



First Presbyterian Church

149 Broad Street

Tonawanda, New York 14150 ~ 2111

Church: (716) 692-1319

Rev. Dr. Rebecca Chaffee

Come, Worship the Lord, Our God

2nd Sunday of Advent

CCLI License # 2839486

December 10, 2023

10:30 am

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Advent Candle Lighting:

Reader 1: O God, our Shepherd, we light the second candle of Advent.

(With the first candle already burning, a family member lights the second candle.)

Reader 2: Isaiah announced God's coming to a people exiled in a broken and parched wilderness. He declared that God's redemption would make a highway in the desert and change the rough places into plain. God would come as a shepherd—feeding, leading, and cradling the weary flock. This Advent, we seek such a God.

Reader 3: With your servant, John, who fulfilled the prophecy, "the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,'" we seek to proclaim the Good News of your kingdom. your comfort. Prepare our hearts to be transformed by you.

People : **Saving God, look upon your world and heal your land and your people. Prepare us to be changed. This Advent, teach us to be tender and just, as you are. Amen.**

INTROIT: "Prepare the Way of the Lord"

Prepare the Way of the Lord 95

Capo 1: (D) (G) (D) (chords continue)
E^b A^b E^b

Pre-prepare the way of the Lord. Pre-prepare the way of the Lord,
and all peo-ple will see the sal - va - tion of our God.

The image shows two staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp) and 6/8 time. The first staff contains the melody for the first line of text, with chords E^b, A^b, and E^b indicated above it. The second staff contains the melody for the second line of text. The music is written in a simple, accessible style suitable for a church service.

**May be Sung as a canon.*

All three synoptic gospels identify John the Baptist as the forerunner of the Messiah (Matthew 3:3/Mark 1:2-3/Luke 3:4) in accord with Isaiah's prophecy (Isaiah 40:3b). Because the latter part of the text (Isaiah 32:10b) has yet to be accomplished, this is still our mission today.

TEXT: Iainé Community, 1984
MUSIC: Jacques Berthier, 1984
Text and Music © 1984 Les Presses de Iainé (admin. GIA Publications, Inc.)

PREPARE THE WAY
7.7.6.7

CALL TO WORSHIP

Listen to what the Lord our God says to us:

Peace is God's hope for us;

salvation is God's gift to us.

See what the Lord our God reveals to us:

righteousness is the path to the kingdom;

faithfulness is the highway we build.

Tell what the Lord our God asks us to speak:

prepare God's way;

the Christ is coming to redeem us.

GATHERING PRAYER

Loving God, you sent your prophet John to prepare your way among us, to call us to repentance and make our pathways straight. Strengthen us to live lives of steadfast love and faithfulness as we await the Messiah's return, that all may see your reign of peace through your just and gracious rule. Amen.

*HYMN: "All Earth is Waiting"

All earth is waiting



1. All earth is wait - ing to see the prom - ised One,
2. Thus says the proph - et to those of Is - ra - el,
3. Moun - tains and val - leys will have to be made plain,
4. In low - ly sta - ble the Pro - mised One ap - peared.



and o - pen fur - rows a - wait the seed of God. All the
"A vir - gin moth - er will bear Em - man - u - el". One whose
o - pen new high - ways, new high - ways for our God, who is
Yet, feel that pre - sence through - out the earth to - day, for Christ



world, bound and strug - gling, seeks true li - ber - ty; it
name is "God with us", our Sav - iour shall be, through
now com - ing clos - er, so come all and see, and
lives in all Chrit - ians and is with us now; a -



cries out for jus - tice and search - es for the truth
whom hope will blos - som once more with - in our hearts.
o - pen the door - ways as wide as wide can be.
- gain on ar - riv - ing, Christ



brings us li - ber - ty.

CALL TO CONFESSION

God comes! Let us prepare the way.
God comes to forgive us! Let us prepare
our hearts as we confess our sins, saying,

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

We confess that whatever our fine might have been that it has been paid, God of Comfort, yet we still insist on earning our way into your heart. We confess that you are beyond patient with us, but wish you would act quickly against those who hurt us. We confess that while your word will stand forever, it is our words of pain and anger that cause long term harm to others.

Your Messenger has come, Approaching God, crying out of your forgiveness and hope. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, you speak to us: not of punishment, but of peace; not of judgment, but of justice; not of a sentence, but salvation. And we offer our hearts in thanksgiving and hope.

Silence is kept

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Hear the Good News God speaks to you:

I love you;

I forgive you;

I restore you to new life.

We will not ignore the fact that God comes: not to condemn, but to comfort us; not to scold, but to speak tenderly to us of hope, of love, of joy. Thanks be to God. Amen.

GLORIA PATRI: GLORIA PATRI: "Glory to God"

SERVICE MUSIC

Glory to God
Gloria, gloria

583

Capo 3: (Bm) (Em) (A) (D)
Dm Gm C F (chords continue)

Glo - ry to God, glo - ry to God, glo - ry in the high - est!
Glo - ri - a, glo - ri - a, in ex - cel - sis De - o!

