

CHURCH SESSION

Class of 2023

Rosemary Gordon
Sharon Ragghianti
Becky Stirling

Class of 2024

Akwi Lillian Aseh
Susie Hayes
Janet Vawter

Moderator: John Michael Krech
Clerk: Becky Stirling
Treasurer: Jere Lawson

Class of 2025

Jere Lawson
John Price
Matthew Smith

CHURCH STAFF

Pastor	John Michael Krech, jmkrech@yahoo.com
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Nursery Attendants	Kathe Walker & Judy Thigpun
Financial Administrator/Admin Asst.	Betsy Lewis, eaclewis@yahoo.com
Sexton	Scott Hunter
Director of Grace Pres. Child Care	Jill Bailey, childcare@grace-pres.org

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Please consider Grace Presbyterian Church in your estate planning.



Grace Presbyterian Church is a congregation of the Presbyterian Church (USA),
Presbytery of the Mid-South, Synod of Living Waters.

Grace Presbyterian Church

Worships God at 11:00 a.m.

December 10, 2023

Second Sunday in Advent

The Bell Calls Us to Worship

Prelude

Masters in This Hall

Traditional French Carol
arr. Lani Smith

The congregation stands to sing

Hymn 7 Lord Christ, When First You Came to Earth Mit Freuden Zart

Opening Sentences

Pastor: Our help is in the name of the Lord,

People: **The Maker of heaven and earth.**

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Pastor: Let us pray.

Prayer for the Day (spoken by the pastor; the congregation joining the **Amen**.)

Merciful God, you sent your messengers the prophets to preach repentance and prepare the way for our salvation. Give us grace to heed their warnings and forsake our sins, that we may greet with joy the coming of Jesus Christ our Redeemer; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

The congregation sits.

Lighting the Second Candle in the Advent Wreath

Ellen Cox, Reeves Street, and Daniel Whitaker

At the conclusion of the candle lighting service, all stand to sing:

O come, Desire of na- tions, bind All peoples in one heart and mind;

Bid envy, strife and dis- cord cease, Fill the whole world with heav- en's peace.

Rejoice; rejoice. Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Is- rael.

Pastor: The peace of Christ be always with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Passing of the Peace (Worshippers safely greet one another with the peace of Christ, and then sit for the announcements.)

Welcome and Announcements

The children bring their ringing offering and come to the Chrismon tree for a
Time for Young Christians

Prayer for Illumination

Old Testament

Isaiah 40:1-11

Psalms 85:1-2,8-13

Unison

Lord, you were favorable to your land; you restored the fortunes of Jacob.

You forgave the iniquity of your people; you pardoned all their sin.

Let me hear what God the Lord will speak,

for he will speak peace to his people,

to his faithful, to those who turn to him in their hearts.

Surely God's salvation is at hand for those who fear him,

that his glory may dwell in our land.

Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet;

righteousness and peace will kiss each other.

Faithfulness will spring up from the ground,

and righteousness look down from the sky.

The Lord will give what is good, and our land will yield its increase.

Righteousness will go before him and will make a path for his steps.

Anthem

An Advent Alleluia Douglas E. Wagner, 1994

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. Alleluia Born Thy people to deliver, born a child and yet a king, Born to reign in us forever, now thy gracious kingdom bring. Alleluia.

(-- Text by Charles Wesley, 1744; Music based on Kanon in D (Pachelbel, c. 1700); and Hyfrydol, Rowland Hugh Prichard, 1831)

Epistle

2 Peter 3:8-15a

The congregation stands to sing

Hymn 3

Comfort, Comfort You My People

Psalms 42

The congregation sits.

Gospel

Mark 1:1-8

Sermon

The Reason for the Season – of Advent

Mike Krech

“... the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, ‘prepare the way of the Lord...’” Mark 1:3

The congregation stands to sing

Hymn 10

On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry Winchester New

Apostles' Creed

Unison; Hymnal, page 14, Traditional

Gloria in Excelsis

Refrain of Hymn 23

Gloria

The congregation sits.

Pastoral Prayer of Thanksgiving, Intercession, and Dedication

The Lord's Prayer (debts/debtors)

Unison; Hymnal, page 16, Traditional

Offertory Sentence

Offertory

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

Rickie Cooke, bell tree; Susan Steppe, organ

The congregation stands to sing the

Doxology 592

Old Hundredth

Benediction

Hymn 13

Prepare the Way

Bereden Väg För Herran

Worshipers are encouraged to be seated for the postlude,

or you may depart the sanctuary quietly and quickly now if necessary.

