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## FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

### WE GATHER TO WORSHIP GOD

#### Prelude

Overture, from *Messiah*  
by G.F. Handel

#### Welcome & Announcements

Leader: This is a day that God has made!

**All: Let us rejoice and be glad in it!**

*Time for sharing news of the church.*

#### Crossing the Threshold

Leader: This Advent, we are looking to hear words of comfort,  
of challenge and of good news.

**People: The prophet Isaiah and the four Gospel authors were writing  
in a time when people needed desperately to hear all of these as well.**

Leader: This first week, Isaiah, the prophet,  
and Mark – the Gospel writer who published first –  
reassure the people that good news is beginning and yet they both say,

**People: “Make yourself ready!  
Raise your voices, change your hearts,  
get ready to be transformed, because now is the time.”**

Leader: Let us embrace hope that we can do what needs to be done  
to bring more light into the world.

#### The Threshold Music

**I Believe**  
by Mark Miller

## Opening Prayer and Lighting the Hope Candle on the Advent Wreath

Leader: Holy One, we thank you for the glimpses we catch of your gift of untiring Hope.  
Even in the midst of fear, of challenge, of struggle –  
even when our view is obscured by clouds of doubt,  
ignite the flame of Hope within us,

**People: ...that we might glow with its brilliance from the inside out.**

## The Threshold Music Reprise

Leader: Help us face this bleak night of the soul and embrace it as a womb of rebirth.

**People: Amen.**

Leader: You are invited to light your own Hope candle of Advent.

## Gathering Advent Song

**Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus**

*Glory to God #82, v. 1-2*

## Invitation to Confession

Leader: 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 us pray together:

## Prayer of Confession (Unison)

**God of Glory, we confess that we have not recognized you in our midst nor listened for your voice. Our faith is fragile, and our sin goes unrecognized amid our massive self-concern. We have lived as if we have no need to account for the life we have been given. Too often as a church we are more focused on our own survival than on its mission and ministry in the world. We come to you today with sincere repentance for our neglect. We have failed to prepare the way for the Christ's entry into our everyday environment. Pardon and change us, we pray. Amen.**

## Assurance of God's Forgiveness

Leader: 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.

**People: Surely our salvation is at hand.  
Faithfulness will spring up from the ground,  
and righteousness will look down from the sky. Alleluia!**

## Passing the Peace

Leader: Since God in Christ Jesus has forgiven us,  
let us forgive one another.  
The peace of Jesus Christ be with you all.  
Please share the peace of Jesus Christ  
with those with whom you are joining us for worship.

## Song of Praise

**This Little Light of Mine**

*v. 1*

## WE HEAR THE WORD OF GOD

### Prayer for Illumination

Leader: God of Good News, who sent John as a messenger to people of his day and who speaks to us in numerous words and deeds of the saints of all ages, open us now to receive what we most need today, that we may serve as a vital resource to others who are looking for meaning and hope in their lives. Amen.

### First Scripture Reading

Isaiah 40:1-11

Comfort, comfort my people!  
says your God.  
Speak compassionately to Jerusalem,  
and proclaim to her that her compulsory service has ended,  
that her penalty has been paid,  
that she has received from the Lord's hand  
double for all her sins!

A voice is crying out:  
"Clear the Lord's way in the desert!  
Make a level highway in the wilderness for our God!

Every valley will be raised up,  
and every mountain and hill will be flattened.  
Uneven ground will become level,  
and rough terrain a valley plain.

The Lord's glory will appear,  
and all humanity will see it together;  
the Lord's mouth has commanded it."

A voice was saying:  
"Call out!"  
And another said,  
"What should I call out?"  
All flesh is grass;  
all its loyalty is like the flowers of the field.

The grass dries up  
and the flower withers  
when the Lord's breath blows on it.  
Surely the people are grass.

The grass dries up;  
the flower withers,  
but our God's word will exist forever.

Go up on a high mountain,  
messenger Zion!  
Raise your voice and shout,  
messenger Jerusalem!  
Raise it; don't be afraid;  
say to the cities of Judah,  
"Here is your God!"

Here is the Lord God,  
coming with strength,  
with a triumphant arm,  
bringing his reward with him  
and his payment before him.

Like a shepherd, God will tend the flock;  
he will gather lambs in his arms  
and lift them onto his lap.  
He will gently guide the nursing ewes.

### The Witness of Music

### Las Posadas

The litany *Para pedir posada* (“Asking for a place to stay”) is sung during the Christmas festival celebrations of *Las Posadas* (The Inns) in Mexico and other parts of the Latin America. It reenacts Mary and Joseph seeking lodging, being turned away at various places until finally finding shelter. The first half of the song is sung by those acting as Joseph and Mary, going door to door, and then various neighbors would respond in the second half that they don’t have room. Then one house would be the “final” inn, and they would sing a refrain as they welcome the travelers in.

We are adapting the song so the entrance refrain is sung every week of Advent. The translation is:

Come in, holy pilgrims! Receive this corner!

Because, even though the place is poor, I offer it to you from my heart.

