

Sunday, December 3, 2023
First Sunday of Advent



GATHERING IN GOD'S PRESENCE

PRELUDE Instrumental Megan McGee-Bonta

WELCOME

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

*WORDS OF BLESSING

*HYMN #1 "Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus"

PRAYER OF INVOCATION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Lord, we haven't always kept watch for you the way you wish. Truth be told, it's pretty hard to be attentive to you or attend to anything but our own interests. We don't always wait to find your will for us. We don't always notice the needs of the people around us. We often don't see your fingerprints on our lives or our world. To be honest, God, we are sometimes careless and all too often clueless. Forgive us for our lack of watchfulness. Help us to wait well. Help us to look out for the needs of others. Help us to work and watch for your coming. In these quiet moments now, O God, may your Spirit show us what we need to confess to you. [. . . silence for our private confessions . . .] Fill us with your love and help us walk into this season of Advent with full and responsive hearts, we pray. In the name of our coming Savior, we pray. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

MUSIC "An Advent Yearning" Sanctuary Choir
featuring Nancy Wright

MINUTE FOR MISSION Sheree Fleming

LISTENING TO GOD'S WORD

PRAYER OF READINESS

Long-awaited Savior, you are the promise of the prophets. We are witnesses to your arrival and your on-going mission in us and through us. As we wait for you again, enlighten and enliven us, send us out to live in your ways and spread your message so that all may see, hear, know and believe that you are the coming of God, the Messiah, now and forever. Amen.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

SCRIPTURE Jeremiah 33:14-16

SERMON "The World Waits: We Invite"
Scripture: Luke 21:25-36

SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION

RESPONDING AS GOD'S PEOPLE

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

MUSIC "From A Distance"

*DOXOLOGY

*PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

GOING IN GOD'S NAME

*CHARGE AND BLESSING

POSTLUDE Instrumental

Pastor Pat Smith, pat@erpc.org

Don Watson, Music Director, Don@erpc.org

Cathy McGee, Executive Administrator, office@erpc.org

Laura Smith, Director of Spiritual Formation, laura@erpc.org

ADVENT WREATH AND CANDLES

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.

A congregational meeting has been called by Session at the end of worship today for the purpose of hearing and acting on the report of the congregational Nominating Committee as they present names for Elders, Deacons, Treasurer and Nominating Committee. Nominated for Session will be Kate McKay (Budget & Finance) and Mike Williamson (Personnel), for Deacons will be Susan MacLachlan, Janet Perdsock and Keith McCarroll, for Treasurer will be Deb Swain. Nominees for the Nominating Committee will be shared at the meeting. Nominations will be allowed during the meeting, just keep in mind that such a nomination must have the approval of the person being nominated and specify which person one would like to replace.

**Budgeted Giving for 2023 - \$503,000 Total received - \$373,000
74% as of 11/28/2023. Thank you for the 24 new pledges received
to date for next year.**