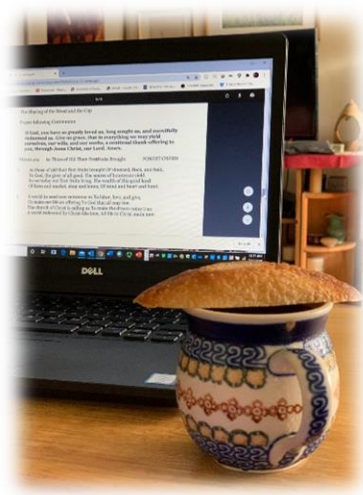


# 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent



**December 13, 2020  
at 10:30 a.m.  
on Facebook **Live****

**or on our church website at  
[westminsterakron.org](http://westminsterakron.org)**

## COME

Opening Voluntary      Recitative: Thus Saith the Lord (*Messiah*)      G.F. Handel  
*Joel Rhoads, soloist*

*We welcome you to Westminster's online worship service this Sunday. To set a more worshipful tone while watching this service at home, we encourage you to find a quiet space and light a candle.*

*Today, we will be celebrating The Sacrament of Holy Communion together. Please have your bread and juice nearby and be prepared to partake at the appropriate time.*

*If you are joining us on Facebook Live, then you can find a copy of today's bulletin on our church website at [westminsterakron.org](http://westminsterakron.org).*

**\*Call to Worship**

**Brad Hall**

The Promised One of God brings good news to the oppressed and binds up the brokenhearted.

**We are witnesses to the light of Christ!**

The Promised One of God proclaims liberty to captives and release to prisoners.

**We are witnesses to the light of Christ!**

The Promised One of God comforts all who mourn.