Postlude

Mit Freuden Zart

Bohemian Brethren, 1566

arr. David Paxton

Welcome to worship at Grace Presbyterian Church.

Today is the second Sunday in Advent, the first season of the new liturgical year.

Isaiah 40, today's Old Testament, is believed to reflect the release of the people of Judah from their captivity in Babylon in the 530's B.C. They are being allowed to return home to Jerusalem, having "received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins."

Now God's care will lead them back home as a way for the Lord is made through

the wilderness, and God will feed the flock like a shepherd

Our Gospel reading from Mark 1 describes John the Baptizer as a forerunner of Jesus.

In the Epistle lesson today, Peter urges patience and faithfulness even if the coming

of the Lord seems slow.

(JMK)

Hymn Texts for Online Worship

Lord Christ, When First You Came to Earth

Lord Christ, when first You came to earth, Upon a cross they bound You.
And mocked Your saving kingship then, By thorns with which they crowned You.
And still our wrongs may weave You now New thorns to pierce that steady brow,
And robe of sorrow round You.

O wondrous love, which found no room In life, where sin denied You,
And, doomed to death, must bring to doom The power which crucified You,
Till not a stone was left on stone, And all a nation's pride o'erthrown,
Went down to dust beside You.

New advent of the love of Christ, shall we again refuse You,
Till in the night of hate and war We perish as we lose You?
From old un-faith our souls release To seek the kingdom of Your peace,
By which alone we choose You.

O wounded hands of Jesus, build in us Your new creation;
Our pride is dust, our vaunt is stilled, We wait Your revelation.
O Love that triumphs over loss, We bring our hearts before Your cross;
Come, finish Your salvation.

Text: Walter Russell Bowie, 1928; alt.

Tune: MIT FREUDEN ZART; Bohemian Brethren's *Kirchengesang*, 1566

Comfort, Comfort You My People

Comfort, comfort you my people, Tell of peace, thus says our God;
Comfort those who sit in darkness Bowed beneath oppression's load.
Speak you to Jerusalem Of the peace that waits for them;
Tell them that their sins I cover, And their warfare now is over.

For the herald's voice is calling In the desert far and near,
Bidding us to make repentance Since the kingdom now is here.
O that warning cry obey! Now prepare for God a way;
Let the valleys rise in meeting And the hills bow down in greeting.

Make you straight what long was crooked, Make the rougher places plain;
Let your hearts be true and humble, As befits God's holy reign.
For the glory of the Lord Now o'er earth is shed abroad;
And all flesh shall see the token That God's word is never broken.

Text: Johannes Olearius, 1671; Trans. Catherine Winkworth, 1863; alt.

Tune: PSALM 42; Genevan Psalter, 1551

On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry

On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry Announces that the Lord is nigh;
Awake and hearken for he brings Glad tidings of the King of kings!

Then cleansed be every life from sin; Make straight the way for God within,
And let us all our hearts prepare For Christ to come and enter there.

We hail You as our Savior, Lord, Our refuge, and our great reward;
O let Your face upon us shine And fill the world with love divine.

All praise to You, eternal Son, Whose advent has our freedom won,
Whom with the Father we adore, And Holy Spirit, evermore.

Text: Charles Coffin, 1736; Trans. John Chandler, 1837; alt.

Tune: WINCHESTER NEW; *Musickalischches Handbuch*, 1690;

Harm. William Henry Monk, 1847; alt.

Prepare the Way

Prepare the way, O Zion, Your Christ is drawing near!

Let every hill and valley A level way appear.

Greet One who comes in glory, Foretold in sacred story.

O blest is Christ that came In God's most holy name.

Christ brings God's rule, O Zion, He comes from heaven above.

His rule is peace and freedom, And justice, truth, and love.

Lift high your praise resounding, For grace and joy abounding.

O blest is Christ that came In God's most holy name.

Fling wide your gates, O Zion; Your Savior's rule embrace.

And tidings of salvation Proclaim in every place.

All lands will bow rejoicing, Their adoration voicing.

O blest is Christ that came In God's most holy name.

Text: Frans Mikael Franzen (1771-1847); Adapt. Charles P. Price, 1980; alt. 1989;

Tune BEREDEN VÄG FÖR HERRAN;

Then Svenska Psalmboken, 1697; Arr. *American Lutheran Hymnal*, 1930