

WESTOVER HILLS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



ADVENT II

A SERVICE OF WORD AND SACRAMENT

DECEMBER 4, 2022 10:30AM

Grace Notes

Welcome to WHPC! If you are visiting us today, we are so glad you joined us for worship. If you have not already, please take a moment to record your contact information on the visitor card you will find in the pew and drop it in the offering box or hand it to a greeter at the door. We are always glad to share the great things happening at WHPC!

If you are looking for a new church home and would like to join in fellowship with Westover Hills, please join us in the Parlor (outside the sanctuary doors) and we will gladly share more about life at WHPC or, if you are ready, receive you into membership.

Childcare is available in the nursery. Please check with a greeter.

WESTOVER HILLS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Indicates the congregation is invited to stand.* **Bold text indicates unison readings.

WE GATHER AT GOD'S INVITATION

GATHERING MUSIC

David Austin, Music Director

WELCOME & OPPORTUNITIES FOR DISCIPLESHIP Rev. Marie Mainard O'Connell

OPENING PRAYER

Holy Light, God of faithful witnesses, please shine in our hearts with all the joys of your coming Son.

May we be delivered from trusting the artificial lights of our generation, and from the ephemeral, decorative lights of this season.

Bring us into the open place where, dazed yet not afraid, we may praise you with wonder and adore you with profound joyfulness. Through Jesus of Nazareth, our Christ and Saviour. Amen.

CHORAL INTROIT

"The Call"

George Herbert, Text

Ralph Vaughan Williams, Music

Come, my Way, my Truth, my Life: such a way as gives us breath, such a truth as ends all strife, such a life as killeth death.

Come, my Light, my Feast, my Strength: such a light as shows a feast, such a feast as mends in length, such a strength as makes his guest.

Come, my Joy, my Love, my Heart: such a joy as none can move, such a love as none can part, such a heart as joys in love.

LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLE

Alice Ahart and Nancy Blackstone

We pray today and every day for the coming of the Prince of Peace, yet so much of our world is broken apart by violence and war.

Still, we never give up on God's promise. Because hatred is still so strong, because so many swords have not yet been beaten into plowshares, we light a candle of peace...

Because so many spears have not yet been turned into pruning hooks, we light a candle of peace...

Because we pray for the day of God's true Shalom, we light a candle of peace...

The candle of peace is lit.

May the light from this candle overwhelm the world.

May the light from this candle say to all that God's peace is coming on earth as it is in heaven. Friends, be not afraid, God's peace is at hand!

Let us pray.

God of light and life, break through the darkness of our world with the light of Jesus Christ. Shine the light of grace on us all so the whole world may know that the Prince of Peace draws near. Amen.

Grace Notes

The second verse of this modern hymn uses the imagery of a garden rose to help explain the purpose of Advent.

During this season we are invited to prepare ourselves for Christ as a gardener prepares the soil for a seed. And then, in the fullness of time, to nurture that seed to grow, like a rose, into mature faith.

A common way of articulating theology is through the use of counterexample or counter-witness. This prayer of confession uses imagery of the false banquets of the world to underscore the truth of Christ's table.

RESPONSE TO CANDLE LIGHTING "People, Look East

1 Peo - ple, look east. The time is near of the crown - ing of the
2 Fur - rows, be glad. Though earth is bare, one more seed is plant - ed

year. Make your house fair as you are a - ble; trim the hearth and set the
there. Give up your strength the seed to nour-ish, that in course the flower may

People, look east and sing to - day:

ta - ble. Love, the Guest, is on the way.
flour-ish. Love, the Rose, is on the way.

People look east (Love is on the way.)

CALL TO CONFESSION

John MacLeod

Because it is so hard to wait, it is not easy to live through Advent's days.

But watch what God does during this time.

God waits for us to turn from our old ways to find the right paths; God waits for us to admit what we have done, and failed to do, so we might be forgiven and graced with new life.

Let us approach the One who waits— for us!

PRAYER OF CONFESSION. (in unison)

You call us home to live with you, Comfort of the lost, but we are too busy right now to listen. We flock to the stores run by temptation and seduction, seeking the best prices. We rush to judge everyone around us, but ask you to be more patient with our repeated errors. We feast at the table piled high with broken promises and drink from the cup of fading dreams.

