

KNOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
First Sunday of Advent

December 3, 2023

Interim Minister: Rev. Dr. David Thompson

Music Director: Suzanne Strahan

* We continue to be mask friendly, but it is now a personal decision. Thank you.
** The offering can be placed in the offering plates at the back of the church in the narthex prior to it being brought forward.

PRELUDE:

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Advent Liturgy:

Voice 1: The prophets call and the psalmist sings to announce that **HOPE** comes from God.

Voice 2: “O that you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at your presence.” (Isaiah 64) “We shall see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living.”

Voice 1: The world cries out for justice and transformation. Advent summons us to watch, to wait and to **HOPE**. In the distress of the current order is the promise of a new order beyond our imagination. Signs of **HOPE** are all around us if we have the patience to wait and to see them.

Voice 2: Holy are you, Source of all new life among us.

All: Jesus Christ comes as the **HOPE** of the world.

Voice 2: We join with all creation and lift our hearts in joyful praise.

All: We light this candle to bear witness to **HOPE**.

Hymn 119 Hope is a star V:1 only. (The Candle of Hope is lit.)

Responsive Call to Worship:

The nights were long,

The heavens trembled with anticipation,

The time of the coming of the One promised long,

Was drawing near,

He came right on time, 600 years after the promise was made.

We celebrate that first Advent today, in our time.

PRAYER OF APPROACH *(together)*

Creator God,

You made the heavens and the earth.

You set the planets in their courses, lit the sun with fire,
caused the stars to shine and the world to turn.

Life springs up wherever Your breath moves.

In Jesus Christ, You brought **HOPE** into a world full of fear and despair.

You sent your Spirit to enliven our hope and guide us on the way.

Now we wait in anxious times for the world to be made new.

Move in us and in all Your creation to bring forth new life,
while we wait with hope in Your grace and goodness. Ame.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION: *(together)*

Our Loving God,

We confess that waiting is difficult

especially when the world around us is on edge.

We are impatient with each other,

waiting for someone, anyone, to make a difference.

We are impatient with You, O God,

waiting for a sign that things will improve.

Please turn our hearts to You again,

and be with us as Emmanuel in ways that we can understand. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon: (Minister)

Hear the Good News! There is nothing we have done, nothing we will ever do, that can separate us from the love of God. Let's take hope in this love, and live as forgiven and forgiving people.

PASSING OF THE PEACE:

Leader: The Peace of Christ be with you

Congregation: And also with you.

(Please turn and greet one another)

Anthem

STORY:

HYMN: #122 O come , O come Emmanuel V: 1, 3, and 5.

SCRIPTURE READING

Old Testament Lesson: Isaiah 7: 13-16 A

St. Luke 2:1-20

SERMON: Finding Real Hope

OFFERTORY:

79 Praise God from Whom all blessings flow

PRAYER OF DEDICATION ((together)

The Sacrament of Holy Communion

Hymn 540 One bread one Body V:1.

Invitation to the Table

This table is set for all;

around it there are no divisions.

Just as bread is not made from one grain, but from many,

and wine is not made from one grape, but from a full harvest,

so too, we are made one in Christ.

This is a sacrament of unity. .Come and join with neighbours across the world, to celebrate Christ's **PRESENCE** with us all.

Words of Institution

Among his friends, on the night he was betrayed,

Jesus took bread, broke it and said,

“Take and eat. This is my body, given for you. Do this to remember me.”

After supper, He took a cup and offered it to his friends, saying:

“This cup is the new covenant, sealed in my blood,
for the forgiveness of sins. Drink from it, all of you.”

Every time we eat this bread and share this cup in Jesus’ name,
we recall the mystery of faith:

Christ has died;

Christ is risen;

Christ will come again.

The elders come forward

Distribution of the elements: Those who wish to receive communion should come forward to the front to receive the bread and wine.

After all have received, the elders are served by the minister

After the elders have received, the Clerk of the Session serves the minister

Prayer: Our Loving God we thank-You that once again we have been able to celebrate the Lord’s death until he comes again. Fill us with his Spirit and inspire us all to do justice, love kindness and to walk humbly with You, our God.

LET THERE BE PEACE ON EARTH (We sing this prayer especially for Israel, Palestine and the Middle East and the Ukraine, please pray it as you sing)

PRAYER of Intercession (Minister and Congregation together)

Merciful God,

We thank you for the light You shine into our lives

as we wait on the coming of the Christ Child this year.

The signs of our times are worrisome.

The earth itself groans in pain,
and people have grown suspicious of each other.

Wherever people feel overwhelmed by the demands of this season,
let them catch a glimpse of Your brightness,

Generous God,

we remember that the days leading up to Christmas are difficult for many,
year by year.

We pray for those who are hungry and cold,
stressed by rising costs all around.

Alert us to ways that we can help
those in our community and beyond
whose cupboards are bare.

Warm them with your love we pray and our practical gifts

Amen.

For healing:

We also ask for those in our congregation who need Your healing touch

We bring their names before You now in silent prayer....

Hymn #127: Sleepers wake! V: 2 and 3.

Benediction

POSTLUDE: