

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT
December 12, 2021
1st Presbyterian of Rockaway

Join Zoom Worship (login beginning at 9:30 AM EDT)

<https://zoom.us/join>

Phone in: (mobile or home phone) +1 929 205 6099 US (New York)
<https://zoom.us/j/4683220487?pwd=OHBUb2V4RmJVMGF2U3VEVEFLMWNjUT09>

Meeting ID: 468 322 0487

Passcode: FPCR2021 One tap mobile)
+16465588656,,4683220487#,,,,*67022253# US (New York)

**Please rise in body or in spirit.*

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

“Carol of the Bells”

The Church Street Ringers

By Mykola Leontovich, 1877-1921

Arr. by Cathy Moglebust

Please use this time to silently prepare your hearts and minds for worship.

CALL TO WORSHIP AND LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him.

He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not **know him.**

He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him.

We light the third candle of Advent.

(Light three candles – pink candle is last.)

We look to John, the one you sent, to point us to your light. The light will come into our world and enlighten everyone.

God sent John the Baptizer to prepare the people for the coming of Jesus Christ, the true Light of the World. John called for people to repent of their sins and to live faithfully. He baptized with a cleansing water and proclaimed the new life that Christ, the one who would follow him, would bring. This Advent, we ask for God’s mercy and a joyful new beginning.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Merciful God, we give thanks that you send messengers like John to call us to greater faith. We ask that in these days we prepare for you in prayer and acts of holy compassion. Forgive us and lead us to your light. Amen.

***HYMN 82 COME, THOU LONG-EXPECTED JESUS**

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.
Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art;
dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart.

Born thy people to deliver, born a child and yet a king,
born to reign in us forever, now thy gracious kingdom bring.
By thine own eternal Spirit rule in all our hearts alone;
by thine all-sufficient merit raise us to thy glorious throne.

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

Brothers and sisters, we come before God this morning aware that we have fallen short of what God desires of us. So let us come before God to confess where we have failed, and to seek God's forgiveness.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Lord God, we praise you for sending light into this world. We confess that we live as though the light had never defeated darkness. We confess that we ignore the Savior you sent to be among us and to live in us. We've kept the birth of your Son confined to the Christmas season and do not yearn for his coming each moment in our waiting hearts.

Forgive us for not opening our eyes to Jesus. Prepare us for His return. Help us rejoice in the light, so that your grace can illuminate the darkened places of our hearts.

Silent Prayer

In the name of Jesus Christ we pray, **Amen.**

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

Listen! For this is Good News! God's Grace is wider than our wildest imaginings. God's Grace embraces us as we are and where we are and draws us out to be the people we were created to be.

Thanks be to God! Amen.

***GLORIA PATRI (581)**

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.

CHOIR ANTHEM “God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen” Traditional English Carol
Arr. with additional words,
By Russell Robinson

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION (Rev. Andy James)

Speak to us, Lord.

**Speak to us in the waiting, the watching, the hoping, the longing,
the sorrow, the sighing, the rejoicing. Speak to us by your Word in these Advent
days, and walk with us until the day of your coming. Amen.**

SCRIPTURE READINGS

ZEPHANIAH 3:14-20

¹⁴ Sing aloud, O daughter Zion; shout, O Israel!

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

¹⁵ The LORD has taken away the judgments against you,
he has turned away your enemies.

The king of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst; you shall fear disaster no more.

¹⁶ On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem:

Do not fear, O Zion; do not let your hands grow weak.

¹⁷ The LORD, your God, is in your midst, a warrior who gives victory;
he will rejoice over you with gladness, he will renew you in his love;
he will exult over you with loud singing

¹⁸ as on a day of festival.

I will remove disaster from you, so that you will not bear reproach for it.

¹⁹ I will deal with all your oppressors at that time.

And I will save the lame and gather the outcast,

and I will change their shame into praise and renown in all the earth.

²⁰ At that time I will bring you home, at the time when I gather you;
for I will make you renowned and praised among all the peoples of the earth,
when I restore your fortunes before your eyes, says the LORD.

ISAIAH 12:2-6

² Surely God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid,
for the LORD GOD is my strength and my might; he has become my salvation.

³ **With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.**

⁴ And you will say in that day:

Give thanks to the LORD, call on his name;

make known his deeds among the nations;

proclaim that his name is exalted.

