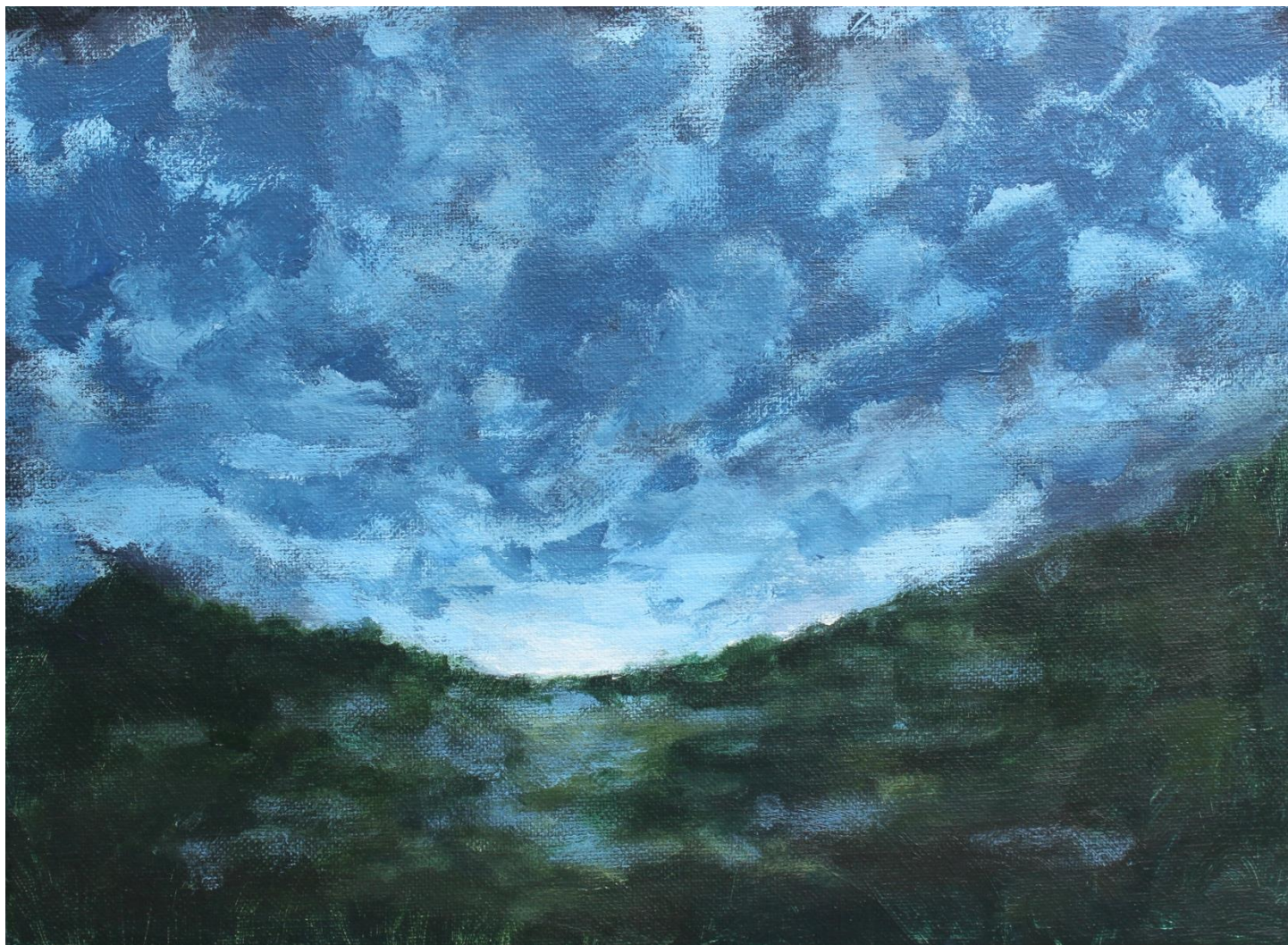


EVERY LONGING HEART

an Advent Communion Worship Service



November 30th 7PM
West End Presbyterian Church



Isaiah 9:2, Wesley Wilcox. 2025.

"Israel's strength and consolation, Hope of all the earth thou art; Dear Desire of every nation, Joy of every longing heart."

Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus, Charles Wesley, 1744

The celebration of the season of Advent, beginning four Sundays before Christmas day, dates back to the 4th century AD. It's a time that focuses our attention on Christ's first coming as well as His second coming when He will return to redeem His creation and rule with all power and authority. We are to be reminded that we do not know the day or the hour of Christ's return, and we are filled with both a sense of joyful expectation and humble reverence, with our spiritual focus being on lives of prayer and preparation.

Advent literally means "coming" or "arrival" and teaches us to expect Jesus as the long-awaited King, His salvation, and the final judgment of the world.

As we look forward to celebrating Christ's birth, we all know grief, loss, and longing. We come to the manger realizing that the world is as cold as stone, that feelings of loneliness and loss overwhelm, and that our hearts cry out: "Come, Lord Jesus! Wipe away every tear! Make all things new!"

