



FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT

— PEACE —

IMMANUEL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH ♦ DECEMBER 20, 2020

Who We Seek to Be

In our love for Christ and guided by God's Word we seek to be a community of

Joyful Worship, thoughtfully centered in the wonder and wisdom of the living God and celebrating the diversity of the body of Christ.

Loving Fellowship, encouraging and serving one another in the unifying love of the Holy Spirit.

Life-changing Learning, biblically-based preaching and teaching to equip children, youth, and adults to grow in their relationship with God.

Enthusiastic Service, reflecting the servant heart of Jesus as we proclaim the gospel near and far in word and deed.

WE GATHER IN GOD'S PRESENCE

PRELUDE

PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

CHURCH FAMILY NEWS

ANNETTE LAPLACA

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING

WALFORD FAMILY

* CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: The mighty God summons the earth from the rising of the sun to the place where it sets.

People: Our God comes and will not be silent. God calls, and we respond to his love.

Leader: The heavens declare God's righteousness.

All: We tell out God's glories! And our God will hear us, save us, and stay with us forever.

based on Psalm 50:1-3, 6 Adapted from the *Worship Sourcebook*

* INVOCATION

** Congregation stands*

* OPENING HYMN: *Comfort, Comfort Ye My People (Verses 1 and 4)*

1. Com - fort, com - fort ye my peo - ple, speak ye peace, thus saith our God;
 2. Yea, her sins our God will par - don, blot - ting out each dark mis - deed;
 3. For the her - ald's voice is cry - ing in the des - ert far and near,
 4. Make ye straight what long was crook - ed, make the rough - er plac - es plain;

com - fort those who sit in dark - ness, mourn - ing 'neath their sor - row's load.
 all that well de - served his an - ger he no more will see or heed.
 bid - ding all men to re - pen - tance, since the king - dom now is here.
 let your hearts be true and hum - ble, as be - fits his ho - ly reign.

Speak ye to Je - ru - sa - lem of the peace that waits for them; tell her
 She hath suf - fered man - y a day, now her griefs have passed a - way; God will
 O that warn - ing cry o - bey! Now pre - pare for God a way; let the
 For the glo - ry of the Lord now o'er earth is shed a - broad; and all

that her sins I cov - er, and her war - fare now is o - ver.
 change her pin - ing sad - ness in - to ev - er - spring - ing glad - ness.
 val - leys rise to meet him, and the hills bow down to greet him.
 flesh shall see the to - ken, that his word is nev - er bro - ken.

WE ARE RENEWED BY GOD'S GRACE

CALL TO CONFESSION

Leader: Lord Christ, we confess our willingness to be loved
but also our reluctance to love.

**All: We confess our readiness to accept your forgiving love
but also our refusal to forgive.**

Leader: We confess our eagerness to grasp your offer of redeeming love
but also our resistance to follow you without question.

All: In this Advent time, forgive us our failure to respond as we should.

Leader: Come to us anew, and by your grace, assist us to receive you
with joy, as the shepherds;

All: With gratitude, as Simeon; with obedience, as Mary;

Leader: With love, as you have loved us.

All: Even so, come Lord Jesus. Amen.

Adapted from The Worship Sourcebook

SONG OF CONFESSION: *My Soul in Stillness Waits (Verse 4)*

Refrain Am Dm9 F G A

For you, O Lord, my soul in still-ness waits;

Bb C Am7 Dm9 *Fine* Am

tru - ly my hope is in you. 1 O Lord of
2 O Spring of
3 O Root of
4 O Key of

Dm9 Am Dm9 Am

Light, our on - ly hope of glo - ry, your ra-diance
Joy, rain down up - on our spir - its; our thirst - y
Life, im - plant your seed with - in us, and in your
Knowl - edge, guide us in our pil - grim-age; we ev - er

Dm9 Am Dm9 Am

shines in all who look to you. Come, light the
hearts are yearn-ing for your Word. Come, make us
ad - vent draw us all to you, our hope re -
seek, yet un - ful - filled re - main. O - pen to

Dm9 Am G C Am7 Dm9 *Refrain*

hearts of all in dark and shad - ow.
whole; be com - fort to our hearts.—
born in dy - ing and in ris - ing.
us the path - way of your peace.—

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Leader: Our Almighty God, by whose providence our Savior, Jesus Christ, came among us in great humility, will sanctify you with the light of his blessing and set you free from all sin.

* ACCLAMATION (*Please stand*)

Pastor: To him in whom God's fullness dwells,

People: To him through whom God reconciles all things to himself,

**All: To him be glory and honor and praise throughout all generations
forever and ever! Amen.**

* PASSING OF THE PEACE

Leader: The peace of the Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

ANNIKA DURBIN

ENVISION MOMENT

SPECIAL MUSIC: *The Green Stump*

SARAH HOLMAN

Music by Xavier Beteta

The Green Stump is the fourth song of an Advent Song Cycle, *Four Tree Lieder for Waiting with Creation*. Its faster, jovial tempo, announcing the good news, in the same way the frozen stones still have some green and thus the tree can revive, the music and the poetry point toward the resurrection of Christ. To the short, staccato rhythm, follows a dance, with a "Jewish theme" as a celebration of the day when the Messiah manifests himself again.

