



Second Sunday of Advent December 10, 2023

A Service of the Word and Sacrament

WE GATHER AT GOD'S INVITATION

*Worshippers are invited to stand in body or spirit. **Bold text indicates unison readings.**

WELCOME AND INVITATIONS TO DISCIPLESHIP The Rev. Dr. Robert Wm Lowry, Pastor

PRELUDE The Greatest of These is Love Hugh Livingston

†LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE Mary Ellen Holder

In the face of injustice, in the face of despair, we light a candle of hope...

The candle of Hope is lit.

May the light from this candle overwhelm the world.

Because of war, because of violence in our communities, because there is still so much unrest in our hearts, we light a candle of peace...

Because hatred is still so strong, because so many swords have not yet been remade into ploughshares, 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 already is in heaven.

Friends, be not afraid, God's peace is at hand!



+SUNG ADORATION

“Sometimes a Light Surprises (Modern)”

AURELIA

Text by Sally Browder

Yet we in stub- born sor- row would rage a- gainst the wrong, Stay fear- ful of to-
mor- row, caught up in bat- tle's. song. No joy but deep frus- tra- tion, a
bit- ter path we chart. And cling to i- so- la- tion and break each oth-er's hearts.

The musical score is written for voice and piano. It consists of three systems of music. Each system has a vocal line on a treble clef staff and a piano accompaniment on a bass clef staff. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are printed below the vocal line.

+OPENING PRAYER

Ray Stephens, Liturgist

May the path that Christ walks
to bring justice upon the earth,
to bring light to those who sit in darkness,
to bring out those who live in bondage,
to bring new things to all creation:
may this path run through our life.
May we be the road Christ takes. Amen.

+HYMN OF PRAISE #8

“Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates”

TRURO

CALL TO CONFESSION

Brothers and sisters, we are complicated creatures. We have the capacity to love and to disdain, a propensity to cherish and ignore, a willingness to see what we want and be blind to what we do not.

We are at times sinners and saints, heroes, heroines, and heretics.

But at all times, in every moment of every day of creation, we are children of God. And as children of God, we are children of God's compassion. Together, with confidence that God's word of mercy is true, let us acknowledge where we fall short of the glory of God and recall where the mercy of God touches our lives.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Holy and loving God,
we have dwelt in darkness
and preferred it to the light;
we have been proud of our accomplishments
and despaired over our shortcomings.
Smooth down the mountains of our pride,
and lift up the valleys of our doubts.
Open a path in the wilderness of our lives
that we might find our way to you again.
Refine us and prepare us once again for life in your kingdom.
Hear our prayer, O Lord. Amen.

Silence is kept.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

...in Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

Thanks be to God!

+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

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON

Isaiah 40:1-11

*Comfort, comfort my people!
says your God.
Speak compassionately to Jerusalem,
and proclaim to her that her compulsory service has ended,
that her penalty has been paid,
that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins!
A voice is crying out:
"Clear the LORD's way in the desert!
Make a level highway in the wilderness for our God!
Every valley will be raised up,*

*and every mountain and hill will be flattened.
Uneven ground will become level,
and rough terrain a valley plain.
The LORD's glory will appear,
and all humanity will see it together;
the LORD's mouth has commanded it."*

A voice was saying:

"Call out!"

And another said,

"What should I call out?"

All flesh is grass; all its loyalty is like the flowers of the field.

*The grass dries up, and the flower withers
when the LORD's breath blows on it.*

Surely the people are grass.

*The grass dries up, the flower withers,
but our God's word will exist forever.*

Go up on a high mountain, messenger Zion!

Raise your voice and shout, messenger Jerusalem!

Raise it; don't be afraid; say to the cities of Judah,

"Here is your God!"

*Here is the LORD God, coming with strength,
with a triumphant arm, bringing his reward with him
and his payment before him.*

*Like a shepherd, God will tend the flock;
he will gather lambs in his arms and lift them onto his lap.*

He will gently guide the nursing ewes.