Tonight's worship service leads us to lament the losses experienced in this broken world and **look expectantly in hope to Jesus**, the Desire of every nation, the true Joy of every longing heart.

Prepare for Worship

:: During this Advent worship service, we will prepare our hearts during an extended musical prelude. ::

Musical Gathering Advent Hymns

As the music is playing, take time to meditate on these Advent readings.

"The celebration of Advent is possible only to those who are troubled in soul, who know themselves to be poor and imperfect, and who look forward to something greater to come."

--Dietrich Bonhoeffer

"The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness,
on them has light shone...

For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given;
and the government shall be upon his shoulder,
and his name shall be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
Of the increase of his government and of peace
there will be no end,
on the throne of David and over his kingdom,
to establish it and to uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time forth and forevermore.
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this."

--Isaiah 9:2, 6-7

"Advent begins in the dark. It is the season that asks us to feel the weight of what is wrong in the world so we may long more deeply for the coming Redeemer."

--Fleming Rutledge

:: Congregation, please rise if you are able. ::

Leader: I cry aloud to God, aloud to God, and He will hear me.

People: In the day of my trouble I seek the Lord;

In the night my hand is stretched out without wearying;

My soul refuses to be comforted.

When I remember God, I moan; when I meditate, my spirit faints.

You hold my eyelids open; I am so troubled that I cannot speak.

I consider the days of old, the years long ago.

I said, "Let me remember my song in the night; let me meditate in my heart."

Then my spirit made a diligent search: "Will the Lord spurn forever, and never again be favorable?"

Has His steadfast love forever ceased? Are His promises at an end for all time?

Has God forgotten to be gracious? Has He in anger shut up His compassion?"

Then I said, "I will appeal to this, to the years of the right hand of the Most High."

I will remember the deeds of the LORD; yes, I will remember Your wonders of old.

I will ponder all Your work, and meditate on Your mighty deeds.

Song: O Come, O Come Emmanuel

"They will call Him Emmanuel, which means, 'God with us.'" Matthew 1:23

O come, O come Emmanuel
And ransom captive Israel
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear
Rejoice! Rejoice!
Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel

O come, Thou Dayspring from on high
And cause Thy light on us to rise
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night
And death's dark shadows put to flight
Rejoice! Rejoice!
Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel

O come, O Bright and Morning Star
And bring us comfort from afar
Dispel the shadows of the night
And turn our darkness into light
Rejoice! Rejoice!
Emmanuel has banished every fear of hell

O come, Thou King of nations, bring
An end to all our suffering
Bid every pain and sorrow cease
And reign now as our Prince of Peace
Rejoice! Rejoice!
Emmanuel shall come again with us to dwell

Latin Hymn (12th century), trans. John Mason Neale (1851); Tune: VENI EMMANUEL (13th century)

:: Congregation, please be seated. ::

Scripture Reading: Lamentations 3:20-25; 55-58

My soul continually remembers it
and is bowed down within me.
But this I call to mind,
and therefore I have hope:
The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases;
His mercies never come to an end;
they are new every morning;
great is Your faithfulness.
"The Lord is my portion," says my soul,
"therefore I will hope in Him."
The Lord is good to those who wait for Him,
to the soul who seeks Him.

"I called on Your name, O Lord,
from the depths of the pit;
You heard my plea, 'Do not close
Your ear to my cry for help!'
You came near when I called on You;
You said, 'Do not fear!'
"You have taken up my cause, O Lord;
You have redeemed my life."

Song: Drive Out the Darkness

"The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." John 1:5

:: The congregation will join in unison on the **refrain** after each verse ::

Come, O come, be our Light and drive out the darkness
Come, O come, be our Light and drive out the darkness
Come, Jesus, come

Every year under the thorn, every wrong that we have known
Every valley will be raised, ancient ruins will be remains...

Come, O come, be our Light and drive out the darkness
Come, O come, be our Light and drive out the darkness
Come, Jesus, come

In the emptiness of grief, through the night of suffering
In the loss and in the tears, God of comfort, O be near...

Come, O come, be our Light and drive out the darkness
Come, O come, be our Light and drive out the darkness
Come, Jesus, come

Prayers of Lament

Our great God, we lament the loss of loved ones who are now absent in our gatherings with family and friends. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

We lament the loss of broken relationships that bring grief and heartache in our homes. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

We lament the loss of health in those we love and in our own weak bodies. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

We lament with those that have lost loved ones in death due to violence, leaving widows and orphans in grief. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

We lament with those who have lost jobs and face economic hardship. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

We lament the lives of unborn children lost through abortion and miscarriages. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

We lament with those who have experienced grief and pain through racial tension, violence, conflict, and discrimination. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

We lament with the poor and the oppressed, for the unemployed and the destitute, for prisoners and captives. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

We lament hearts that have known confusion and condemnation. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

We lament with the weary, the rejected, the lonely, and the fearful. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

The people can add their own cries for God to meet them in their longings, and for Christ to come and set things right.

