

Sunday, December 11, 2022
Third Sunday of Advent: Joy



In the ancient world, various peoples lit fires to mark the turning of the light into winter's season and to pray for the return of the light.

The church has Christianized that practice in the lighting of the Advent wreath. To us, these candles are signs of the growing light of Christ who is coming again in all fullness into the darkness of our world. Until the dawning of that Great Day, we watch and wait in Holy Spirit for Christ's coming into the darkness of our world, lighting candles of hope, peace, joy, and love; and remembering the promises of God with prayer.

GATHERING IN GOD'S PRESENCE

*PRELUDE "Longing for Light, We Wait in Darkness" on screen

WELCOME

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH CANDLES

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Gracious Lord God, forgive us for our blindness to the needs of others and our preoccupation with our own agenda, for our failure to pay attention to your still, small voice in our lives and for our surrender to fear and self-protection, for harsh words spoken to our friends, and love withheld from our enemies, for seeking success rather than faithfulness, for praying without acting, and acting without praying. Forgive us for our life choices this week that have not contributed to greater love and justice in the world. We now bring to you our own silent confessions [keep silence as we each pray] and we all affirm these prayers by saying, "Amen!"

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

Song: "Still, Still, Still" ERPC Handbell
 Choir

Young Disciples

K-12th Grade students are invited to go downstairs to Sunday School

LISTENING TO GOD'S WORD

PRAYER OF READINESS

God of Hope, as we enter into this time of year when the darkness grows deeper, we wait expectantly for the light of your coming. Help us not to fill our time with busy-ness, but to embrace these quiet, reflective days. Open our eyes and hearts to see and experience all the ways you come to us. As we study and pray and wait, fill our hearts with hope, peace, joy and love. We pray in Jesus' name, Amen.

SERMON "Hope is on the Way in Our Uncertainties"

Scripture Matthew 11:2-15

RESPONDING AS GOD'S PEOPLE

MINUTE FOR MISSION

Hillary Higgins

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

To share a joy or concern: Click [HERE](#) or use the QR code
 Offering

To give online: Click [HERE](#), or use the QR code.

Song: "Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus"

*DOXOLOGY

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

GOING IN GOD'S NAME

*CHARGE AND BLESSING

POSTLUDE

Instrumental

Some of our worship elements are adapted from the writings of “A Pouring Confession” on the Leader website.

<http://www.leaderonline.org/supplement.htm>, Laura Smith as posted on erpc.org, Rev. Stephen M. Fearing as posted on <http://www.stephenmfearing.com/>

ADVENT - Plan to attend and invite family and friends to join us for our Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and New Year's Day worship services.

Christmas Eve:

Our 5:00 and 7:00 services will be full of candlelight, music, Scripture readings and a message for all ages. Both services will be simulcast.

Our 9:00 contemplative candlelight service will include the sacrament of communion.

Christmas morning we will gather in Fellowship Hall at 10:00 for sharing food, a Christmas carol sing, a conversation about the birth of Jesus and sharing what Christmas means to us. This event will not be simulcast.

New Year's Day worship will return to our 9:30 worship time for all, in-person and simulcast.

Thanks to all of you who are providing much needed support for Eagle River Presbyterian Church. Year 2022 financial status:

\$115,000 of additional income from both pledge balances and non-pledge giving is needed to meet ERPC budgeted needs for 2022.

Thank you for the 42 pledges of \$244,000 received to date.

Year 2023 Pledges vs Goal:

\$176,000 additional pledges are needed to meet our goal for the year 2023.

Pastor Pat Smith, pat@erpc.org

Don Watson, Music Director, don@erpc.org

Cathy McGee, Executive Administrator, office@erpc.org