Poetry by Tiffany Kriner

European tree researcher Peter Wohlleben once came upon a ring of mossy stones in a very old forest. Digging down, he realized that those stones were not actually stones but the remains of a tree dead 500 years or more. And more, he found they were still alive, deep down, having been fed by the surrounding roots for centuries.

Here, now, this round
of frozen stones dug
down's a stump. Dead
centuries now,
supposed dissolved,
cut down, gone, but,
wonder, though hollow
is green.

What time
has scooped out is
wombwood for shoot,
sawed off gold rings
of gains cut down
to sod, the rod
of God. What was
forgotten he's
now begotten.

INTERCESSORY PRAYER

ALVA STEFFLER

WE HEAR GOD SPEAK

(Please stand for the reading of God's Word.)

READERS: HOLMAN FAMILY

* OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURE

Psalm 29:4-11

- ⁴ The voice of the Lord is powerful;
the voice of the Lord is majestic.
- ⁵ The voice of the Lord breaks the cedars;
the Lord breaks in pieces the cedars of Lebanon.
- ⁶ He makes Lebanon leap like a calf,
Sirion like a young wild ox.
- ⁷ The voice of the Lord strikes
with flashes of lightning.
- ⁸ The voice of the Lord shakes the desert;
the Lord shakes the Desert of Kadesh.
- ⁹ The voice of the Lord twists the oaks
and strips the forests bare.
And in his temple all cry, "Glory!"
- ¹⁰ The Lord sits enthroned over the flood;
the Lord is enthroned as King forever.
- ¹¹ The Lord gives strength to his people;
the Lord blesses his people with peace. NIV

* NEW TESTAMENT SCRIPTURE

Luke 2:8-14

⁸ And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. ⁹ An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. ¹¹ Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

¹³ Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

¹⁴ "Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests." NIV

Romans 5:1-2

Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God. NIV

Philippians 4:6-7

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. NIV

Romans 12:18

If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. NIV

* CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

SERMON: *Live in Heavenly Peace*

WE ARE DISMISSED TO LOVE AND SERVE

* CLOSING SONG: *Glorious Light*

Keith and Kristyn Getty

1. Glor - i - ous light! See the dawn of sal - va - tion:
2. Long has the world fought the song of the an - gels;
3. There is a day all cre - a - tion has longed for,
5 An - gels in white fill the skies with their won - drous song, a -
Hea - ven - ly mus - ic is drowned by a war - ring world. Yet
when all of time has been spent and the Lord re - turns. His
10 wak - en - ing earth with news of His birth; Join the hymn of the
hope burns a light that shat - ters the night; Turn your heart to the
song we'll re - peat as Hea - ven com - pletes pro - mised peace that will
15 high - est hea - vens. Glo - ry to God in the high - est!
call of glo - ry.
fill the na - tion.
21 Peace to men on earth. Come and a - dore Him with
27 won - der - Christ, Lord of Hea - ven and earth.

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* BENEDICTION

* POSTLUDE

Today

If you are in need of prayer, elder [Gaby Sosa](mailto:gabydesosa10@gmail.com) will be glad to pray with you (gabydesosa10@gmail.com or 331-234-4094).

Thanks to our musicians: [Mary Hopper](#), [Sarah Holman](#), [Timothy Holman](#), [Nathaniel Holman](#).

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Thanks to our Livestream video crew: [Peter Welander](#), [Chris Danusiar](#)

1:00 - 3:00 p.m.

4:00 - 5:00 p.m.

6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

Food Pantry open

3rd - 5th grade Sunday School Zoom

Youth Group Zoom (Christmas party)

This Week

Monday

Observation of Blue Christmas, with sanctuary open hours for personal prayer and meditation (with a prayer elder available). The number in the sanctuary at any time will be limited to eight, masked and social-distanced.

Open Sanctuary hours: 10 a.m.- noon, 2 - 4 p.m., 6 - 8 p.m.

Tuesday

11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Food Pantry open

COMING

Christmas Eve: Plan to come to the church by 5 p.m. for a short outdoor service with candles and carols (masked, social-distanced).

The **Food Pantry** will be closed Sunday, December 27.

Advent Calendar Food Drop Off: If you have been participating in the Reverse Advent Calendar food collection, you may drop off your donations at the Food Pantry on Tuesday, December 29th, 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. or at the church Tuesday through Friday between 8:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. If you have children try to come on 12/29 and bring the family. There will be a little thank you for the kids.

ELDERS

*Katherine Anderson (Clerk of Session), Dan Balzer, Carl Pickard,
Sheroll Ritchie, Leon Sinclair, Gaby Sosa, Alva Steffler, Steve Westfall, Ken Wolgemuth*

DEACONS

*Phebe Balzer, Tim Curley, Becky Eggimann, Seth Ehorn, Debby France,
Marc Johnson, Michael Kendrick, Harv Meyers, Tom Nguyen, Heather Reyes (chair), Jack Swanson*

STAFF

*George A. Garrison, Senior Pastor; Annette LaPlaca, Minister of Congregational Life;
Alva Steffler, Minister of Congregational Care; Mary Hopper, Minister of Music;
Annika Durbin, Children's Minister; Anna and Scott Scheidt, Ministers to Youth;
Amber Johnson, Business Manager; Barbara Lawrence, Church Secretary; Frank Lawrence, Church Sexton*