

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT
December 5, 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 **“The First Noel”** W. Sandby’s Christmas Carols, 1833
Arranged by David Huntsinger

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

CALL TO WORSHIP AND LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES –
The Confirmation Class

Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid,
that she has received from the LORD’s hand double for all her sins.

A voice cries out:

**“In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a
highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and
hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places
a plain.**

Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together,
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.”

O God, we light the second candle of Advent.

(Light the first and second candle.)

We seek your comfort. Both mighty and tender, you come. Prepare our hearts to be
transformed by you.

Isaiah announced God’s coming to a people exiled in a broken and parched wilderness.
He declared that God’s redemption would make a highway in the desert and change the
rough places into plain. God would come as a shepherd—feeding, leading, and cradling
the weary flock. This Advent, we seek such a God.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Saving God, look upon your world and heal your land and your people. Prepare us to be changed. This Advent, teach us to be tender and just, as you are. Amen

***HYMN 104 O LORD, HOW SHALL I MEET YOU**

**O Lord, how shall I meet you, how welcome you aright?
Your people long to greet you, my hope, my heart's delight!
O kindle, Lord most holy, a lamp within my breast,
to do in spirit lowly all that may please you best.**

**Love caused your incarnation; love brought you down to me;
your thirst for my salvation procured my liberty.
O love beyond all telling, that led you to embrace
in love, all loves excelling, our lost and fallen race.**

**You come, O Lord, with gladness, in mercy and goodwill,
to bring an end to sadness and bid our fears be still.
In patient expectation we live for that great day
when your renewed creation your glory shall display.**

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

Saints of God, let us trust in God's love for us and confess our sin, confident in God's mercy.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Loving God, you sent us prophets and we have not always listened. We have not always determined what is best or made way for your presence in our lives, our church, and our society. Forgive us, we pray, and renew your covenant within us, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Silent Prayer

In the name of Jesus Christ we pray, Amen.

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

Friends, we can be confident of this: if we repent, we will know and receive God's mercy and forgiveness.

Thanks be to God!

***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

"Were You There on that Christmas Night?"

Words & Music by Natalie Sleeth

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Holy God, through your Spirit instruct us by the light of your prophets. Illumine our hearts, that we may hear your call to become your path into the world. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING

MALACHI 3:1-4

See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight—indeed, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts. ²But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap; ³he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the LORD in righteousness. ⁴Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years.

ISAIAH 40:1-11

Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God.

² **Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins.**

³ A voice cries out:

"In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD,
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

⁴ **Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain.**

⁵ Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together,
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

⁶ **A voice says, "Cry out!"**

And I said, "What shall I cry?"

All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field.

⁷ The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the LORD blows upon it;
surely the people are grass.

⁸ **The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand forever.**

⁹ Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings;
lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings,
lift it up, do not fear; say to the cities of Judah, "Here is your God!"

¹⁰ **See, the Lord God comes with might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him.**

¹¹ He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms,
and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead the mother sheep.

LUKE 3:1-6

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, ²during the high priesthood of

Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. ³He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, ⁴as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah, "The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. ⁵Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways made smooth;⁶and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.'"

SERMON

LOOK FOR MESSENGERS

Rev. Dr. Nancy K. Young

HYMN 87

COMFORT, COMFORT NOW MY PEOPLE

**"Comfort, comfort now my people; tell of peace!" So says our God.
"Comfort those who sit in darkness mourning under sorrow's load.
To my people now proclaim that my pardon waits for them!
Tell them that their sins I cover, and their warfare now is over."**

**For the herald's voice is crying in the desert far and near,
calling us to true repentance, since the reign of God 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.**

**Straight shall be what long was crooked, and the rougher places plain.
Let your hearts be true and humble, as befits God's holy reign.
For the glory of the Lord now on earth is shed abroad,
and all flesh shall see the token that God's word is never broken**

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (Apostles' Creed)