Refrain:

¡En - tren san - tos Pe - re - gri - nos, Pe - re - gri - nos! ¡Re - ci -  
po - bre la mo - ra - da, la - mo - ra - da, os la

4

1. 2.

-ban es - te rin - cón! Aun - que es  
doy de co - ra - - - - zón.

## Second Scripture Reading

Mark 1:1-15

The beginning of the good news about Jesus Christ, God's Son, happened just as it was written about in the prophecy of Isaiah:

*Look, I am sending my messenger before you.  
He will prepare your way,  
a voice shouting in the wilderness:  
“Prepare the way for the Lord;  
make his paths straight.”*

John the Baptist was in the wilderness calling for people to be baptized to show that they were changing their hearts and lives and wanted God to forgive their sins. Everyone in Judea and all the people of Jerusalem went out to the Jordan River and were being baptized by John as they confessed their sins. John wore clothes made of camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist. He ate locusts and wild honey. He announced, "One stronger than I am is coming after me. I'm not even worthy to bend over and loosen the strap of his sandals. I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

About that time, Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and John baptized him in the Jordan River. While he was coming up out of the water, Jesus saw heaven splitting open and the Spirit, like a dove, coming down on him. And there was a voice from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I dearly love; in you I find happiness."

At once the Spirit forced Jesus out into the wilderness. He was in the wilderness for forty days, tempted by Satan. He was among the wild animals, and the angels took care of him.

After John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee announcing God's good news, saying, "Now is the time! Here comes God's kingdom! Change your hearts and lives, and trust this good news!"

Leader: The Word of God for the people of God.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Message: **"I Believe in the Sun: Hope for Tomorrow"**

**Rev. Marilyn Gamm**

## WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

Advent Song of Response

**Creator of the Stars of Night**  
*Glory to God #84, v 1-4*

## Litany of Belief

Leader: In times when humanity disappoints,  
perhaps when even our own thoughts and behaviors disappoint,  
it is an important act to call out, name and claim,  
the consequences of our wrongs.  
And in times of distress, it is a prophetic act to call out,  
name and claim, our belief in the hope for tomorrow.  
Hear these statements of belief from members of our own congregation:

Leader: I believe even when so many people in our world are spewing hate

People: **that God is Love.**

Leader: I believe even when in times of bitter partisan and societal division

People: **that we are all God's children.**

Leader: I believe that even when the world becomes crazy and unpredictable  
**People: that we continue to be a rock providing a constant presence and reminder of God's love and care for us.**

Leader: I believe even when a global pandemic has turned life as we have known it upside down  
**People: that hardship brings the best learning and growth.**

Leader: I believe that even when living through difficult and challenging times  
**People: that the connections we share make the hardship bearable.**

Leader: I believe that even when the Christian faith is ridiculed as lacking integrity, welcome and inclusivity  
**People: that we are called to be a community that goes into the world, loves all people, grows active faith in Christ, and transforms people. Amen.**

### Prayers in the Stillness

Leader: I invite you to get in a comfortable position of rest.  
I invite you to get as quiet and still as you can.  
I invite you to a deep breath and a deep listening posture – perhaps eyes closed or fixed on a candle – as we prepare for a time of prayer.

### The Stillness Music

**In the Stillness**  
*by Mark Miller, Lindy Thompson*

### Prayers of the People

*A time for silent prayers will be offered during the Prayers of the People.*

Leader: .... Meet me in the stillness, Lord.

### Stillness Coda

**In the Stillness**  
*by Mark Miller, Lindy Thompson*

### 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.**

### Offering

#### Invitation

#### Doxology

**O Gladsome Light**  
*Glory to God #672, v. 1*

### Prayer of Dedication (Unison)

**While we are waiting and preparing for the Christ to appear, we are seeking, O God, to act as faithful followers. May our offerings extend the promise of salvation to people whose lives are broken by neglect, abuse, bad choices, and sinful ways. May these gifts offer hope to all whose suffering and loss seem to heavy to bear. May our church be a listening, caring presence for all its members and participants, and through us for all those we meet out in our community. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.**

## WE GO FORTH TO SERVE IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST

**Carol of Resistance**

**Born in the Night, Mary's Child**  
*Glory to God #158, v 1-4*

**Commission and Blessing**

**Postlude**

**Carol of the Bells**  
*by Mykola Leontovych*

### Participants in Today's Worship

**Pastor** – Marilyn Gamm

**Director of Music & Pianist/Organist** – Christian Hendricks

**Liturgist** – Pat Gibbons

**Children & Youth Minister** – Hannah Peters

**Communications Coordinator** – Katie Gibbons

**Technical Support** – Dylan Voss and John Roman

**Soloist** – Janelle Pierce

### **The Trinity Choir:**

*Soprano – Aleta Klein, Cricket Gordon, Jenn Clodi, Madeline Black (Section Leader)*

*Alto – Connie Torretta, Margy Brown, Nancy Wagoner, Rachel Presti, Janelle Pierce (Section Leader)*

*Tenor – Brian Schroer, Pat Courtney, Evan Babel (Section Leader)*

*Bass – George Van Hare, Nigel Holloway, John Galczynski*

Contact Trinity's staff and leadership by emailing [admin@trinityucity.org](mailto:admin@trinityucity.org) or contacting the church office.

## TRINITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH NEWS AND NOTES FOR NOVEMBER 29, 2020

*We open our doors to all persons to join in worship, fellowship, educational programs, and service.*

*We welcome into membership all who profess faith in Jesus Christ without regard to gender, race, ethnic origin, worldly conditions, sexual orientation, disability, or any other human condition.*

*We elect and ordain persons who are called by God and committed to serving the Lord Jesus Christ in the Church.*

### **I Believe Even When....**

**The Worship Committee is excited to share that our theme for this year's four Sundays of Advent, for framing the traditional Christmas Eve Lessons and Carols, and for the Sunday after Christmas is "I Believe Even When...."**

As the language of the soul even during these challenging times, this worship series is designed to focus upon and heighten our music appreciation "even when" we cannot be together in all the many ways we would prefer.

As such, our weekly worship format will be modified to include a time of "Threshold Music" as we from wherever we are gathering "enter" into the service, a time of appreciating the "Witness of Music" between the weekly Scripture readings and concluding each week with a "Carol of Resistance."

Our weekly services will include an original “Litany of Belief” composed from the one-liners you have submitted that capture what we as a worshipping Christian community believe through which we will name and claim our belief in the hope for tomorrow.

And our services will also include a time for “Prayers in the Stillness” at the beginning of our weekly prayers of the people.

### **December Sunday Symposium**

Our December Sunday Symposium will be December 6 at 11:15 a.m. via Zoom. In addition to a time of fellowship, the Session has called a Congregation meeting during the Symposium for the purpose of electing four members each to the Session and to the Board of Deacons, and to elect two members of the congregation to the 2021 Nominating Committee.

**To ensure that we will have a quorum for the Congregation meeting, please RSVP your plans to attend to Clerk of Session Brian Muegge by Wednesday, December 2.**

The nominating slates are as follows:

Session, Class of 2023:

Diana Gray  
Kevin Harkins  
Sarah Mayer  
Tim Rand

Board of Deacons, class of 2023:

DeAnne Brown  
Stacy Carman  
John Merker  
Joanne Roman

At-large members of Nominating Committee for 2021:

Pat Gibbons  
Sandy Norkatis

**Working for justice means keeping the issues in the forefront of people's minds.** Every Wednesday, members of First Presbyterian Church stand at their busy corner of Midland and Delmar, holding signs acknowledging that Black Lives Matter and demanding Justice for those who have been murdered.

They welcome us to join them each week. Currently they meet from 5:30-6:30pm each Wednesday, but will probably switch to 5-6pm once we have the time change. Please contact Liz Nelson for more details (314-359-2478; leithskye@gmail.com), or show up on the front lawn if First Pres with a sign and a desire for justice!

**Trinity is “broadcasting” our Sunday morning 10 a.m. worship service via our Facebook page or you can watch the recording on YouTube later on Sundays.** Those who participate in this way on home computers or mobile devices can even type messages to one another during the live service, such as doing a virtual passing of the peace. Also, Facebook has captions! While watching the service, find the gear icon at the bottom of the video and click on it. When you do, an option pops up to turn on closed captioning!

Kids and parents probably already know about this, but if you are not a parent of a young person and have **wondered what goes on in “Children’s Church,” now you can experience it!** Hannah Peters has taped a

YouTube video, and updated links will be posted regularly on the “Sundays at Trinity” section of our website homepage.

**As we live in this challenging time, Trinity continues to be available to all those who need us.**

Members desiring pastoral care are encouraged to call the church office at 314-725-3840 or to reach out to Deacons Margy Brown, 314-452-7241, or Cathy Smith, 314-725-0586. Your need will be shared confidentially with our Transitional Pastor the Reverend Marilyn Gamm. You also can email her directly at [Marilyn.Gamm@TrinityUCity.org](mailto:Marilyn.Gamm@TrinityUCity.org)

**Supporting the church through your financial gifts continues to be encouraged!** Please mail your contributions to Trinity Presbyterian Church, Att’n: Linde, 6800 Washington Ave., University City, MO 63130, or check out the online giving instructions below.

1) Text the code TPCDONATE \$[your gift] to 73256. You'll receive a text back with a link that lets you complete your online donation.

2) Log in to your Realm account and click on the "Giving" tab.

#### **Session**

Gordon Brown, Dayna Early, Nigel Holloway, Kris Kerr, Mary Klingensmith, Mike Krivonak, Mary McKown, Brian Muegge (Clerk), Rachel Presti, John Roman, Jan Schulte-Glad, George Van Hare

#### **Deacons**

Margy Brown, Bill Cahoon, Kathie Cahoon, Anna Gardner-Andrews, Jennifer Higginbotham, Corie Merker, Jim Person, Art Platt, Diana Regan, Joanne Roman, Cathy Smith, Spirit Sorensen