

Community Presbyterian Church

open hearted, open minded



Third Sunday in Advent: Joy
Sunday, December 14, 2025

Welcome to worship this morning!

Bulletin Cues: **Bold** indicates congregational response, * indicates please stand, if able
An offering plate is placed near the door to the church to receive your offerings. It is available before worship, during the hymn of the day and shortly following the service.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING

Watch and wait for Christ's coming!

Light candles of hope, peace, joy, and love,
remembering the promises of God with prayer.

We light this candle in hope.

We light this candle for peace.

We light this candle in joy!

Light the first candle.

Light the second candle.

Light the third (pink, if used) candle.

Rejoice! For our Lord is coming into the darkness of oppression's exile to lead us home, as we hear in Isaiah 35:1-10:

Reader 1:

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad,
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;
like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly,
and rejoice with joy and singing.
The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,
the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.
They shall see the glory of the LORD,
the majesty of our God.

Reader 2:

Strengthen the weak hands,
and make firm the feeble knees.
Say to those who are of a fearful heart,
"Be strong, do not fear!
Here is your God.
He will come with vengeance,
with terrible recompense.
He will come and save you."

Reader 1:

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
and the ears of the deaf unstopped;
then the lame shall leap like a deer,
and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.

For waters shall break forth in the wilderness,
and streams in the desert;
the burning sand shall become a pool,
and the thirsty ground springs of water;
the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp,
the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

Reader 2:

A highway shall be there,
and it shall be called the Holy Way;
the unclean shall not travel on it,
but it shall be for God's people;
no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray.
No lion shall be there,
nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it;
they shall not be found there,
but the redeemed shall walk there.
And the ransomed of the LORD shall return,
and come to Zion with singing;
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;
they shall obtain joy and gladness,
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Let us pray.

O Lord, our redeemer, you lead us from languishing in sorrow's shadows into laughter's joy over your abundant restoration. Thank you that you are coming for us to lead us home along your Way, Jesus Christ. Amen.

ADVENT RESPONSE GTG 88

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

vs. 5

**O come, thou Key of David, come, and open wide our heavenly home;
make safe the way that leads on high, and close the path to misery.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.**

CALL TO WORSHIP

(Isaiah 35:1-2; Matthew 11:4-5)

What if joy were to break out unrestrained in our world? What would we notice?

The wilderness and dry land would be glad; the desert rejoice and blossom.

The blind would see and the lame would walk.

Lepers would be cleansed, and the deaf would hear.

The dead would rise and the poor would receive good news.

May joy break out in our worship today
as we anticipate the One who comes into our world!
Come thou long expected Jesus!

OPENING HYMN GTG 102 Savior or the Nations Come

1 Sav - ior of the na - tions, come; vir - gin's
2 From God's heart the Sav - ior speeds; back to
3 Now your man - ger, shin - ing bright, hal - lows
4 Praise we sing to Christ the Lord, vir - gin's

son, make here your home. Mar - vel now, O
God his path - way leads; out to van - quish
night with new - born light. Night can - not this
son, in - car - nate Word! To the ho - ly

heaven and earth, that the Lord chose such a birth.
death's com - mand, back to reign at God's right hand.
light sub - due; let our faith shine ev - er new.
Trin - i - ty praise we sing e - ter - nal - ly.

CONFESSION AND PARDON

There are two great equalizers among us. One is that we have all sinned and fallen short of God's glory. The other is that we are all now justified by God's grace through the gift of Christ Jesus. Confident of both, let us admit where we have fallen short and receive grace without limit.

**Holy and wonderful God,
we confess that we have closed our eyes to what you are doing.
We prefer to concentrate on problems, bad news and violence.
When we do, we miss all the healing, freeing and helping you accomplish in our world.
We pass up opportunities to participate in your Good News.
We rob ourselves of so much joy.
Forgive us and give us eyes to see, ears to hear, minds to understand,
and hearts to treasure your mission in the world.
Fill us with unquenchable joy at the coming of Jesus. Amen.**

The angel told Joseph, "You are to name the baby Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." Believe the good news of the gospel:

In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven! Hallelujah! Amen.

