

*Community* Presbyterian Church  
open hearted, open minded

3705 Fairway Place NW, Rochester, MN • [www.cpcrochester.org](http://www.cpcrochester.org) • 507-280-9291



Teach our hearts  
to welcome...  
Love

December 20, 2020

*Welcome to worship this morning! Bulletin Cue: **Bold** indicates congregational response.  
We hope to see you again soon!*

## GATHERING AROUND THE WORD OF GOD

### WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

### PRELUDE

### CALL TO WORSHIP

An angel spoke to Mary: "Do not be afraid!"

**The child she carries will be God's son, and the world will never be the same.**


An angel spoke to Mary: "Do not be afraid!"

**God was with her, and God is with us, drawing us into worship and praise.**


### OPENING HYMN GTG 105

### People, Look East


*vs. 1 and 2*




1 Peo - ple, look east. The time is near of the  
2 Fur - rows, be glad. Though earth is bare, one more



crown - ing of the year. Make your house fair as you are  
seed is plant - ed there. Give up your strength the seed to



Peo - ple, look  
a - ble; trim the hearth and set the ta - ble.  
nour - ish, that in course the flower may flour - ish.



east and sing to - day:  
Peo - ple, look east: Love, the Guest, is on the way.  
Love, the Rose, is on the way.

## CALL TO CONFESSION

All we, like sheep, have gone astray;  
we have followed our own hearts rather than God's good will.

But there is mercy for those who call on the name of the Beloved.  
Trusting in God's grace, let us confess our sin.

## CONFESSION

**An angel spoke to Mary: "Do not be afraid!"**

**And yet we find ourselves paralyzed  
by fear of what we do not know.**

**Forgive us of our sins and give us the faith of Mary**

**to respond to your grace with lives of grateful praise.**

**Teach our hearts to welcome the good news that she first heard:**

**Light is breaking. Love is coming. The world is about to turn!**

## ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

Every valley is lifted up; every mountain made low.

Now the glory of the Truth is revealed,

For the mouth of the Merciful has spoken.

In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

**Thanks be to God.**

## LIGHTING OF THE FOURTH ADVENT CANDLE: LOVE

Isaiah spoke to a people called chosen,  
to a tribe called Israel, with a light of hope.

Gabriel came to a town called Nazareth,  
to a girl called Mary, with a light of joy.

Mary went to a place called Bethlehem,  
to a stable called a nursery,  
with a light of love.

## Musical Meditation

Peggy Pillers

As we light our fourth Advent candle,

**we rejoice with Mary, for Love has flesh.**

Come now, O Child of Mary.

**Come now, O Prince of Love.**

## LISTENING FOR GOD'S WORD

SPECIAL MUSIC

*Carol of the Bells*

Jubellation Handbell Choir

by Mykolo Leontovich arranged by Douglas E. Wagner

### PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Holy God, our hope and strength, by the power of your Spirit, prepare the way in our hearts for the coming of your Word, so that we may see the glorious signs of your promise fulfilled; through Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen**

### RESPONSIVE READING

Psalm 89

I will sing of your steadfast love, O my God, forever;

I will proclaim your faithfulness to all generations.

I will declare that your steadfast love is established forever;  
your faithfulness is as firm as the heavens.

**Your steadfast love endures forever;**

**Your faithfulness is as everlasting as the skies.**

You said, "I have made a covenant with David, my chosen one:

'I will establish your reign for all generations.

I have exalted one chosen from the people.

My hand shall always be with him; my arm shall support him."

**Your steadfast love endures forever;**

**Your faithfulness is as everlasting as the skies.**

My faithfulness and steadfast love shall be with him;

and in my name he shall be exalted.

I will set his hand on the sea and his right hand on the rivers.

He shall cry to me, 'You are my God, and the Rock of my salvation!'

**Your steadfast love endures forever;**

**Your faithfulness is as everlasting as the skies.**

### YOUTH PRESENTATION

A Virtual Christmas Pageant

HYMN GTG 121

O Little Town of Bethlehem

*vs. 1 and 4*

**O little town of Bethlehem,**

**how still we see thee lie!**

**Above thy deep and dreamless sleep**

**the silent stars go by.**

**Yet in thy dark streets shineth**

**the everlasting light;  
the hopes and fears of all the years  
are met in thee tonight.**

**O holy child of Bethlehem,  
descend to us, we pray;  
cast out our sin and enter in;  
be born in us today.**

**We hear the Christmas angels  
the great glad tidings tell;  
O come to us; abide with us,  
our Lord Emmanuel!**

SCRIPTURE READING      Romans 16:25–27

Now to God who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages but is now disclosed, and through the prophetic writings is made known to all the Gentiles, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith— to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever! Amen.

GOSPEL READING      Luke 1:26–38, 46–55

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all

generations will call me blessed; for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever.”

Heaven and earth will pass away, but the word of our God stands forever.

