

TRINITY UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

December 10, 2017
Second Sunday of Advent
8:15a 10:30a

Welcome to Trinity United Church of Christ. We seek to offer a warm greeting to our visitors, whether you are visiting the area or seeking a church family. To assist you as you worship, we have large print bulletins and hearing assistance devices available. Please see an usher for assistance.

We would be happy for you to sign the guest book in the gathering area while you are with us this morning. Whoever you are, wherever you are in life's journey, we are glad that you have come, and pray that you will be blessed by your worship experience. Come and see what God is doing!

**denotes the congregation standing as you are able; congregational responses in bold print*

We continue our journey through Advent this morning, aware that the journey ends at the manger in Bethlehem where God's love was fully revealed to us in the birth of the Christ Child. But let us not hurry to arrive, for there is much to experience and learn along the way. We need to reflect on how we will respond when we finally arrive at the place where the Child is lying -- what are we willing to sacrifice in order to truly pay homage to Jesus? Are we ready to make the changes that are necessary in order to serve Him more fully and completely? Is my life truly reflective of the life that this Child led as He grew into adulthood? Along the way, we might discover that the road is not so easy as we thought, for it forces us to be honest with ourselves -- are we ready for such honesty?

PRELUDE – “Comfort, Comfort O My People” – *R. Lau*

TIME OF SHARING

PREPARING OUR HEARTS AND MINDS FOR WORSHIP

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE OF PEACE

8:15 – **Dave & Sue Churchill**

10:30 – **Scot Dolly Family**

We come because we've seen some hint of hope, a hand outstretched,
a candle standing bravely in the dark.

Our waiting is a time for memories; for retelling the ancient stories of our people.

We've gathered here to warm our weary hearts while we wait for something we have never known.

**We come to celebrate the outrageous possibility that God is calling forth
our gifts in ways that have already changed the world.**

"See, I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me;
the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come," says the Lord Almighty.

Praise be to the Lord, because God has come and redeemed the people.

"A voice of one calling in the desert, 'Prepare the way for the Lord, make the paths straight.'"

Praise be to the Lord, because God has come and redeemed the people.

"Every valley shall be filled in, every mountain and hill made low.

The crooked roads shall become straight, the rough ways smooth."

Praise be to the Lord, because God has come and redeemed the people.

"All humankind will see God's salvation."

Praise be to the Lord, because God has come and redeemed the people.

Today we light two candles on the Advent Wreath.

The first candle is the candle of hope;

during Advent we wait in hope for God's love to make its full expression in the Messiah.

The second candle is the candle of peace.

Because the way was prepared, because God has come and redeemed the people, we can be at peace.

Praise be to the Lord, because God has come and redeemed the people.

Advent Hymn - "Star Child" – *see insert (sing vs. 1 & 2)*

Let us pray together, saying:

Almighty God, we are thankful that you sent the prophets to prepare the people to receive Jesus. We are thankful that you sent John the Baptist to cry in the wilderness that the Messiah was coming. We ask today that you help us prepare the world for Jesus.

Where there are roadblocks of hatred and prejudice, help us to remove them.

Where there are barriers of indifference, help us to breach them with love.

Where we humans have made things crooked, help us to begin to straighten them out.

We pray for the day when all humans will see God's salvation. Amen.

*GATHERING HYMN # 101 – "Comfort, Comfort O My People"

TIME OF CONFESSION

God is patient with us, not wanting any to perish.

Yet we have turned away from holiness and godliness.

We have chosen to fit into society rather than give leadership for a new day.

Let the Church confess its failures.

Forgive us, Lord, if we have hindered your entrance into our lives,

if we have been preoccupied by work or play,

if we have barred you from certain aspects of our private lives,

if we have worshiped our possessions.

Forgive us, we pray, and clear away any underbrush or barriers

that keep you from the core of our being.

Now let us silently reflect on the personal struggles and fears that keep us from being fully free.

WE PRAY FOR GOD'S MERCY

Kyrie, Kyrie, Kyrie eleison

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

God speaks tenderly to us and assures us that
our debt has been paid, our sins forgiven, our paths made straight.
God's glory is waiting to burst into the midst of all who accept the Good News.

Surely our salvation is at hand.

Faithfulness will spring up from the ground, and righteousness will look down from the sky.

Enjoy the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Thanks be to God for this magnificent gift of love.

***HYMN RESPONSE # 208 – “God Loved the World”**

*** AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

And now, experiencing once again the forgiving power of our loving God,
let us confess our faith:

You, O God, are supreme and holy.

You create our world and give us life.

Your purpose overarches everything we do.

You have always been with us. You are God.

You, O God, are infinitely generous, good beyond all measure.

You came to us before we came to you.

You have revealed and proved your love for us in

Jesus Christ, who lived and died and rose again.

You are with us now. You are God.

You, O God, are Holy Spirit.

You empower us to be your gospel in the world.

You reconcile and heal; you overcome death.

You are our God. We worship you.

(A New Zealand Prayer Book)

CHILDREN'S TIME

ANTHEM

“Waiting for the Promise”

Words by Jan McGuire; Music by Lloyd Larson

Senior Choir

THE WORD OF GOD

Isaiah 40:1-11 Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13 1 Peter 3:8-15a

Mark 1:1-8

HYMN # 115 – “The Baptist Shouts on Jordan's Shore”

QUIET PREPARATION

SERMON

* THE PRAYER FOR THE MORNING AND OUR LORD'S PRAYER

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

For we ask it in the name of Jesus, who taught us to pray, saying:

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 sins

as we forgive those who sin against us.

And lead us not into temptation

but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom,

and the power, and the glory,

for ever. Amen

PRAYER RESPONSE # 283 - "Spirit of the Living God"

Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh on me; Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.

Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me. Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.

THE GIVING OF OURSELVES AND OUR OFFERINGS

"Let your light shine before others," said Jesus,

"so that they may see your good works

and give glory to your Father in heaven."

To our visitors - - the finances of the church are the responsibility of our church members.

As our guests, we ask visitors to simply pass the offering plate to the person sitting next to you in the pew.

Please sign the Registration Booklet at the end of each pew, then pass it to the next person. Thank you!

OFFERTORY - "All Earth Is Waiting" - A. Taulé

* OFFERTORY RESPONSE # 9 - "O Little Town of Bethlehem"

(3rd verse of the red Christmas Carol book)

* PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Holy God, in our daily lives as well as through these offerings,

we wish to be light-givers in a world that all

too often is dark with confusion and despair.

***CLOSING HYMN #121 – “All Earth Is Waiting”**

***COMMISSION AND BENEDICTION**

May Jesus Christ, at his second coming,
find you prepared for him,
for he lives and reigns forever,
worthy of all honor and all praise.

*“Star Child”: Text: Shirley Erena Murray. Tune: Carlton R. Young. © 1994 Hope Publishing Company.
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