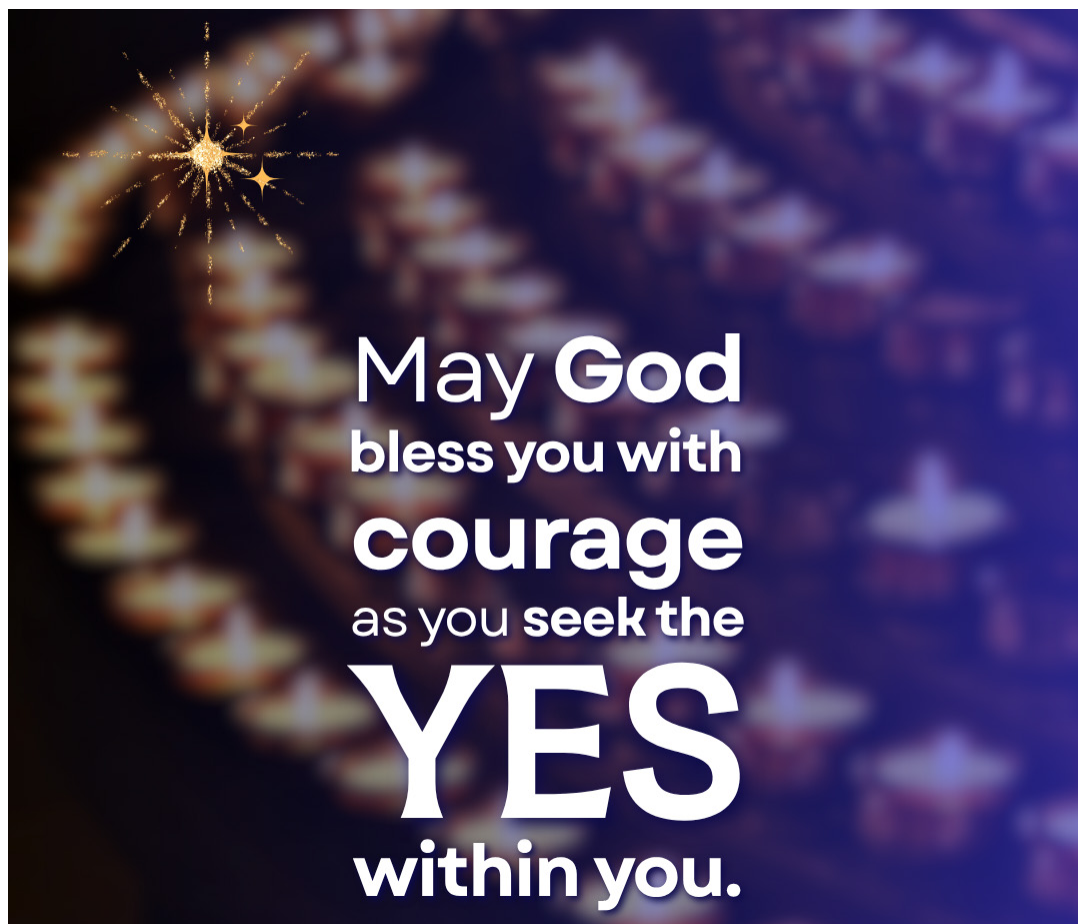


# Community Presbyterian Church

open hearted, open minded



**Fourth Sunday in Advent: Love**  
**Sunday, December 21, 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!  
We light this candle with love.

*Light the first candle.*  
*Light the second candle.*  
*Light the third (pink, if used) candle.*  
*Light the fourth candle is lit.*

Out of love for the people of God, the Lord speaks through the prophet Isaiah, as found in the seventh chapter, verses 10-14:

The LORD spoke to Ahaz, saying, Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven. But Ahaz said, I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test. Then Isaiah said: "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel.

Let us pray.  
God of hope, Prince of peace, Jubilee Judge, and Lord of love,  
your goodness is beyond our wildest imaginings.  
You give us more than we can think to ask,  
coming to us with impossible possibility  
in the union of flesh and spirit.  
Teach us to love this world and all people  
as you love us in Jesus Christ, our Lord.  
God of promise, God of hope,  
into our darkness come.

#### CALL TO WORSHIP

Prepare the way of the Lord!

**Lift every valley, lift every voice.**

Prepare the way of the Lord!

**And all flesh shall see the salvation of our God.**

**O come, O come, Emmanuel,  
and ransom captive Israel,  
that mourns in lonely exile here  
until the Son of God appear.**

**Refrain:**

**Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
shall come to thee, O Israel.**

**2 O come, thou Wisdom from on high,  
who orderest all things mightily:  
to us the path of knowledge show;  
and teach us in her ways to go. [Refrain]**

**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. [Refrain]**

**6 O come, thou Dayspring,  
come and cheer  
our spirits by thine advent here;  
disperse the gloomy clouds of night,  
and death's dark shadows put to flight.  
[Refrain]**

**CONFESSION AND PARDON**

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

**Great God, as we 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 that matter little  
that 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.**

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!**

## LISTENING FOR GOD'S WORD

### PRAYER FOR 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.**

### RESPONSIVE READING

Psalm 80:1–7, 17–19

Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, you who lead Joseph like a flock!