SERMON

"An Alternative Universe"

Dr. Lowry

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

†HYMN OF RESPONSE #3 *"Comfort, Comfort, You My People"*

†AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Advent Credo

Daniel Berrigan, S.J.

It is not true that we are simply victims of the powers of evil
who seek to rule the world—

This is true:

**To me is given authority in heaven and on earth,
and lo I am with you, even until the end of the world.**

It is not true that we have to wait for those who are specially gifted,
who are the prophets of the Church, before we can be peacemakers—

This is true:

**I will pour out my spirit on all flesh
and your sons and daughters shall prophesy,
your young men shall see visions
and your old men shall have dreams.**

OFFERING

Bring Us Peace

Craig Courtney

Bring peace to each person and peace to each heart, bring peace to the loved ones from whom we're apart. Bring peace to each home and to husband and wife, bring peace to the families living in strife. Prince of Peace, Child of peace, Dona nobis pacem. Fill us with Your true gift of love for one another. Prince of peace, Child of peace, bring us peace, we pray.

Bring peace between neighbors who live side by side, bring peace to each city, each village and tribe. Bring peace between nations, peace near and afar, bring peace that will blossom wherever you are. Prince of Peace, Child of peace, Dona nobis pacem. Fill us with Your true gift of love for one another. Prince of Peace, child of peace, bring us peace, we pray

Peace for each morning each step of the way, Peace that remains at the end of the day. Help us to see that for peace to begin, first we must find our true peace from within. Prince of Peace, Child of peace, Dona nobis pacem. Fill us with Your true gift of love for one another. Prince of peace, Child of peace, bring us peace, we pray. Bring us peace today.

WE GATHER AT GOD'S TABLE

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

THE SURSUM CORDA

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

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.

THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD

THE COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE

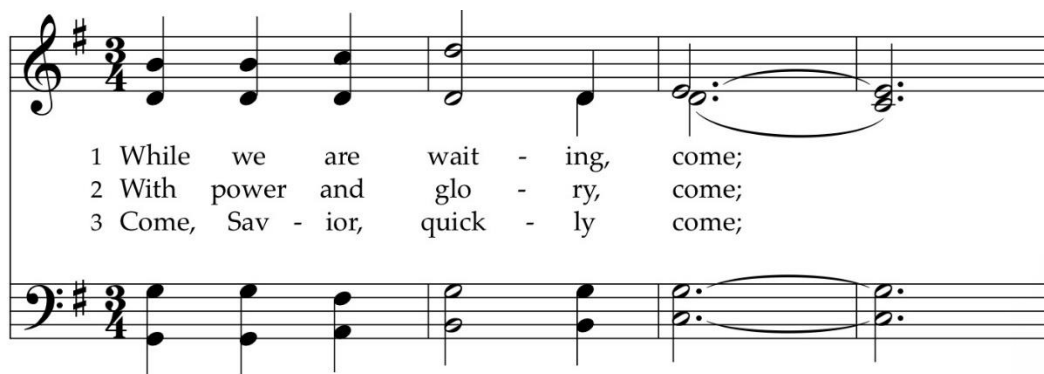
PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

WE DEPART IN GOD'S NAME

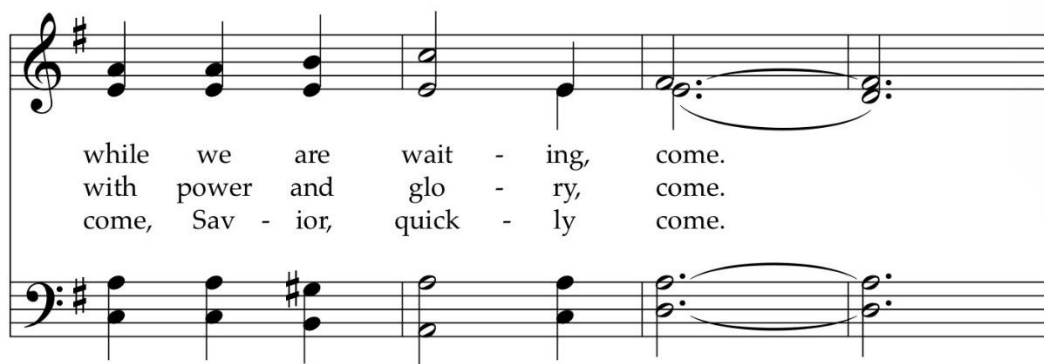
+PARTING HYMN

"While We Are Waiting, Come"

