

Sunday, December 24, 2023
10:00 am
Fourth Sunday of Advent

REFLECTION

"How is God calling you this Advent season to slow down, open your eyes in wonder, and expectantly wait for is already in the process of being born?"

Rev. Carl Gregg

PRELUDE

"Once He Came in Blessing"

Wilbur Held

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

WELCOMING ONE ANOTHER

INTROIT

"Prepare the Way"

PREPARE THE WAY

Prepare the way of the Lord. Prepare the way of the Lord,
and all people will see the salvation of our God

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

Session Members: Barbara Heuston and Lydia Spinelli

*HYMN NO. 88 verses 1, 2, and 3 *"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"*

VENI EMMANUEL

1. O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.

Refrain: Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

2. O come, thou Wisdom from on high, who orderest all things mightily:
to us the path of knowledge show; and teach us in her ways to go.

Refrain

3. O come, O come, thou Lord of might, who to thy tribes on Sinai's height
in ancient times didst give the law in cloud and majesty and awe.

Refrain

*PRAYER OF CONFESSION

We watch for packages to arrive and Christmas cards to be delivered, but we do not keep our eyes open for your coming, Approaching God. We expect our Christmas 'wish list' to be filled, and for the pile under the tree to grow and grow, but we hope you do not expect to transform our lives. We notice where to find the best bargains, and what decorations our neighbors have put on their houses, but we do not notice the little, the least, the lost, the last walking down our streets.

Forgive us, Saving God, for our misplace priorities. May we watch for your coming, may we reach out to those in need, may we wait for hope to come, even as Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, arrives to live in our hearts. Amen.

*ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

The good news is made known to all people: Christ Jesus was born to save us from our sins.
Glory and praise to the only wise God, who fills us with healing and hope. Amen.

*HYMN OF RESPONSE

"Wait for the Lord"

Berthier

Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.
Wait for the Lord, keep watch take heart!

CHILDREN'S SERMON

CHILDREN'S PRAYER RESPONSE

We are Marching in the light of God,
We are marching in the light of God!

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON

Psalm 89:1-5

Page 516, OT

SPECIAL MUSIC

"People Look East"

Barry Ferguson

GOSPEL LESSON

Luke 1:26-38

Page 53, NT

SERMON

"Where Is God in All This Mess?"

Rev. William Schram

*HYMN NO. 145

"What Child Is This"

GREENSLEEVES

1. What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet while shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
Haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary!
2. Why lies he in such mean estate where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear; for sinners here the silent Word is pleading.
Nails, spear, shall pierce him through; the cross be borne for me, for you.
Hail, hail, the Word made flesh, the babe, the son of Mary!
3. So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh; come, one and all, to own him.
The King of kings salvation brings; let loving hearts enthrone him.
Raise, raise the song on high. The Virgin sings her lullaby.
Joy, joy, for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mary!

JOYS AND CONCERNS

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND 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.**

SPECIAL MUSIC

"Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus"

arr. Lloyd Larson

*HYMN NO. 113

"Angels We Have Heard on High"

GLORIA

1. Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o'er the plains,
and the mountains in reply echoing their joyous strains.
Refrain: Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!
2. Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be which inspire your heavenly song?
Refrain
3. Come to Bethlehem and see him whose birth the angels sing;
come, adore on bended knee Christ, the Lord, the newborn King.
Refrain

*BENEDICTION

*BENEDICATION RESPONSE

“Amen”

POSTLUDE

“O Come All Ye Faithful”

Wilbur Held

* Please rise in body or spirit

WORSHIP PARTICIPANTS

Rev. William Schram

Valerie Shondel, Director of Music

FPC Section Leaders:

Abbey Clyne, Rachel Jufer, Justin McBurney, Alan Smulen

Lauren Willenborg, Alto

Ray Liptak, AV Engineer

Dennis Velez, Assistant AV Engineer

Matthew Califf & Michael Sperrazza, AV Team

✠ We are glad you have chosen to worship here today! Please come again!
✠ For more information about our church, please visit our website:

www.firstprescaldwell.org

Upcoming Events

12/24—Christmas Eve Services 10:00am—8:00pm—10:00pm all in the Sanctuary.

12/31—New Year’s Eve Service 10:00am in the Sanctuary