LISTENING FOR GOD'S WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Come Holy Spirit! Through the reading and hearing of the Word today, may a deep and complete joy be born in us. **Amen.**

RESPONSIVE READING

Psalm 146:5–10

Happy are those whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the Lord their God, who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them;

**who keeps faith forever; who executes justice for the oppressed;
who gives food to the hungry.**

The Lord sets the prisoners free; the Lord opens the eyes of the blind.

The Lord lifts up those who are bowed down; the Lord loves the righteous.

The Lord watches over the strangers;

he upholds the orphan and the widow, but the way of the wicked he brings to ruin.

The Lord will reign forever, your God, O Zion, for all generations.

Praise the Lord!

Do You Hear What I Hear?
words and music by Noel Regney and Gloria Shayne
arranged by Harry Simeone

*Said the night wind to the little lamb,
“Do you see what I see?
‘Way up in the sky, little lamb,
Do you see what I see?
A star, a star, dancing in the night,
With a tail as big as a kite,
With a tail as big as a kite.”*

*Said the little lamb to the shepherd boy,
“Do you hear what I hear?
Ringing thru the sky, shepherd boy,
Do you hear what I hear?
A song, song high above the tree,
With a voice as big as the sea.
With a voice as big as the sea.”*

*Said the shepherd boy to the mighty king,
“Do you know what I know?
In your palace warm, mighty King,
Do you know what I know?
A Child, a Child shivers in the cold,
Let us bring Him silver and gold,
Le us bring Him silver and gold.”*

*Said the king to the people ev’rywhere,
“Listen to what I say;
Pray for peace, people ev’rywhere!
Listen to what I say;
The Child, the Child sleeping in the night,
He will bring us goodness and light,
He will bring us goodness and light.
Bring us light.”*

GOSPEL READING

Luke 1:26-56

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.

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."

And Mary said,

 "My soul magnifies the Lord,

 and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
for he has looked with favor on the lowly state 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;
indeed, 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 imagination 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 come to the aid of his child Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,
according to the promise he made to our ancestors,
to Abraham and to his descendants forever.”

And Mary remained with her about three months and then returned to her home.

Heaven and earth will pass away but the word of the Lord stands forever.

Thanks be to God.

SERMON

Mary Said Yes

Rev. Tim Gerarden

RESPONDING TO GOD’S GRACE

*HYMN OF THE DAY GTG 99

My Soul Gives Glory to My God (Song of Mary)

1 My soul gives glo - ry to my God; my
2 My God has done great things for me: yes,
3 From age to age to all who fear, such
4 Love casts the might - y from their thrones, pro -
5 Praise God, whose lov - ing cov - e - nant sup -

heart pours out its praise. God lift - ed up my
ho - ly is God's name. All peo - ple will de -
mer - cy love im - parts, dis - pens - ing jus - tice
motes the in - se - cure, leaves hun - gry spir - its
ports those in dis - tress, re - mem - ber - ing past



AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

(from A Declaration of Faith)

What do you believe?

In Christ, God gave us a glimpse of the new creation God has already begun and will surely finish. We do not know when the final day will come. In our time we see only broken and scattered signs that the renewal of all things is under way. We do not yet see the end of cruelty and suffering in the world, the church, or our own lives. But we see Jesus as Lord. As he stands at the center of our history, we are confident he will stand at its end. He will judge all people and nations. Evil will be condemned and rooted out of God's good creation. There will be no more tears or pain. All things will be made new.

INVITATION TO OFFERING

We give to God's work in the world in response to all that God has done for us. In awareness and gratitude, let us give God's tithes and our offerings.

DOXOLOGY GTG 144

In the Bleak Midwinter

verse 4

**What can I give him, poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;
if I were a wise man, I would do my part;
yet what I can I give him: give my heart.**

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

We thank you God, for all the ways you work and heal and bless and free us. Accept these gifts given in great gratitude and in anticipation of Christ's return. Multiply them for your glory and for the good of all people. **Amen.**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE / JOYS AND CONCERNS

God who promises to be with us...