Glo - ry to God, glo - ry to God, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!
Glo - ri - a, glo - ri - a, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

**May be sung as a canon.*

TEXT: Trad. liturgical text
MUSIC: Jacques Berthier, 1979
Music © 1979, 1987 Les Presses de la Sorbonne (admin. GIA Publications, Inc.)

GLORIA (Latin)

PASSING OF THE PEACE

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Mighty God, send your Holy Spirit to speak peace, that the good news of this age may be proclaimed through your word, which stands forever. Amen.

SCRIPTURE LESSONS

FIRST READING: Isaiah 40:1-11

¹Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. ²Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins.

³A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. ⁴Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. ⁵Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

⁶A voice says, "Cry out!" And I said, "What shall I cry?" All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field. ⁷The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the LORD blows upon it; surely the people are grass. ⁸The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand forever.

⁹Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, do not fear; say to the cities of Judah, "Here is your God!" ¹⁰See, the Lord GOD comes with might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. ¹¹He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead the mother sheep.

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

ALL GOD'S CHILDREN

PSALM 85:1-2, 8-13

¹LORD, you were favorable to your land;

you restored the fortunes of Jacob.

²You forgave the iniquity of your people;

you pardoned all their sin. Selah

⁸Let me hear what God the LORD will speak, for he will speak peace to his people,
to his faithful, to those who turn to him in their hearts.

⁹Surely his salvation is at hand for those who fear him,

that his glory may dwell in our land.

¹⁰Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet;

righteousness and peace will kiss each other.

¹¹Faithfulness will spring up from the ground,

and righteousness will look down from the sky.

¹²The LORD will give what is good,

and our land will yield its increase.

¹³Righteousness will go before him,

and will make a path for his steps.

SPECIAL MUSIC: "While We Are Waiting, Come" - Choir

Waiting(Cason)

GOSPEL READING: Mark 1:1-8

¹The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. ²As it is written in the prophet Isaiah, "See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way; ³the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,'"

⁴John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

⁶Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. ⁸I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON: "God, the Shepherd"

Rev. Dr. Rebecca Chaffee

SERMON HYMN: "My Shepherd Will Supply My Need" #803

RESIGNATION

PASTORAL PRAYER AND PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

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.

MOMENT FOR MISSION

CALL TO THE OFFERING

The Lord will give what is good, and our land will yield its increase. May your righteousness go before God and prepare a pathway for the Lord. Let us offer our lives and labor to God and fulfill our vows to the Most High.

THE OFFERTORY:

DOXOLOGY: "Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow" #607

OLD HUNDREDTH

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

We pray, Holy God, that our gifts might smooth the path of those who walk in grief, might surround the grieving with comfort, might feed the hungry, and bring others into places of peace and safety. Amen.

*CLOSING HYMN: "Lift Up the Gates Eternal" #364

Israeli folk melody

CHARGE

As you were present with us through your Word, O God:

May we be present to others who will come to us this week.

As you fed us with peace, Bread of Life:

May we grace others with your peace in the coming days.

As you welcomed us to your Table, Spirit of hope:

May we welcome those you send us who have no hope.

BENEDICTION "Go Now in Peace"

Natalie Sleeth

Go now in peace,

go now in peace; may the love of God surround you

ev - 'ry - where, ev - 'ry - where you may go.

**may be sung as a round*

Volunteers This Week 12/10:

Liturgist: Tom Dugan
 Tech: Betsy Crocker
 Usher(s): Leslie Dugan
 Coffee Hour: Laura & Alvin Marohn,
 Nathan & Adam Harrington
 Greeter(s): Laura & Alvin Marohn

Volunteers Next Week 12/17:

Liturgist: Janet Haacker
 Tech: Betsy Crocker
 Usher(s): Alvin Marohn & Nathan Harrington
 Coffee Hour:
 Greeter(s): Lynn Hyland

PRAYER CONCERNS

The prayer concerns have recently been updated. If you have a prayer request, please contact **Pastor Rebecca at 315-317-6140 or the church office at 716-692-1319.**

CALENDAR

Sunday, Dec 10

9:30am Faith Formation (All Ages)
 10:30 am Worship for all ages (Sanctuary)
 11:30am Coffee Fellowship for all ages (Parlor)

Monday, Dec 11

10:00 am Alcoholics Anonymous (Circle II Basement)

Tuesday, Dec 12

9:00am – 2:00pm Office Hours

Wednesday, Dec 13

9:00am – 2:00pm Office Hours
 7:00pm Historical Society of the Tonawandas Lecture (Parlor)

Thursday, Dec 14

9:00am – 2:00pm Office Hours
 10:00am Alcoholics Anonymous (Circle II Basement)
 5:45pm Sing For Your Supper Potluck (Parlor)

Saturday, Dec 16

10:00am Alcoholics Anonymous (Circle II Basement)

Sunday, Dec 17

9:30am Faith Formation (All Ages)
 10:30 am Worship for all ages (Sanctuary)
 11:30am Coffee Fellowship for all ages (Parlor)

