

Grace Community Presbyterian Church
December 5, 2021



Second Sunday of Advent
12/5/21

Thought for Meditation:

Joy is the capacity to hear the name (of God) and to recognize that God is here. *Eugene Peterson*
Most joy is anticipatory. It normally has something of an eschatological character. *Karl Barth*

Prelude	Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence	Travis
Welcome and Announcements		Doug Marshall
* Call To Worship		Terri Ludwig
	Advent Wreath Ceremony: The Shepherds' Candle	
* Hymn of Praise	O Come, O Come, Emmanuel	#245

Prayer of Confession

Merciful God, always with us, always coming: We confess that we do not know how to prepare for your Advent. We have forgotten how to hope in miracles; we have ignored the promise of your kingdom; in the busyness of the season we have missed the joy of your salvation.

Forgive us, God. Grant us the simple wonder of the shepherds, the seeking courage of the Magi, and the trusting faith of Mary and Joseph. In the quietness of our hearts make us ready for the coming of Jesus, our Lord and Savior... *Silent Prayer of Confession*

Assurance of Forgiveness

Zephaniah 3:14-15

L: Sing aloud, O daughter Zion; shout, O Israel!

P: Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter Jerusalem!

L: The LORD has taken away the judgments against you.

P: The king of Israel, the LORD, is with us!

L: Grace Church, believe the Good News:

P: In Jesus Christ we are forgiven!

All: Alleluia! Praise the Lord!

*** Passing of the Peace**

L: Since God has forgiven us in Christ, let us forgive one another.

The peace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

P: And also with you.

Please pass the peace of Christ to your neighbors in the pews and introduce yourself to those you do not know.

*** Glory Be To The Father**

#813

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be.

World without end. Amen. Amen.

Special Music **A Winter's Song (Martin)** **Chancel Choir**

Congregational Meeting: Today, December 5, Session has called for a congregational meeting, immediately after worship. The purpose of the meeting is to review and receive the 2022 budget.

Mask Update: The session discussed the increasing number of COVID cases in western PA. There will be no drastic actions at this time (i.e. not cancelling worship), however we do want to encourage people to be careful and take precautions when needed. The one “change” we are making (which is noted on signs at the entrance doors) has to do with masks. The signs used to ask people to wear masks if they are not vaccinated. The signs now say: **If you are not vaccinated, or you have cold / flu symptoms, PLEASE WEAR A MASK. This will help keep others safe.**

If you have any questions about this, please feel free to give the Pastor a call or come by the office.

Today’s music: “Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence” is one of the earliest Christian hymns still in common usage. It dates to the 4th century and is based on the “Prayer of the Cherubic Hymn” in the Liturgy of St. James. The ancient Liturgy of St. James originated with the Church at Jerusalem. It was thought to have been the work of James the Lesser, the brother of Jesus, but current research places it in the time of Cyril of Jerusalem, c. 347.

In worship, this liturgy leads up to the celebration of the Eucharist. The hymn was used as the bread and wine were brought into the sanctuary. This was intense drama, not for entertainment but inviting the worshipper to experience the awe and mystery of God becoming incarnate and ultimately our sacrifice, and to join the angels in praise. In 1864, Anglican priest Gerard Moultrie provided an English translation from the original Greek.

Philip Nicolai was a Lutheran pastor in Unna, a small town in Germany, when an outbreak of the plague did its terrible work during the winter of 1597-1598. The plague took the lives of more than 1,300 people in his community. He kept busy all winter conducting funerals (at times as many as thirty a day) and comforting the sick and grieving. It was in the midst of this heart rending period that he wrote a series of meditations to which he gave the title "Joyful Mirror of the Eternal Life". It was a book of pious and devout reflection, which included two hymns (both words and music) that quickly attained a wide popularity, and are still sung today.

Wake, Awake, for Night is Flying (also known as “Sleepers, Wake, a Voice Is Calling”) is one of those two hymns. It is a hymn of encouragement — a statement of faith in the coming of the Christ who overcame death on the cross — and who overcomes death for us as well. The hymn uses the image of the watchman on a city wall (Isaiah 52:8), and of the Parable of the Bridesmaids welcoming the Bridegroom to the Marriage.

We have two arrangements of this hymn today. Our offertory is by Baroque composer Johann Walther. His arrangement uses typical musical weavings of the Baroque period (though not as complex as those of his better-known cousin, J.S. Bach). The postlude is by Sigfrid Karg-Elert, a German Romantic composer. Karg-Elert developed an original style that melded the extreme chromaticism of his time with the music of the Renaissance and Baroque.

*Wake, awake, for night is flying,
The watchmen on the heights are crying, Awake, Jerusalem, at last.
Midnight hears the welcome voices,
And at the thrilling cry rejoices: “Come forth, you maidens! Night is past.”
The bridegroom comes! Awake;
Your lamps with gladness take!” Alleluia!
Rise, and prepare the feast to share;
Go, meet the bridegroom, who draws near.*

This Week's Calendar

Dec. 5	Congregational Meeting	
Dec. 5	Amy's Angels Gifts Due	
Dec. 7	Bible Study	1:00pm
Dec. 8	Choir	7:00pm

Looking Ahead

Dec. 12	Christmas Dinner	5:00pm
Dec. 14	Bible Study	1:00pm
Dec. 15	Choir	7:00pm
Dec. 16	Ladies Club	6:30pm

Grace Community Presbyterian Church
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Website: www.gracecommunitypresbyterian.org
Worship Service is at 10:00am

Church Staff:

Pastor: Doug Marshall, Interim Pastor
doug@gracecommunitypresbyterian.org
Secretary: Wendy Stein Clark
secretary@gracecommunitypresbyterian.org
Christian Ed.: Bill Ludwig (interim)
Organist: Kenneth Mc Geary
Treasurer: Ray Zerjav
Custodian: John Baron and Paul Zurich

Elders

Cathy Brady*
Dave Briscoe*
Arch Carroll
Cathy Christoforetti
Michael Cochenour*
Martha Gumbert
David Highfield
Dan Howard
John Irvin*
Henry Kedzierski
Val Lester*
Lew McNay
Glenn Nordmark*
Stephanie Tutka*
Cathy Vitari**

Deacons

Darlene Artman
Rich Artman
Gary Barbiaux
Judy Barbiaux
Kitty Berkey
Margie Bistline
Beulah Brown
Jackie Chickerella*
Cindy Irvin
Linda Johnson
Terri Ludwig
Connie Markle
Judy Sulitz
Mary Ann Walter
Lou Walter

*Denotes Chairman

**Clerk of Session

*Denotes Moderator