We boldly ask these things with confidence, knowing your will in Christ Jesus our Lord, who taught us to pray saying:

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father and Mother in heaven, hallowed be your name.

Your kingdom come, your 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 let us not be led into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen

SENDING INTO THE WORLD TO LOVE AND SERVE

*CLOSING HYMN GTG 539

We Will Go Out with Joy



1 We will go out with joy in the Spir-it; we will go out with God.
2 Now an - y - one who's born of the Spir-it, sing a new song of joy.
3 We will go out with joy in the Spir-it; we will go out with God.



We will go out with joy in the Spir-it; we will go out with God.
Now an - y - one who's born of the Spir-it, sing a new song of joy.
We will go out with joy in the Spir-it; we will go out with God.

Refrain



Al - le - lu - ia! We will go out with joy.



Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!

*BLESSING AND CHARGE

May God bless you with courage, as you seek the YES within you;
May Christ be born again in every risk you take for the sake of the world;
And may the Holy Spirit remind you, again and again, that you are never alone,
and that you are loved beyond measure.

Amen.

POSTLUDE



The tubas are returning! On Saturday, December 20th, The Landing invites you for a Tuba Christmas, a free, one-hour concert that fills the season with warmth, cheer, and the unmistakable charm of low brass holiday music. There's truly nothing like the sound of dozens of tubas and euphoniums lifting beloved Christmas carols into the air. The deep, rich tones blend together in a way that feels both festive and magical — the kind of sound that wraps around you like your favorite winter scarf.

Best of all? Tuba Christmas is completely FREE and open to the public. No tickets, no fees — just an afternoon of music, community connection, and holiday spirit!

Saturday, December 20th, 12:00–1:00 PM
Christ United Methodist Church
400 5th Ave SW, Rochester, MN 55902

[https://www.facebook.com/
events/2157780571396049](https://www.facebook.com/events/2157780571396049)

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Liturgy written by Tracey Davenport and provided for free distribution.

Another resource used
with permission:
Church Anew:
The Power of Yes -
Advent To Go Vol. 3 (2025)
By Rev. Andrea Roske-
Metcalf



There will be a **Christmas Tea this afternoon at 2:30 pm** at Plainview CPC for the women of both churches. They will be serving a lunch with cookies, social time, and music. Meet at CPC Rochester at 1:45 pm to carpool together!

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Sunday, December 14 Advent 3

9:30 am Worship- Onsite and Online

**1:45 pm Meet to carpool for the PW
Christmas Tea in Plainview**

2:30 pm Great Room Use: Labranza de Dios

Tuesday, December 16

9:00 am Bulletin Items Due

7:00 pm Great Room Use: Mission Aid Net.

Wednesday, December 17

8:00 am Prayer Group

6:30 pm CPC Choir Rehearsal

7:30 pm Jubellation Handbell Rehearsal

Thursday, December 18

5:30 pm Great Room Use: Labranza de Dios

Saturday, December 20

12:00 pm Newsletter Items Due

Sunday, December 21 Advent 4

9:30 am Worship- Onsite and Online

2:30 pm Great Room Use: Labranza de Dios



Judy Leal

Jane and Ed Burgstaler family,
especially daughters Jenny & Elissa
Nellie Brovold's mother, Jacqueline
Jennifer Hall and Sage Hall

Amy Ward and family

Sherrie Wilson

Vera Atkinson

Bill Marshall's Dad

*To be added to the prayer list, please
contact the office: 507-280-9291 or via
email: office@cpcrochester.org.*

Serving in Worship Today

Guest Preacher Rev. Tim Gerarden

Liturgist

Advent Dave & Carole Copeland

IT Support Louis Bouchard
& Bruce Felger

Church Staff

Music Director Jennifer Taylor

Pianist Tianyao Xie

Custodian Nancy Sanford

Office Manager Stephanie Pasch