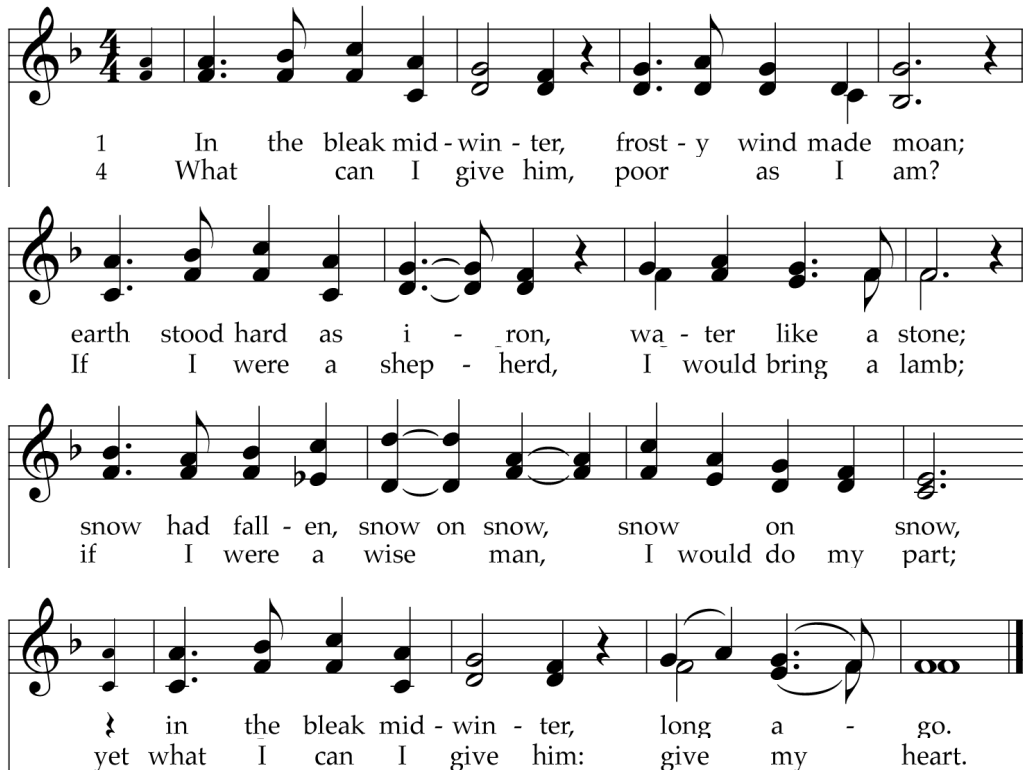
**Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

*Teach Our Hearts to Welcome Love*

Pastor Jan

### RESPONDING TO GOD’S GRACE



1 In the bleak mid-winter, frost-y wind made moan;  
4 What can I give him, poor as I am?

earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone;  
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;

snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow,  
if I were a wise man, I would do my part;

in the bleak mid-winter, long ago.  
yet what I can I give him: give my heart.

HYMN OF THE DAY GTG 144

In the Bleak Midwinter

(vs. 1 and 4)

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

**Out of Israel, God in due time raised up Jesus,  
whose faith and obedience were the response of the perfect child of God.  
As the Christ, he was chosen to be the fulfillment of God's promise to Israel,  
the beginning of a new creation, and the pioneer of a new humanity.  
God in Christ gave history new meaning and direction  
and called the church into a ministry of reconciliation for the world.**

*Adapted from the Confession of 1967, 9.19*

JOYS AND CONCERNS/PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

God, our Savior,

**hear our prayer.**

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 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.**

SENDING INTO THE WORLD TO LOVE AND SERVE

CLOSING HYMN GTG 110

Love Has Come

*vs. 1 and 3*

BLESSING AND CHARGE

May the God of peace make you holy,  
and the power of the Spirit sustain you,  
until the coming of Jesus Christ, most blessed. **Alleluia!**

Prepare the way of the Lord! **Amen**

# Love Has Come

110



1 Love has come: a light in the dark - ness!  
3 Love has come and nev - er will leave us!



Love shines forth in the Beth - le - hem skies. See, all  
Love is life ev - er - last - ing and free. Love is



heav - en has come to pro - claim it; hear how their song of  
Je - sus with - in and a - mong us. Love is the peace our



joy a - ris - es: Love! Love! Born un - to you, a  
hearts are seek - ing. Love! Love! Love is the gift of



Sav - ior! Love! Love! Glo - ry to God on high.  
Christ-mas. Love! Love! Praise to you, God on high!



# Community Presbyterian Church

open hearted, open minded

## TODAY AT CPC

### Sunday, December 20 Advent 4

9:30 am Online Worship Service

12:00 pm Newsletter Articles Due

## THIS WEEK AT CPC

Tuesday, December 22

12:00 pm Conference Call \*

12:00 pm Bulletin Information Due

6:00 pm Session Meeting

Wednesday, December 23

6:30 am Prayer Group

Thursday, December 24

Office Closed

6:00 pm Christmas Eve Outdoor

Candlelight Service - Parking Lot

Friday, December 25

Merry Christmas!

