



First Presbyterian Church

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Rev. Leslie Latham

Come, Worship the Lord, Our God

Fourth Sunday in Advent: Proclaim Hope

CCLI License # 2839486

Words to hymns are on the back of the bulletin

December 19, 2021

10:30 am

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

"Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence"

CALL TO WORSHIP

We gather in preparation,
for good news is about to be proclaimed.

We gather in expectation,
for joy is about to be sung in "Alleluias."

We gather in celebration,
for we know good news is coming.

We gather in anticipation,
for hope is about to be born anew.

With preparation, expectation, celebration, and anticipation,
let us worship God!

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING

Janet & Sue Schurr

Where do we proclaim hope?

On hillsides and valleys, in villages and cities, go tell it everywhere.

How do we proclaim hope?

In lament and in song; in sighs too deep for words and jubilant exclamation,
with the Spirit of the Lord upon us, bringing good news to all.

On this fourth Sunday of Advent, let us light a candle to proclaim hope.

(Light the fourth candle)

Living Christ, give us faith to trust you, hope to follow you, love to live for you. Amen.

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE: #772 *Live into Hope, verse 4*

Live into hope of captives freed from chains of fear or want or greed.

God now proclaims our full release to faith and hope and joy and peace.

GATHERING PRAYER

May the angels of light glisten for us this day.

May the sparks of God's beauty dance in the eyes of those we love.

May the universe be on fire with Presence for us this day.

May the new sun's rising grace us with gratitude.

Let earth's greenness shine and its waters breathe with Spirit.

Let heaven's winds stir the soil of our soul

and fresh awakenings rise within us.

May the mighty angels of light glisten in all things this day.

May they summon us to reverence, may they call us to life.

— John Philip Newell

HYMN: #372 *O for a World*

CALL TO CONFESSION

In the world and in this season, there are many claims on our lives. We take this time to remember that in our baptism, Jesus the Christ claimed us as his own. We acknowledge before God and one another that we have not followed Jesus Christ with all our hearts and minds and strength. Trusting in God's grace, let us pray.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

O God, we live as if your light had never overcome the darkness. We confess that we stumble in shadows rather than walk in the light of Christ. We fear to have hope because sometimes it feels safer to sit in the dark of our despair. We wrap ourselves in self-doubt and do not trust that you are bigger than any problem we can conjure. But you come to us, a tiny human, to show us what our humanity may be like—full of promise and justice and hope for life in the household of God. Restore in us that hope that lets our light reflect your glory and proclaim the good news of your love. Amen.

Time for Silent Confession

DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

Hear the good news God speaks: I love you. I forgive you. I restore you to new life. **Friends, in Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. Thanks be to God. Amen.**

PASSING OF THE PEACE

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE LESSONS:

Leviticus 25:1–13

Luke 4:16-21

SERMON

The Rev. Leslie Latham

PASTORAL PRAYER

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.

CALL TO THE OFFERING

God is our rock and our fortress. Let us celebrate our salvation by fearlessly giving a portion of what has already been given to us, either by placing it in the basket in the back of the church, or by mailing it in.

THE OFFERTORY

"Soon and Very Soon"

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

—*John Birch, www.faithandworship.com*

For your word which endures, **we give you thanks.**

For your promises to which we hold, **we give you thanks.**

For such intimacy with you, **we give you thanks.**

For the love which from our birth over and around us lies, **we give you thanks.**

For those gathered here today, **we give you thanks.**

For family, friend and stranger, **we give you thanks.**

For those who minister your grace, **we give you thanks.**

For the hope that lives each Advent of a love that has no end, **we give you thanks. Amen.**

HYMN: #123 *It Came Upon a Midnight Clear, verses 1-4*

CHARGE

Trust in the Lord and know that God is at work within you.

BENEDICTION

Hymns

“O for a World”

1 O for a world where everyone respects each other's ways,
where love is lived and all is done with justice and with praise.

2 O for a world where goods are shared and misery relieved,
where truth is spoken, children spared, equality achieved.

3 We welcome one world family and struggle with each choice,
that opens us to unity and gives our vision voice.

4 The poor are rich, the weak are strong; the foolish ones are wise.
Tell all who mourn: outcasts belong, who perishes will rise.

5 O for a world preparing for God's glorious reign of peace,
where time and tears will be no more, and all but love will cease.

“It Came Upon a Midnight Clear”, verses 1-4

1 It came upon a midnight clear that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth, to touch their harps of gold:
“Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heaven's all gracious King”:
the world in solemn stillness lay, to hear the angels sing.

2 Still through the cloven skies they come, with peaceful wings unfurled,
and still their heavenly music floats o'er all the weary world:
above its sad and lowly plains they bend on hovering wing,
and ever o'er its Babel sounds the blessed angels sing.

3 Yet with the woes of sin and strife the world has suffered long;
beneath the heavenly hymn have rolled two thousand years of wrong;
and we at war on earth hear not the tidings that they bring;
O, hush the noise and cease the strife to hear the angels sing!

4 And you, beneath life's crushing load, whose forms are bending low,
who toil along the climbing way with painful steps and slow,
look now, for glad and golden hours come swiftly on the wing:
O, rest beside the weary road, and hear the angels sing.

Scripture Lessons

Leviticus 25:1-13

¹The LORD spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai, saying: ²Speak to the people of Israel and say to them: When you enter the land that I am giving you, the land shall observe a Sabbath for the LORD. ³Six years you shall sow your field, and six years you shall prune your vineyard, and gather in their yield; ⁴but in the seventh year there shall be a Sabbath of complete rest for the land, a Sabbath for the LORD: you shall not sow your field or prune your vineyard. ⁵You shall not reap the after growth of your harvest or gather the grapes of your unpruned vine: it shall be a year of complete rest for the land. ⁶You may eat what the land yields during its Sabbath—you, your male and female slaves, your hired and your bound laborers who live with you; ⁷for your livestock also, and for the wild animals in your land all its yield shall be for food.

⁸You shall count off seven weeks of years, seven times seven years, so that the period of seven weeks of years gives forty-nine years. ⁹Then you shall have the trumpet sounded loud; on the tenth day of the seventh month—on the day of atonement—you shall have the trumpet sounded throughout all your land. ¹⁰And you shall hallow the fiftieth year and you shall proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you: you shall return, every one of you, to your property and every one of you to your family. ¹¹That fiftieth year shall be a jubilee for you: you shall not sow, or reap the after growth, or harvest the unpruned vines. ¹²For it is a jubilee; it shall be holy to you: you shall eat only what the field itself produces. ¹³In this year of jubilee you shall return, every one of you, to your property.

Luke 4:16-21

¹⁶When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, ¹⁷and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:

¹⁸“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, ¹⁹to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”

²⁰And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. ²¹Then he began to say to them, “Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.”