Yet you continue to cry out to us, Broken Heart, speaking to us of your love. Forgiveness is the gift for every moment, not just one day; hope is our constant companion as we journey with Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, who is your Messenger of mercy.

Silent Confession

Grace Notes

The tune **GLORIA** traditionally associated with this hymn is a traditional French carol arranged for the hymn by Edward Shippen Barnes.

The “o” in “Gloria” is sustained through 16 notes. This extension of a single syllable over rising and falling notes in succession is known as “melisma” which literally means “song” in Greek.

Melismatic singing is a technique common in opera, gospel, and religious Jewish music including the canting of the Torah. It is also used in the calls to prayer and reading of the Quran in Islam.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

...in Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

Thanks be to God.

SUNG RESPONSE “Angels We Have Heard on High”

Refrain

Glo - - - ri - a

in ex - cel - sis De - o! Glo -

- - - ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o!

†THE PEACE OF CHRIST

The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ which passes all understanding be with you all.
And also with you.

WE PROCLAIM GOD’S WORD

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Esther 4:1-17

SERMON

“What Time Is This?”

Rev. Marie Mainard O’Connell

“If Ruth was brought to her position as queen for such a time as this,” how might we serve in our present time? What time is this, and how are you “for” it.

Grace Notes

This late 20th century hymn paraphrasing the Magnificat uses a lively Irish folk melody, STAR OF THE COUNTY DOWN, to evoke a festive and lively tone to the song.

By setting these important words to such a lively tune, the writer reminds us that Mary's response to God is joyful and vibrant.

The refrain calls on God to use this moment to transform the world into a new and more just place. The Christ event is the dawning of a new day.

+HYMN OF RESPONSE

Canticle of the Turning



1 My soul cries out with a joy - ful shout that the
 2 Though I am small, my God, my all, you
 3 From the halls of power to the for - tress tower, not a
 4 Though the na - tions rage from age to age, we re -



God of my heart is great, and my spir - it sings of the
 work great things in me, and your mer - cy will last from the
 stone will be left on stone. Let the king be - ware for your
 mem - ber who holds us fast: God's mer - cy must de -



won - drous things that you bring to the ones who wait.
 depths of the past to the end of the age to be.
 jus - tice tears ev - ery ty - rant from his throne.
 liv - er us from the con - quer - or's crush - ing grasp.



You fixed your sight on your ser - vant's plight, and my
 Your ver - y name puts the proud to shame, and to
 The hun - gry poor shall weep no more, for the
 This sav - ing word that our fore - bears heard is the



weak - ness you did not spurn, so from east to west shall my
 those who would for you yearn, you will show your might, put the
 food they can nev - er earn; there are ta - bles spread; ev - ery
 prom - ise which holds us bound, till the spear and rod can be



name be blest. Could the world be a - bout to turn?
 strong to flight, for the world is a - bout to turn.
 mouth be fed, for the world is a - bout to turn.
 crushed by God, who is turn - ing the world a - round.

Refrain



My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Let the



fires of your jus - tice burn. Wipe a - way all tears, for the



dawn draws near, and the world is a - bout to turn.

Grace Notes

The rose is a common Renaissance image for both Christ and Mary. The red rose was used to symbolize the blood of Christ while the white rose symbolized both the charity and purity of Mary.

The Glastonbury rose (pictured below) is also a common symbol of both Mary and Jesus. In Great Britain, it is known as the Christmas Rose. The legend of the rose holds that Joseph of Arimathea came to Britain to found the first church at Glastonbury and when he arrived he planted his staff in the ground. From that spot a thorn bush grew with spectacular roses that bloom each Christmas.

Also called the Palestinian Rose, it is one of many plants historically known as the Rose of Sharon.



OFFERING

OFFERTORY

“Come, O Rose”

Daniel Greig

We will keep our eyes fixed on Jesus. Keep our eyes fixed on Jesus.

Keep our eyes fixed on Jesus till He comes again.

We will wait on Him, wait with hope. Wait on Him, wait with hope.