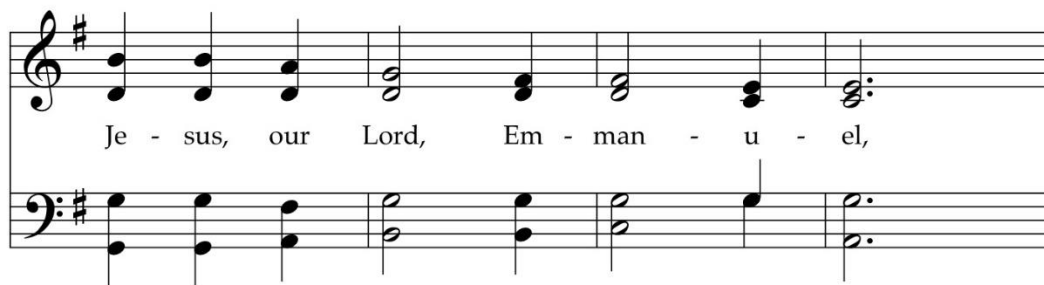
WAITING



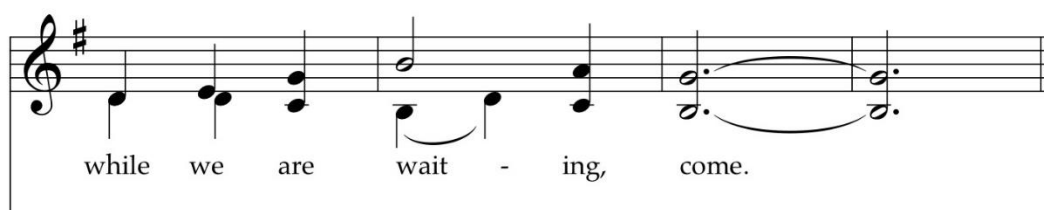
1 While we are wait - ing, come;
 2 With power and glo - ry, come;
 3 Come, Sav - ior, quick - ly come;



while we are wait - ing, come.
 with power and glo - ry, come.
 come, Sav - ior, quick - ly come.



Je - sus, our Lord, Em - man - u - el,



while we are wait - ing, come.

†CHARGE & BENEDECTION

†POSTLUDE

Join Us ON THE JOURNEY!

DECEMBER 10-16, 2023

Welcome

We are so glad to be worshipping with you today.

If this is your first visit, welcome! If you have been with us before, welcome back! Whether you are a life-long Presbyterian, a brand-new Christian, or someone who is just trying to make sense of this world we share, we hope you will feel at home at Westover Hills Presbyterian.

Let us know you are worshipping with us!

In the pew you will find an information card. Please leave us information on how we might be in touch with you to share more about life at Westover Hills. We would love to share a little about our story and hear more about yours. If you do not see a card in the pew near you, please ask one of the ushers you saw when you came in and we will be sure to get one for you.

Midweek Manna

Midweek Manna has resumed on Wednesdays at noon in the New Chapel downstairs and via Zoom. We are reflecting each week on the previous Sunday's lectionary text. This week our focus will be on Isaiah 40:1-11. Zoom information is available in the CareLine.

Yoga

Yoga is for everyone! Our yoga group meets at 10am on Thursday in the New Chapel (downstairs). This class is for beginners and experienced alike. All you need is a yoga mat and an open mind.

Online Giving

You can now make donations online! By donating you can choose to give to Westover Hills and/or our nested New Worshiping communities, The Table and The Queer Collective. You may find the link in the CareLine, and simply click the "funds" tab to pick which you'd like to give to. You can make a one-time donation or schedule a recurring gift. Also, by setting up an account, you can keep up with your digital records online. Our communities are so grateful for your generosity and hope this platform is helpful for you.

56TH COTHAM LECTURES

Westover Hills Presbyterian Church

“Faith and
Community: How
Engagement Helps
Everyone”

Saturday December 9
7pm

“Why and How
Religion Can
Lead on Race”

Sunday
December 10
7pm



FEATURING
Dr. Rebecca Glazier
UALR

Lectures are free and open to the
public.

Westover Hills is a congregation of
the Presbyterian Church (USA)

6400 Richard B. Hardie Drive
At the roundabout with McKinley and Pine Valley

CHRISTMAS AT WESTOVER HILLS

ADVENT WORSHIP
SERVICES 10:30AM
DECEMBER 3, 10, 17, 24

THE MUSES PROJECT
HOLIDAY CONCERT
4PM DECEMBER 3

BLUE CHRISTMAS/
LONGEST NIGHT SERVICE
7PM DECEMBER 21

CHRISTMAS EVE
CANDLELIGHT SERVICE
5:30PM DECEMBER 24



Reverse Advent Calendars

This year for the season of Advent we have adopted a “reverse Advent calendar” program to benefit our mission partners. While a traditional Advent calendar has a little treat hidden for each day of the season, the reverse Advent calendar is an invitation to *add* a little treat for one of our neighbors in need. There will also be weekly reflections, a suggested way to offer a gesture of love and goodwill each Saturday, and a special prayer request for each Sunday of Advent.

Each weekday you are invited to add to your reverse Advent calendar bag an item that is needed by one of our partners. This may be a bag of dry beans for El Zócalo or a pair of mittens for the Mitten Tree. Each item on the list has been identified by our partners as a particular need for either the season or on an ongoing basis. We will collect the bags on Christmas Eve at our candlelight service and offer a blessing over them. If you are unable to attend or will be travelling, you may bring your filled bags by the church before Christmas Eve or after January 1.

The mission partners benefitting from the reverse Advent calendars are:

- El Zócalo food pantry
- Ferncliff (international summer staff)
- WHPC Mitten Tree
- The Jail Ministry
- Vera Lloyd Presbyterian Family Services (specifically the boys’ houses)

Stewpot

The Stewpot needs clothes and personal items to replenish the shelves due to a sharp increase in need. The following items are particularly in demand:

- Ball caps
- Men’s athletic shoes
- Men’s jeans and Docker’s (khaki-type) pants size 30-36
- Travel size toothpaste, shampoo, lotion, and soap
- Daypack/bookbag style backpacks

Donations may be left in the Narthex on Sundays or in the donation bin in the church office.

Stewpot is also in need of volunteers for the clothes closet.

Volunteers are needed Tuesdays 9:00-11:00 and Thursdays from 9:00-1:00. Please contact Nancy Sherman Carter if you can help; her email is nesherman57@yahoo.com

Morning Circle

The WH PW Morning Circle will meet on Monday, Dec 18 at 10am at Betty Glenn’s home at 2612 Grist Mill Rd, LR, 72227 (501-993-5020). Nancy Blackstone will lead Lesson 4 of Sacred

Encounters, Mary and Martha Encounter Jesus. Hostesses Betty Glenn and Marcey Berry will be gifting us with Betty's mother's traditional boiled custard. Come and enjoy good teaching, yummy custard, and Merry Christmas fellowship!

Fair Trade

Presbyterian Women have a limited supply of fairly traded pecans for \$6.35 per bag. The review from Peggy C, our first sale, was "delicious." We also have caramel crunch candy bars for \$2.50. Contact Carolyn Nash or Donna Callaway if you are interested.

CARING FOR ONE ANOTHER

Prayer and Meditation

There are two important traditions at Westover Hills that join our voices in prayer every week. The first is *Prayer on the 9's*. Every day you are able, join us in taking a minute to pause at 9am and 9pm to offer a short prayer for the church, the world, or someone you know who needs comfort.