**I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary,
Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried;
He descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven,
He is seated at the right hand of the Father,
And he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church,
The communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
The resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen**

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 527 EAT THIS BREAD (Option A)

**“Eat this bread; drink this cup; come to me and never be hungry.
Eat this bread; drink this cup; trust in me and you will not thirst.”**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

In this season of expectant waiting, we are invited to Christ’s table here and now. Coming to Christ’s table is a way to experience the grace of God. Therefore it is open to all. The only requirement is a sincere heart. The only barriers to the table are created in our own heart. So let the Spirit of God open your hearts to the grace and love of God.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

. The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

God of our salvation, we do not deserve your love and yet you lavish it upon us.

Not being content to be apart from us, you came to us in human form, donning flesh and becoming one of us. You are not a God that is removed from our reality but is intimately present in our lives and our struggles.

We lift up to you our thanks for your presence among us.

We give thanks for your son, Jesus Christ, the very incarnation of your being on this earth. We remember how you called your servant Mary to bear your son ,how you called your servant Joseph to accompany her, how you called the wise men to search and the shepherds to ponder ,how you called John to proclaim and Jesus to be baptized, how you called Peter and the disciples to follow and serve.

For as long as we eat this bread and drink this cup,

we proclaim the resurrection of our living savior until he comes again.

As we wait, during this blessed rest known as the season of Advent,

we proclaim the mystery of faith.

Christ has died; Christ is risen;

Christ will come again.

We give thanks for your gifts of grace, and ask that your Holy Spirit would come to bless this sacrament, that we might preside with you and you in us.

Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor are yours, almighty God, now and forever. Amen.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

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

+19292056099,,81827612671#,,,,*017713# US (New York)

+13017158592,,81827612671#,,,,*017713# US (Washington DC)

Christmas Luncheon

The Christmas luncheon is scheduled for December 12th following the church service.

Tickets go on sale on November 21, November 28, and December 5th.

The price is \$10.00 per person.

One of the committee members will be available at the end of each service for ticket sales.

Join us for delicious food and fellowship

AMAZON SMILE FUNDRAISER

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CHRISTMAS FLOWERS AND MUSIC

Would you like to help carry on the music and flower traditions we enjoy during the holiday season? A donation of any amount to the MUSIC FUND enables us to enjoy wonderful music for Christmas and Advent. A donation of \$10.00 to the Flower Fund buys one Poinsettia Plant. As a special bonus, the plant is yours to take home on Sunday, December 26. You can print the form below. Forms will also be available in the church office. Place you form and check in the offering plate, bring or mail to the church office no later than December 12.

-----Cut Here-----

Christmas Flowers and Music Fund

From _____

In Memory of _____

For _____ Flower Fund _____ No. of Poinsettias or _____ Music Fund

In Thankfulness for _____

For _____ Flower Fund _____ No. of Poinsettias or _____ Music Fund

HOLIDAY WISHES

There are almost 200 children who attend school in Rockaway Borough or Township who qualify for the federal program providing free (or reduced price) lunches. We have the opportunity to help them enjoy the holidays this year. If you would like to provide gifts for one or more children you can contact Brenda Budd at Rockawayholidaywishes@gmail.com. If you would rather send a check, make it out to Holiday Wishes and send it to her at 43 Willow Ave. Rockaway, NJ 07866. She is asking that all gifts be collected by Nov 30.

Dear Friends:

The Eternal Life Experience Group will hold its next virtual meeting via Zoom on Friday December 10 from 10:00 am to 12:00 noon. We will be discussing near-death experiences and other topics related to the Afterlife. If you are interested in attending, please contact Dave Mortensen at dmortnj@hotmail.com or 862 812-2324 to make a reservation. Maria Graham, who is setting up the Zoom meeting, will then email you the website log-in directions a week before the event. If you choose to call in and utilize the audio only option, please be sure that the number you are using has unlimited toll-free nationwide calling, since the Zoom number is probably outside your local dialing area.

Sincerely,

Dave Mortensen