Wait on Him, wait with hope till He comes again.

Come, O Rose of Sharon, come, O Prince of Peace.

Come, O Rose of Sharon, come, Emmanuel.

We will reach our hands out in service. Reach our hands out in service.

Reach our hands out in service till He comes again.

We will dry the tears of one another, dry the tears of one another, dry the tears of one another till He comes again!

Come, O Rose of Sharon, come, O Prince of Peace.

Come, O Rose of Sharon, come, Emmanuel.

Come, O Rose of Sharon, Come, Prince of Peace.

Come O Rose of Sharon, come, Emmanuel. O come, Lord Jesus, come.

WE GATHER AT GOD'S TABLE

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

God's banquet is coming. The time we await when all will gather from North, East, West and South.

A banquet where the rich and powerful will sit with the weak and poverty-stricken. A table where young and old will learn from each other. A time when all will sit together in peace, “and the wolf will lie down with the lamb.”

Here at this table we get a foretaste of God's banquet. This is indeed God's table, not the church's, and so all who seek to follow The Way are welcome to eat and drink from it.

Come and taste the grace eternal, come and see that God is good.

SURSUM CHORDA

God is with us

We are not alone

Christ is present here

The Spirit moves within us

Let us give thanks to God

In memory and in hope

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

Blessings be to you, Creator God, who in the beginning brought light and life to the world and who continues to bring it love and light everlasting.

Your song of wisdom echoes through the ages, your ancient promise still brings us hope.

Over the ages you have called people to embrace your hope and share your love. But even when they have closed their ears to the song you did not stop singing.

Grace Notes

This liturgy incorporates many parts of the Christ story from the gospels including the promise of the Christ-child, the cry for messiah to come, the liberating work of Jesus, and the story of his final meal with his disciples.

The table is a foretelling of the Kingdom of God told by a recalling of the story of Christ.

You sent prophets and messengers to your people, reminding them of the promised time of peace and justice that would surround the world.

They came in the midst of our despair and filled us with hope.

And then you came to a young woman named Mary and laid out the promise in a new way

Promising her a son, who would be called Jesus

Promising her that in her son the world would be changed

And now as we prepare for that child to be born, we echo the ancient cry:

O come, O come, Emmanuel.

Yet even now, as we prepare to celebrate his birth, we remember the life that this baby will live.

We remember how he broke the bonds of human tradition to show all what the Banquet of Hope could be as he ate openly with the despised and the outcast of his world.

And we remember one special meal, foretaste of the banquet that is to come, that he ate with his closest friends.

Gathering them together in an upper room to share the story of liberation, he prepared them for liberation.

And at the end of the meal he took bread, blessed and broke it, then passed it to them saying:

Take and eat. This bread is the body of Life, broken by the world. Eat it in remembrance and in hope.

After that he took the cup, blessed it, and passed it to them saying:

This cup is the sign of the New Covenant. Whenever you drink it, remember me, for I shall not eat or drink again until the time of the heavenly banquet.

Remembering the birth of the child in the stable, we remember also his life, his death and his resurrection.

We remember how he poured his love out on all he met and look forward to his return and the coming reign of peace, love, and justice.

God, you poured your Spirit on Mary and she sang words of defiance and hope. Pour out your Spirit upon us gathered here.

As we eat and drink may we know your presence. As we eat and drink may we be opened to the possibilities of your hope and power and may we be strengthened in our time of waiting for peace and justice so that we will have the courage to make the Christmas promise a reality. Amen.

THE 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.**

Grace Notes

Elders will be in the Parlor (outside the sanctuary doors) following worship if you would like to learn more about WHPC or if you are ready to join as part of the congregation.

BREAKING THE BREAD

The Bread we break is the Bread of Life
The Cup we Share is the Cup of Promise
These are the gifts of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.

Come and eat, the banquet awaits.

THE COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE

THE PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

WE DEPART IN GOD'S NAME

+PARTING HYMN #2 "Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus"

HYFRYDOL

+CHARGE & BENEDICTION

+POSTLUDE



PLEASE SEE BULLETIN INSERT FOR ANNOUNCEMENTS, NEWS, AND PASTORAL CARE LIST.