We also share every Sunday in the bulletin and every Wednesday in the Careline e-newsletter the list of pastoral care concerns known to the church. Members and friends are invited to pray for those people and world issues named on the list. Prayers of comfort, for healing, and for peace are always appropriate ways to remember our friends and neighbors. This week we remember:

Shayne Smith (friend of Pastor Robert and Brian) following a double lung transplant in Dallas; Catherine Lowry (Pastor Robert's mother, at home recovering from a stroke); Pete Welch (friend of Ann Patterson, undergoing triple bypass surgery); Doyle Hughes (at St. Vincent); Kristi Craddock (Cindy Hamilton's cousin who is out of the ICU but still in the hospital); Aaron and Paige Hall (friends of Robert and Brian) on the death of Paige's father; Judy Lyle; Courtenay Jackson; family of Barbara Polite (manager of Clothes Closet, who died recently); Jason Chrisman (son of Mary Chrisman); Duke Monroe and family (death on October 29th of Duke's wife, Barbara); Douglas Ponce (director of El Zócalo; his mother died recently in El Salvador); The Garcia family (friends of Sydney, recent passing of daughter/sister and the father is recovering in the hospital from two strokes); Christiana Esemé-Kuwong; Mary Ellen Holder; Anna Grace Clark (brain cancer); Reverend Doug Kanney (heart issues); family of Vivianna McAtee, who died on October 6; Jim Miller (broken ankle, at home); Lila Quinn; Deran Abernathy (son-in-law of former member Judy Huffman; stage 4 lung cancer); Rev. Carol-Ann Blow (health issues); Johnny Rhodes; the people of Maui, who are recovering from a wildfire; the people impacted by wildfires in the Presbytery of South Louisiana; FPC DeRidder, LA, and the Korean New Worshipping Community of DeRidder (providing shelter and support for evacuees); the WHPC Staff: Robert, Tammy, David, Ulysses, Shawn, and Sydney; WHPC Preschool, children, and

families. If you or a loved one would like to be added to the prayer list, please contact the church office at office.westoverhills@gmail.com Names remain on the prayer list until we are notified to remove them or until the end of the quarter.

Deacon's Ministry

The Deacons for November are Shirley Garlington and Brenda Lelansky. Please contact them with any pastoral care needs or updates. You may also contact Pastor Robert with any updates.

STAY CONNECTED

CareLine

Stay up to date with news and pastoral care updates with the CareLine. If you do not already receive this now once-weekly email newsletter, please contact the church office to add your name to the distribution.

If you have information to be included in the CareLine, please contact the office. The deadline for the Careline is 5pm Tuesday.

Calendar Updates and Session Reports

All updates to the church calendar and any information for the church session should be sent to the office.

STAFF AND MINISTRY LEADERSHIP

Dr. Robert Wm Lowry Pastor/Head of Staff

David Austin Director of Music

Shawn Mittedorf Preschool Director

Tammy Pflug Treasurer

Sydney McEwen Administrative Assistant

Ulysses Neyland Sexton

Elder Liz Branch Recording Clerk & Christian Education Ministry

Elder Candice Misenheimer Corresponding Clerk & Matthew 25 (Yard Sign Ministry)

Elder Ray Stephens Worship and Arts

Elder Bob Quinn Building and Grounds

Elder Ann Patterson Stewardship and Finance

Sally Browder Matthew 25 (Church Vitality)

Donna Callaway Presbyterian Women

Elder Bill Smith Personnel

Alice Ahart Kitchen

Deacons Rosemary McGinnis and Laura Whitmore Board of Deacons

AFFILIATED MINISTRIES

Rev. Michael Gallup The Table

Rev. Marie Mainard O'Connell The Central Arkansas Queer Collective

Rev. Deacon Carol-Ann Blow Sister Thea Bowman Ecumenical Catholic Church

Westover Hills Presbyterian Church

6400 Richard B. Hardie Drive

Little Rock, AR 72207



Church Calendar and Website