# First Presbyterian Church of Youngstown

**Second Sunday of Advent** 

**December 15, 2024** 

11:00 a.m.

\* Please rise in body or in spirit. **Bolded words** indicate unison responses from the congregation.

## REFLECTION FOR WORSHIP

The following scriptures and reflection are provided for meditation as we prepare for worship.

Isaiah 35:1-10, Luke 1:46b-55, James 5:7-10 and Matthew 11:2-11

**Reflection on Isaiah 35:1-10:** In some churches, each Sunday of Advent is represented with a particular word: Hope for the first Sunday, then Peace, Joy, and finally Love. Whether or not we are in churches that observe these themes explicitly, it is worth noting that this text from Isaiah is an extraordinary match to the traditional theme of Gaudete (Rejoice) Sunday, the Third Sunday of Advent. Joy pulses through Isaiah 35 from the first line, with its glad lands and blossoming deserts, to the last, when a ransomed people come home singing.

The transformation promised in the previous Isaiah texts for Advent glistens here in every line; redemptive reversals will be dramatic and complete. What kind of changes do worshipers in Advent seek? What do they sigh for, what sorrows have brought them to tears? We may not know what haunts each heart in the room, but we can take a cue from Isaiah, who speaks in detail of how the world looks now, and what it will be when God has saved it. Just as the prophet wrote for a scattered people, we too speak to people living fragmented lives in a fractured world, with torn-apart families and broken hearts.

- Stacey Simpson Duke

**Response:** Where can you find God's joy this week, despite difficult circumstances?

Prayer: Thank you, God, for joy that transcends time and circumstance, and for redeeming your people. I will rejoice! Amen.

## **WE GATHER**

Organ Prelude Variations on "Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence" Jonathan B. Hall (2007)

**Welcome and Announcements**Margie Patterson

Minute for Mission The Rescue Mission Crystal Eckman

# **WE PREPARE**

**Threshold Moment** Make the Blessings Known: Unabashed Joy Rev. Payne Warner

Sing a new song to the Lord Lift your hearts with gratitude Sing a new song to the Lord Lift your hearts with gratitude and unabashed joy

Your steadfast love and faithfulness

are ever present in our lives

Your steadfast love and faithfulness

is ever present in our lives

with unabashed joy

Let the voices of all people blend in harmony, in unison let the people magnify the Beloved!

May heaven and nature sing

Joy to the World

May Heaven and nature sing out

with loving joy.

# **Lighting of the Advent Candle**

Holy God, you provide the source of our joy. It runs deep and wide underneath all of life.

The Warner Family

When we are tempted to depend on others for happiness,

draw us back to you, for you are the Light that shines for us always.

Help us to shine that light from within us through our own Unabashed Joy.

Let us make your blessings known in our hearts this day.

Let us make your blessings known in our church this day.

Let us make your blessings known in the world this day... in the name of Joy. Amen.

\*Hymn #82

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

**HYFRYDOL** 

#### **WE CONFESS**

## **Call to Confession**

In Jesus Christ, God seeks to smooth those places made rough by sin. With humility and hope, let us make our confession.

## **Prayer of Confession**

Great God, as we prepare to behold the birth of Jesus again, we are mindful of how we have failed to receive the fullness of that gift. The story points us to your glory, yet we struggle to join in the song of praise and thanksgiving. We are distracted and confused, so focused on things of little significance we overlook the good news of great joy that you have prepared.

Tell us again that the Savior is born. Tell us again that we are forgiven. Tell us again that our lives can be abundant in faith, hope and love because of what you have given us in Jesus Christ. Amen.

## **Assurance of Pardon**

The angel tells Joseph that the child forming in Mary's womb is to be named Jesus. "Call him Jesus," the angel says, "For he will save the people from their sins." From his birth through his resurrection, from age to age, Jesus is about salvation. This is good news!

# In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!

\*Gloria #583 Gloria, gloria GLORIA (Taizé)

Gloria, gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, gloria, alleluia, alleluia!

## **Time with Young Disciples**

Patti Gruver

#### \*Sharing the Peace of Christ

May the peace of Christ be with you! May you be filled with unabashed joy!

#### **WE LISTEN**

## **Prayer of Illumination**

Gracious God, illumine these words by your Spirit that we might hear what you would have us hear and be who you would us be, for the sake of Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh. Amen.

Old Testament Lesson Isaiah 35:1-10 Pg. 578

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Canticle The Magnificat Pam Root, Cantor

The Motet Choir

Epistle Lesson James 5:7-10 Pg. 982

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Lesson Matthew 11:2-11 Pg. 792

**Luke 1:46-55** Pg. 832

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

**Sermon** Living with Unabashed Joy Rev. Payne Warner

\*Affirmation of Faith (from the Confession of 1967)

Out of Israel, God in due time raised up Jesus.

His faith and obedience were the response of the perfect child of God.

He was the fulfillment of God's promise to Israel,

the beginning of the new creation,

and the pioneer of the new humanity.

He gave history its meaning and direction

and called the church to be his servant for the reconciliation of the world.

## **WE DEDICATE**

## Call for the Offering

With gratitude for God's faithfulness and with thanksgiving for all that we have received, let us bring our gifts to God.

**Offertory Anthem** 

In the Bleak Midwinter
The Motet Choir

arr. by Larry Harris

\*Response of Thanksgiving God Whose Giving Knows No Ending

**BEACH SPRING** 

God, whose giving knows no ending, from your rich and endless store, Nature's wonder, Jesus' wisdom, costly cross, grave's shattered door: Gifted by you, we turn to you, offering up ourselves in praise; Thankful song shall rise forever, gracious donor of our days.

# \*Prayer of Dedication

O God, with faith and hope, we offer these gifts. Use them, even as you use us, to accomplish your purposes in Jesus Christ, our coming Lord. Amen.

# Prayers of the People and the 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 sins, as we forgive those who sin against us; 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 #93

Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates

TRURO

\*Benediction

**Organ Postlude** 

Fanfare on TRURO

# WE SCATTER TO CONTINUE OUR WORSHIP IN SERVING OTHERS

A warm welcome is extended to all who worship today. May the gift of worship we offer honor God and serve as a blessing to you.

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WORSHIP LEADERS

Rev. Payne Warner Margie Patterson The Deacons

THE MUSIC TODAY

Prof. Larry Harris Pam Root The Motet Choir

**ALSO SERVING TODAY** 

Ushers: John Einfalt and Alex Esseniyi

Facilities Staff: David Phibbs

**ELDERS** 

Daniel Ayana Sandy Benson Miranda D'Amico

John Einfalt Karen Cooper Elsie Dursi

Margie Patterson

**DEACONS** 

Darrell McClendon Elizabeth Ayana Michael Shepherd

Becky Mallin Sean Barron Wilma Miller Julie Miller

## **WORSHIP NOTES**

Our liturgies today are from John Wurster for the *Presbyterian Outlook* and Marcia McFee's Worship Design Studios.