**Rejoicing always, praying without ceasing, holding fast to what is good,  
we are witnesses to the light of Christ!**

Choral Introit

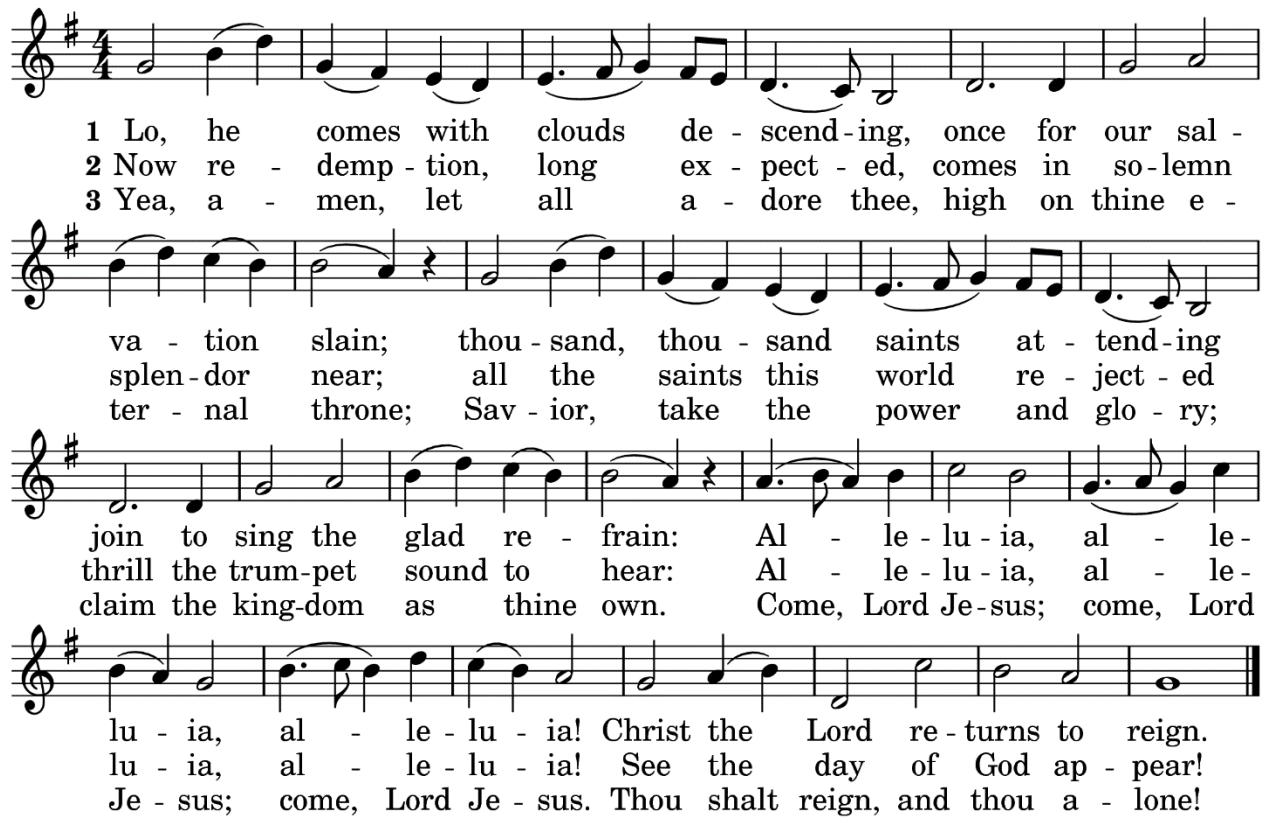
Wait for the Lord

Taizé

\*Hymn 6

Lo, He Comes, with Clouds Descending

HELMSLEY



1 Lo, he comes with clouds de - scend - ing, once for our sal -  
2 Now re - demp - tion, long ex - pect - ed, comes in so - lemn  
3 Yea, a - men, let all a - dore thee, high on thine e -  
va - tion slain; thou - sand, thou - sand saints at - tend - ing  
splen - dor near; all the saints this world re - ject - ed  
ter - nal throne; Sav - ior, take the power and glo - ry;  
join to sing the glad re - frain: Al - le - lu - ia, al - le -  
thrill the trum - pet sound to hear: Al - le - lu - ia, al - le -  
claim the king - dom as thine own. Come, Lord Je - sus; come, Lord  
lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Christ the Lord re - turns to reign.  
lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! See the day of God ap - pear!  
Je - sus; come, Lord Je - sus. Thou shalt reign, and thou a - lone!

Lighting of the Advent Candles

Brad Hall

We light this candle as a sign of the coming light of Christ.

**Advent means coming. We are preparing for the full coming of God's kingdom:**

The nations shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them.

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.

**Let us walk in the light of the Lord.**

## ENCOUNTER

Call to Confession

Old habits and new wrongs wear ruts through our lives and relationships. But God is able to restore us. Like water cursing through a desert, the waters of baptism flow through us, reminding us that we belong to God and are raised to new life.

#### Prayer of Confession

**Merciful God, you love justice; why, then, do we persist in wrongdoing and every form of evil? You have given us the gift of your Spirit; why, then, do we quench the spirit among us? You have given us the words of the prophets and the Word himself; why, then, do we despise and ignore what we have heard from you? You have sent the light into the world; why, then, have we loved darkness rather than light? Forgive us. Restore us. Till and tend us as your garden until righteousness and praise spring up, for the sake of Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.**

*Silence is observed.*

Response 574                      Lord, Have Mercy                      *Kyrie*  
**Lord, have mercy upon us. Christ, have mercy upon us. Lord, have mercy upon us.**

#### Assurance of Forgiveness

In Jesus Christ, the Lord has done great things for us! Even if we have gone out in tears, God brings us home shouting for joy. Thanks be to God: we are forgiven!

\*Response 479, Verse 1    Praise, My Soul, the God of Heaven    LAUDA ANIMA ++

**Praise, my soul, the God of heaven;  
Glad of heart your carols raise;  
Ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven,  
Who, like me, should sing God's praise?  
Alleluia! Alleluia! Praise the Maker all your days!**

\*Passing the Peace

We invite you now to greet one another saying, **The peace of Christ be with you.**

#### Time for Church Life and Call for the Offering

Joining Mary's joyful song,  
our souls proclaim the greatness of the Lord,  
and our spirits rejoice in God our Savior.

