and set us free, O God, our Sav - ior.
4 Come, hope of u - ni - ty; make us one bod - y.



Come, O Lord Je - sus; rec-on-cile all peo - ple.

KOREAN

- 1 오소서 오소서 평화의 임금
우리가 한몸 이루게 하소서
- 2 오소서 오소서 사랑의 임금
우리가 한몸 이루게 하소서
- 3 오소서 오소서 자유의 임금
우리가 한몸 이루게 하소서
- 4 오소서 오소서 통일의 임금
우리가 한몸 이루게 하소서

Originally created for a 1988 world conference for the peace and reunification of the Korean peninsula, these four stanzas centering on peace, love, freedom, and unity demonstrate how texts for particular situations can become hymns that speak deeply to shared human longings.

The Days Are Surely Coming 357

1 The days are sure - ly com - ing, says God to all the earth,
 2 The days are sure - ly com - ing, says Christ, the prom - ised one,
 3 The days are sure - ly com - ing when we will know at last

when you will see my prom - ise: sal - va - tion come to birth.
 when you will read my warn - ing in moon and stars and sun.
 the full - ness of God's pres - ence, God's prom - ise, come to pass.

My righ - teous - ness and jus - tice will spread through - out the land
 Though earth and heav - en trem - ble, stand up and do not fear,
 Then righ - teous - ness and jus - tice will spread through - out the land

and you will be de - liv - ered by my al - might - y hand.
 for I am your re - deem - er, and I am draw - ing near.
 and we will be de - liv - ered by God's al - might - y hand.

This text uses imagery from Jeremiah 33:14–16 and Matthew 24:29–36/Mark 13:24–32/Luke 21:25–36. These passages are especially associated with the beginning of Advent, a season that looks forward to Christ's second coming while also preparing us to remember his first coming.