⁵ **Sing praises to the LORD, for he has done gloriously;
let this be known in all the earth.**

⁶ Shout aloud and sing for joy, O royal Zion,
for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.

LUKE 3:7-18

⁷ John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" ⁸ Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor'; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. ⁹ Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire."

¹⁰ And the crowds asked him, "What then should we do?" ¹¹ In reply he said to them, "Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise." ¹² Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, "Teacher, what should we do?" ¹³ He said to them, "Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you." ¹⁴ Soldiers also asked him, "And we, what should we do?" He said to them, "Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages."

¹⁵ As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, ¹⁶ John answered all of them by saying, "I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹⁷ His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

¹⁸ So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.

SERMON

A GUEST FOR CHRISTMAS?

Rev. Dr. Nancy K. Young

***HYMN 106**

PREPARE THE WAY, O ZION

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.

Refrain:

**O blest is Christ who came
in God's most holy name.**

He 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. [Refrain]

**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. [Refrain]

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (20th century South African creed)

Jesus taught us to speak of hope as the coming of God's kingdom.

We believe that God is at work in our world

turning hopeless and evil situations into good.

We believe that goodness and justice will triumph in the end

and that tyranny and oppression cannot last forever.
One day all tears will be wiped away; the lamb will lie down with the lion,
and justice will roll down like a mighty stream.
True peace and true reconciliation are not only desired,
they are assured and guaranteed in Christ.
This is our faith.
This is our hope.

MINUTE FOR MISSION - JOY OFFERING

Carl Kline

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

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.

***HYMN 88 O COME, O COME, EMMANUEL (verses 6,7)**

O come, thou Dayspring, come and cheer
our spirits by thine advent here;
disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
and death's dark shadows put to flight.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, Desire of nations, bind
all peoples in one heart and mind;
bid envy, strife, and discord cease;
fill the whole world with heaven's peace.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel.

CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE "Trumpet Tune on Two French Noels" arr. by Bryan Hesford

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GIVING TO 1ST PRESBYTERIAN OF ROCKAWAY

- Go to our web page (fpcrockaway.org), scroll down to "donate" and give electronically
- Mail your donation to:
1st Presbyterian of Rockaway
35 Church St.
Rockaway, NJ 07866

Offering plates are available in the narthex and at the exit door

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ADULT BIBLE STUDIES

SUNDAYS, 9:00 AM GENESIS

We meet in the Fellowship Hall.

Email Pastor Nancy for further information and the schedule.

Youngnancy501@gmail.com

TUESDAY MORNING STUDY – OUR FAVORITE ADVENT & CHRISTMAS HYMNS

9:30 am. We meet on Zoom.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83842008669?pwd=MnFSQlpgZXNKK2NvVIA4eFhoVTNnQT09>

Meeting ID: 838 4200 8669

Passcode: 749308

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/u/keIzi0xanW>

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THE CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING

The Christmas Joy Offering has been a cherished Presbyterian tradition since the 1930s. The Offering distributes gifts equally to the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions and to Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. Presbyterian-related schools and colleges provide education and leadership development while nurturing racial and ethnic heritage. This has been a Presbyterian commitment for nearly 140 years.

God has blessed the Church with incredible leadership in every time and place, but those leaders often need to be supported by their communities as well. This Offering addresses the support needed by some of our leaders, including supporting leadership development for communities of color, and providing support for Presbyterian church workers in their time of need. The Assistance Program provides critical financial support to church workers and their families.

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Christmas Eve Service

December 24, 2021 at 6PM in the Sanctuary, via Zoom and Facebook



Advent Evening Prayer

Tuesdays, 7:00 pm

November 30

Psalm 27:1

The LORD is my light and my salvation;
whom shall I fear?

The LORD is the stronghold of my life;
of whom shall I be afraid?

December 7

[Revelation 21:23](#)

And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it,
for the glory of God is its light, and its lamp is the Lamb.

December 14

[1 Peter 2:9](#)

⁹ But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation,
God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him
who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

December 21

Isaiah 60:1

Arise, shine; for your light has come,
and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.

ZOOM LINK

Topic: Advent Evening Prayer

Time: Nov 30, 2021 07:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81827612671?pwd=SGRIMWxveFE3MFo0cUIBUjA2SWJCQT09>

Meeting ID: 818 2761 2671

Passcode: 017713

One tap mobile

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