12:00 pm Conference Call \*

### Sunday, December 27

9:30 am Online Worship Service

### Online Worship

Sundays 9:30 – 10:30am

<https://meet.google.com/vao-wjef-cbe>

+1 575-305-4527 PIN: 652 821 468 #

\* Tuesday/Friday Conference Call

<https://meet.google.com/kee-rcys-sdh>

+1 413-889-2244 PIN: 433 818 991#

*In Our Thoughts  
& Prayers*



Judy Leal

Jane, Ed, Jenny, Elissa and  
the Burgstaler grandchildren

Connie Holst

MariLynn Johnson

*To be added to the prayer list,  
please contact the church office at  
507-280-9291 or*

*email [office@cpcrochester.org](mailto:office@cpcrochester.org).*

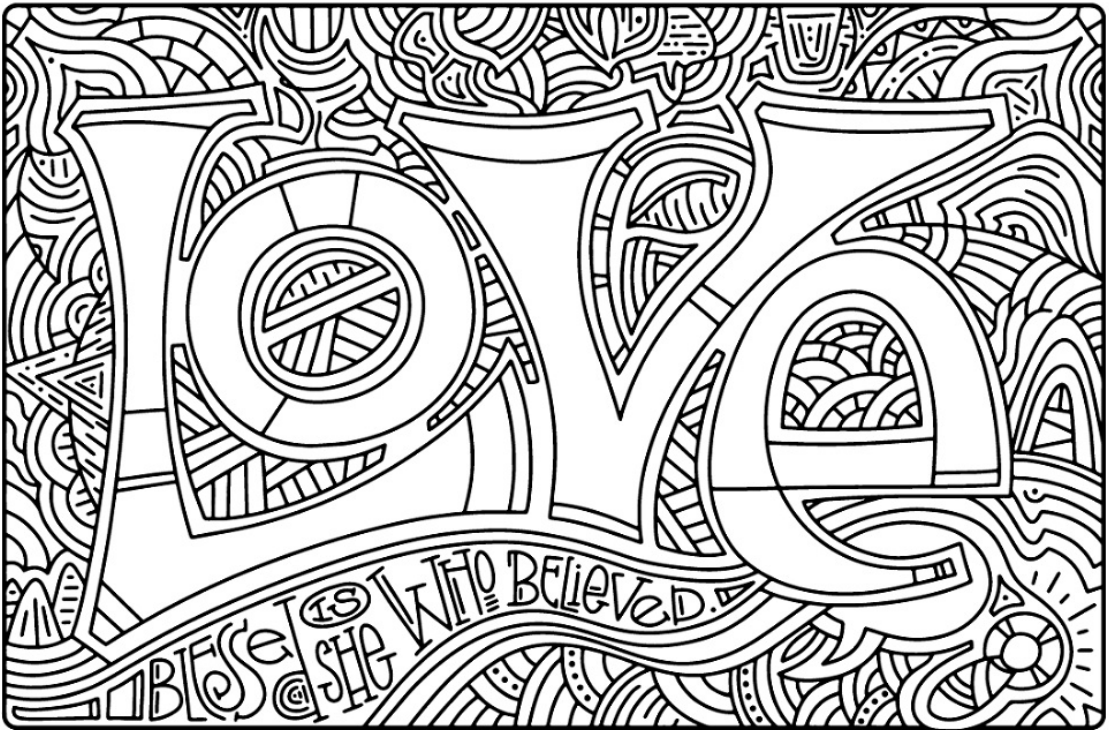
*For emergency pastoral care,  
call Pastor Jan at 763-219-2927.*

Pastor	Rev. Jan Wiersma
Choir Director	Meg Cain
Handbell Director	Judy Kereakos
Pianist	Glenna Muir
Custodian	Nancy Sanford
Office Manager	Stephanie Pasch

### Serving in Worship Today

Liturgist	Bruce Felger
IT Support	Dave Copeland
Candle Lighter	The Cain Family





*From the Finance & Stewardship Committee: Reminder to pay your Per Capita (\$36.50) and please submit your 2021 pledge soon to assist in preparing the 2021 budget. Thank you!*

**Abby Hall** will be ringing the handbell tree, accompanied by Judy Kereakos, and featured at the Charter House Christmas Eve Vespers virtual services at 4 p.m. on Dec. 24 and on Christmas Day, Dec. 25. These services are viewed by Charter House residents and their families can access the services as well. Check out the Virtual Vespers on Youtube! <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL8nR5-F7-KuWW3bB0v-vNiFU65HTj43Hmc>

**Christmas Eve  
Outdoor Candlelight Service  
7:00 pm in the parking lot**

Please join us for this brief service of lessons and carols! You are welcome to stay in your car or bring a chair for the service. You will be guided to a spot that is a designated safe distance from others. Do wear a mask, however, especially if you wish to sing! You may bring your own electric or live candle for the conclusion of the service, but bring your own light, as we will not be passing the flame (or the virus!) this year.