Song: Our Lord, Come

"Surely I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!" Revelation 22:20b

Our Lord, come
Come Lord Jesus, come

Thus says the LORD:

"In a time of favor I have answered you;
in a day of salvation I have helped you;
I will keep you and give you as
a covenant to the people,
to establish the land,
to apportion the desolate heritages,
saying to the prisoners, 'Come out,'
to those who are in darkness, 'Appear.' They
shall feed along the ways;
on all bare heights shall be their pasture;
they shall not hunger or thirst,
neither scorching wind nor sun shall strike them,
for He who has pity on them will lead them,
and by springs of water will guide them.
And I will make all my mountains a road,
and my highways shall be raised up.
Behold, these shall come from afar,
and behold, these from the north and from the west,
and these from the land of Syene."
Sing for joy, O heavens, and exult, O earth;
break forth, O mountains, into singing!
For the LORD has comforted His people and
will have compassion on His afflicted.

:: Congregation, please rise if you are able. ::

Song: O Come, All Ye Faithful

"Let us go to Bethlehem and see." Luke 2:15

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem
Come and behold Him born the King of angels...

*O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him
O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord*

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation
Sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above
Glory to God, glory in the highest...

Attr. to John Francis Wade (1751); Tune: ADESTE FIDELES, John Francis Wade, Cantus Diversi (1751).
Public Domain.

:: Congregation, please be seated. ::

Message: Psalm 13

Pastor Kevin Greene

To the choirmaster. A Psalm of David.

- ¹ How long, O LORD? Will you forget me forever?
How long will you hide your face from me?
- ² How long must I take counsel in my soul
and have sorrow in my heart all the day?
How long shall my enemy be exalted over me?
- ³ Consider and answer me, O LORD my God;
light up my eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death,
- ⁴ lest my enemy say, "I have prevailed over him,"
lest my foes rejoice because I am shaken.
- ⁵ But I have trusted in your steadfast love;
my heart shall rejoice in your salvation.
- ⁶ I will sing to the LORD,
because he has dealt bountifully with me.

For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me." In the same way, after supper He took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me." For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.

Prayer

Almighty and merciful Father, we come to you at Advent with the brokenness of the world in our eyes, the cries of injustice, loneliness, and sadness in our ears, and the failures and confusion of sin in our hearts. O promised Christ: We are a world at war; our peace depends on Your coming. We are an unfulfilled, longing people; our hope depends upon Your coming. We are a sinful people; our pardon depends on Your coming. Lord Jesus, Word made flesh, forgive our sins, comfort our hearts, and lift our eyes to look for Your glorious return with hope and joy. Come, Lord Jesus! Amen.

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper

West End Presbyterian Church welcomes all baptized Christians who actively trust in Jesus Christ for salvation, who are willing to forsake their sin and heart-idols, and who are members of congregations that proclaim the Gospel, to participate in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper with us. The Elders presiding over the Supper are praying for you as the congregation participates in the sacrament. For a list of ingredients in the wafers, see www.wepc.org/communion.

Song: O Taste and See

"Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good." Psalm 34:8

O taste and see that the Lord is good...
The Lord is good, the Lord is good

And all the time the Lord is good...
The Lord is good, the Lord is good

The night is dark but the Lord is good...
The Lord is good, the Lord is good

O taste and see that the Lord is good...
The Lord is good, the Lord is good

Molly Parden & Dee Wilson, ©2025 The Porter's Gate. Used by permission. CCLI #708363

:: Congregation, please rise if you are able. ::

Let Your steadfast love, O LORD, be upon us,
even as we hope in You.

But they who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength;
they shall mount up with wings like eagles;
they shall run and not be weary;
they shall walk and not faint.

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power
of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.

Songs of Response: Come Light Our Hearts

"Blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the LORD his God..." Psalm 146:5

For You, O Lord, our souls in stillness wait
For You, O Lord, our souls in stillness wait
Truly our hope is in You
Truly our hope is in You

O Lord of life, our only hope
Your radiance shines
On all who look to You in the dark
Emmanuel come, come light our hearts...

Oh joy above all other loves
In You we find more than enough
We come as we are, O heal and restore
Come light our hearts...

Come Thou Long Expected Jesus

"And a Redeemer will come to Zion, to those in Jacob who turn from transgression," declares the LORD."
Isaiah 59:20

Come Thou long expected Jesus
Born to set Thy people free
From our fears and sins release us
Let us find our rest in Thee
Israel's strength and consolation
Hope of all the earth Thou art Dear
desire of every nation
Joy of every longing heart

Born Thy people to deliver
Born a child and yet a King Born
to reign in us forever
Now Thy gracious Kingdom bring
By Thine own eternal Spirit
Rule in all our hearts alone
By Thine all sufficient merit
Raise us to Thy glorious throne

Words: Charles Wesley (vv. 1 & 3, 1748) | Mark E. Hunt (v. 2, 1978).
Tune: HYFRYDOL, Rowland Hugh Prichard (1855). Public Domain.

Benediction

I Peter 5:10-11

¹⁰And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you. ¹¹To him be the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Pastor Kevin Greene gave tonight's message and administered the Lord's Supper.

Worship Arts Director Becca Wethered, Elder Chris Newlin, Mya Wilcox,
Win Benko, Sonya Smith, Wesley Wilcox, and Deacon Luke Shrader
served in tonight's worship service.