**You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth  
before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh.**

Stir up your might, and come to save us!

**Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may be saved.**

O Lord God of hosts, how long will you be angry with your people's prayers?

**You have fed them with the bread of tears  
and given them tears to drink in full measure.**

You make us the scorn of our neighbors; our enemies laugh among themselves.

**Restore us, O God of hosts; let your face shine, that we may be saved.**

But let your hand be upon the one at your right hand,

**the one whom you made strong for yourself.**

Then we will never turn back from you;

**give us life, and we will call on your name.**

**Restore us, O Lord God of hosts;**

**let your face shine, that we may be saved.**

### SPECIAL MUSIC

*Coventry Carol of the Bells*  
arr. by Cathy Moglebust

CPC Choir

### GOSPEL READING

Matthew 1:18-25

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be pregnant from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to divorce her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

“Look, the virgin shall become pregnant and give birth to a son,  
and they shall name him Emmanuel,”

which means, “God is with us.” When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife but had no marital relations with her until she had given birth to a son, and he named him Jesus.

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

**Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

*Joseph Said Yes*

Rev. Tim Gerarden

### RESPONDING TO GOD’S GRACE

\*HYMN OF THE DAY GTG 103      Come Now O Prince of Peace

1 Come now, O Prince of Peace; make us one bod - y.  
2 Come now, O God of love; make us one bod - y.  
3 Come now and set us free, O God, our Sav - ior.  
4 Come, hope of u - ni - ty; make us one bod - y.

Come, O Lord Je - sus; rec-on-cile all peo - ple.

## 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.**

## INVITATION TO OFFERING

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

## 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

O God, with faith and hope, we offer these gifts. Use them, even as you use us, to  
accomplish your purposes in Jesus Christ, whose birth we celebrate and whose Lordship  
we praise. **Amen.**

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE / JOYS AND CONCERNS

Come, Lord Jesus. Bring your presence, bring your peace, bring your light. Comfort the  
sick, soothe the sorrowful, bind up the wounded. Calm our spirits. Ease our burdens.  
Mend our hearts. **Come, Lord Jesus. ..**

Now, with the confidence of the children of God, let us pray as Jesus taught, 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 134

Joy to the World

**Joy to the world, the Lord is come!  
Let earth receive her king;  
let every heart prepare him room,  
and heaven and nature sing,  
and heaven and nature sing,  
and heaven, and heaven and nature sing.**

**3 No more let sins and sorrows grow,  
nor thorns infest the ground;  
he comes to make his blessings flow  
far as the curse is found,  
far as the curse is found,  
far as, far as the curse is found.**

**2 Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!  
Let all their songs employ,  
while fields and floods,  
rocks, hills, and plains  
repeat the sounding joy,  
repeat the sounding joy,  
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.**

**4 He rules the world with truth and grace,  
and makes the nations prove  
the glories of his righteousness  
and wonders of his love,  
and wonders of his love,  
and wonders, wonders of his love.**

\*BLESSING AND CHARGE

Let us go, trusting that God is with us in Jesus Christ. Emmanuel. This day, this Christmas, and forevermore, God is with us. Emmanuel. May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the companionship of the Holy Spirit be with you and abide with you today and always.

**Thanks be to God! Amen.**

POSTLUDE



**See you on Christmas Eve!  
Onsite and Online at 6 pm**

**Holiday Office Days:**

Office Open Monday, Tuesday, Dec. 22 and 23

Office Open Tuesday, December 30

Normal Office Days resume the week of  
January 4.

© Presbyterian Outlook, 2025  
Liturgy written by John Wurster 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-Metcalfé



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**Sunday, December 21 Advent 4**

**9:30 am Worship- Onsite and Online**

**2:30 pm Great Room Use: Labranza de Dios**

**Monday, December 22 - Office Open**

**9:30 am Mission Prayer Group**

**Tuesday, December 23 - Office Open**

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

**7:30 pm Session Meeting**

**Wednesday, December 24 - Office Closed**

**6:00 pm Christmas Eve Worship Service**  
Onsite and Online

**Thursday, December 25 Christmas Day**  
Merry Christmas!

**Sunday, December 28**

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

## Serving in Worship Today

Guest Preacher

Rev. Tim Gerarden

Liturgist

Margie Petersen

Candle Lighter

Gwen Riggan

Special Music

Jubellation Handbells

IT Support

Louis Bouchard

& Bruce Felger

## Church Staff

Music Director

Jennifer Taylor

Pianist

Tianyao Xie

Custodian

Nancy Sanford

Office Manager

Stephanie Pasch