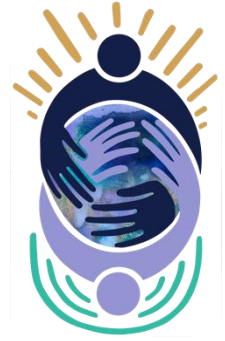


The Presbyterian Church of Okemos
December 3, 2023
First Sunday of Advent



Preparation: “There are too many people in the world today who decide to live disappointed rather than risk feeling disappointment. This can take the shape of numbing, foreboding joy, being cynical or critical, or just never really fully engaging.” -- Author Brené Brown from her book *Atlas of the Heart: Mapping Meaningful Connection and the Language of Human Experience*

Gathering As a People of God

Prelude

Voluntary and Fughetta
Dr. Marlene Brewbaker, organist

Charles Callahan
based on Stuttgart

Choral Introit

Song of Zechariah

*** Call to Worship**

David Cook, Liturgist

One: In God’s house, we can be joyful.

All: We can be grateful. We can be hopeful.

One: In God’s house, we can be weary.

All: We can be anxious. We can be grieving.

One: In God’s house, we can be honest—

All: inspired or tired, delighted or doubtful, connected or curious, and everything in between.

One: This is God’s house. You are welcome exactly as you are.

All: Let us worship our loving God.

*** Hymn #83**

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus, vs. 1-4
[Stuttgart]

Prayer of Confession

David Cook, Liturgist

One: It can be hard to receive good news when we don’t expect it. It can be hard to accept God’s grace and God’s love when we think we don’t deserve it. Scripture tells us over and over again of a loving, generous, and gracious God. So may we come to the prayer of confession today, not with fear, but with an awe so deep that we ask ourselves, “How can this be?” Let us pray.

All: Gracious God, we are weary. For weary bodies that ache and cry out, we pray:

Forgive us for pushing ourselves too hard.

Remind us that we deserve Sabbath rest.

For weary minds that feel overwhelmed and saturated with news, we pray:

Forgive us for creating so many distractions.

Remind us that in the quiet, we can hear you.
For weary hearts that long to feel the joy of this season, we pray:
Forgive us for being impatient with ourselves.
Remind us that healing takes time, and that joy and grief can coexist.
For the weary edges of our faith that struggle to hold onto hope, forgive us.
Remind us of Zechariah and Elizabeth.
Remind us that your good news knows no bounds. Amen.

Promise of the Gospel and Passing of the Peace David Cook, Liturgist

One: Family of faith, no matter how many times we wear ourselves thin, no matter how many times we lose ourselves to distractions, no matter how many times we ask ourselves, “How can this be?” God’s love keeps showing up for us. So say this with me:

All: We are loved. We are claimed. We are forgiven. Thanks be to God. Amen.

One: As a forgiven people, let us greet each other, sharing the peace of Christ. The peace of Christ be with you.

All: And also with you. *Please greet your fellow worshippers in ways you feel comfortable.*

* **Act of Praise #583**

Gloria, Gloria

Jacques Berthier

[Gloria]

Will be sung once by soloist; please join on the second time

Gloria, gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Gloria, gloria, alleluia, alleluia!

The Word

Prayer of Illumination

Rebecca Mattern

Loving God, the source of our joy, we turn our hearts toward your Word. Weave yourself in between the cracks in our spirits. And plant hope where there is room. And as you do this, like flowers toward the sun, we will turn ourselves toward you, eager to hear a Word so good that we cannot help but ask ourselves, “How can this be?” With openness and gratitude we pray, amen.

Lighting the Advent Candle: Hope and Children’s Message Zach, Teddy, Isaac Krawczyk

Journey to Bethlehem Nativity: Stable, Shepherds and Sheep

Old Testament Scripture Psalm 80: 1-7, 17-19

Musical Response #880 *Come, O Come, Emmanuel, vs. 1*

New Testament Scripture

Luke 1:5-23

Pastor Lisa Schrott

Sermon

How does a weary world rejoice? We acknowledge our weariness.

Pastor Lisa Schrott

Anthem

Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silent

Ralph Vaughan William

Responding to the Word

Invitation to Our Shared Ministry

Rebecca Mattern

Minute for Parish Life

Cabin Fever

Jerri Gillett

Offering

Pastor Lisa Schrott

Invitation

Offertory *Communion on Lo, He Comes with Clouds Descending* Charles Callahan

*Doxology #606

*Prayer of Dedication and Dedication of Alternative Gift Market Craft Ministry Items

Holy Communion

Invitation

Rebecca Mattern

The Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

Rebecca Mattern

One: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

One: Lift up your hearts.

All: We lift them up to God.

One: Let us give thanks to God.

All: It is right to give both thanks and praise.

The Lord's Prayer

in unison

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

Pastor Lisa Schrott

Communion Prayer

Pastor Lisa Schrott

Sent Out As a People of God

* Hymn #79

Light Dawns on a Weary World, vs. 1-3
[Temple of Peace]

* Benediction

Pastor Lisa Schrott

Family of faith, as you leave this place,
you go into a weary world—so speak tenderly.

Do the good that is yours to do.

Choose connection. Hold onto hope.

And remember that Christ took on flesh for you.

You are God's beloved. So go rejoicing.

Postlude

The world needs it. Amen.
An Advent Postlude
Dr. Marlene Brewbaker, organist

Charles Callahan

** Please rise in body or spirit*

Education Time: Intergenerational Advent Workshop following worship. Join us as we create a new banner for our Sanctuary to celebrate the season. God's children of all ages welcome!

Next Week December 10, 2023

Second Sunday of Advent.

Scripture: Isaiah 40:1-11 and Luke 1:24-45

Education Hour: Pastor Lisa will lead a discussion on the use Old Testament prophecy in the season of Advent.

Ushers: Jane Paterson, Jill Tribell, Tom Schaberg & Keith Camann

This Morning's Fellowship Team: Thank you to the Roloef/Uitvlugt family for bringing snacks and to Tom Schaberg and Wayne & Barbara Scott for taking care of the coffee.

This morning's liturgy is adapted from words by the Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed. Graphic design by the Rev. Lauren Wright Pittman. A Sanctified Art LLC - *A Weary World Rejoices*
sanctifiedart.org.

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Dr. Marlene Brewbaker, Organist
Westin Sorrel, Chancel Choir Director
Irene Shutt, Handbell Choir Director
Edward Ennen, Sexton
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