With humble and grateful hearts,  
let us bring our offerings to God.

Anthem

Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence

Gustav Holst

*Let all mortal flesh keep silence, And with fear and trembling stand;  
Ponder nothing earthly-minded, For with blessing in his hand  
Christ our Lord to earth descendeth Our full homage to demand.*

*King of Kings, yet born of Mary, As of old on earth he stood,  
Lord of Lords, in human vesture, In the body and the blood  
He will give to all the faithful His own self for heav'nly food.*

*Rank on rank the host of heaven Spreads his vanguard on the way,  
As the light of light descendeth From the realms of endless day,  
That the pow'rs of hell may vanish As the darkness clears away.*

*At his feet the six-winged seraph; Cherubim with sleepless eye  
Veil their faces to the presence As with ceaseless voice they cry,  
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Lord most high. Amen.*

\*Response 592    Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow    *Doxology*  
**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise God all creatures  
here below; Praise God above, ye heavenly hosts; Praise Father,  
Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

Time with Young Disciples

## GROW

Prayer for Illumination

Holy One, giver of life and light, as your word is read and proclaimed, illumine our hearts and minds, that by the power of the Holy Spirit, our lives may reflect God's glory. **Amen.**

The First Lesson

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

Old Testament

1 The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me;  
he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the  
brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners;  
2 to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God;  
to comfort all who mourn; 3 to provide for those who mourn in Zion — to give  
them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the

mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, to display his glory. 4 They shall build up the ancient ruins, they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations.

8 For I the LORD love justice, I hate robbery and wrongdoing; I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. 9 Their descendants shall be known among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples; all who see them shall acknowledge that they are a people whom the LORD has blessed. 10 I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. 11 For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.

The Second Lesson

Luke 1:46b-55

New Testament

46b My soul magnifies the Lord, 47 and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, 48 for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; 49 for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. 50 His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. 51 He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. 52 He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; 53 he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. 54 He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, 55 according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever.”

This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God!**

Sermon

The God Who Acts

The Reverend Jon Hauerwas

## SERVE

The Sacrament of Holy Communion

Invitation

John 6:35

Jesus said, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.”

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts! **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

With joy we praise you, gracious God, for you have created heaven and earth, made us in your image, and kept covenant with us - even when we fell into sin. We give you thanks for Jesus Christ, our Lord, whose coming opened to us the way of salvation and whose triumphant return we eagerly await.

Therefore we join our voices with all the saints and angels and the whole creation to proclaim the glory of your name.  
Together let us sing:

1 Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! Lord God Al-might - y! ear - ly in the  
morn - ing our song shall rise to thee; ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly!  
mer - ci-ful and might - y! God in three per-sons, bless - ed Trin - i - ty!

You are holy, O God of majesty, and blessed is Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord. You sent him into this world to satisfy the longings of your people for a Savior, to bring freedom to the captives of sin, and to establish justice for the oppressed. He came among us as one of us, taking the lot of the poor, sharing human suffering. We rejoice that in his death and rising again, you set before us the sure promise of new life, the certain hope of a heavenly home where we will sit at table with Christ, our host.

Living God, send your Holy Spirit upon us as we share your heavenly meal; nourish us with your grace so that we are strengthened to do your work in this world; unite us with you so that we are renewed. May we gratefully and joyfully remember that Jesus, our Savior, lived, died and rose again to give us new life and make us new creations in him.

May we live in the hope we discover through Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

God's Spirit is with us still: **Through him, with him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honor and glory are yours, Almighty God, now and forever. Amen.**

In one voice, let us offer the words of 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.**

Words of Institution

"The bread of life." "The cup of salvation."

Communion Motet:            Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming        (*sung by the choir*)

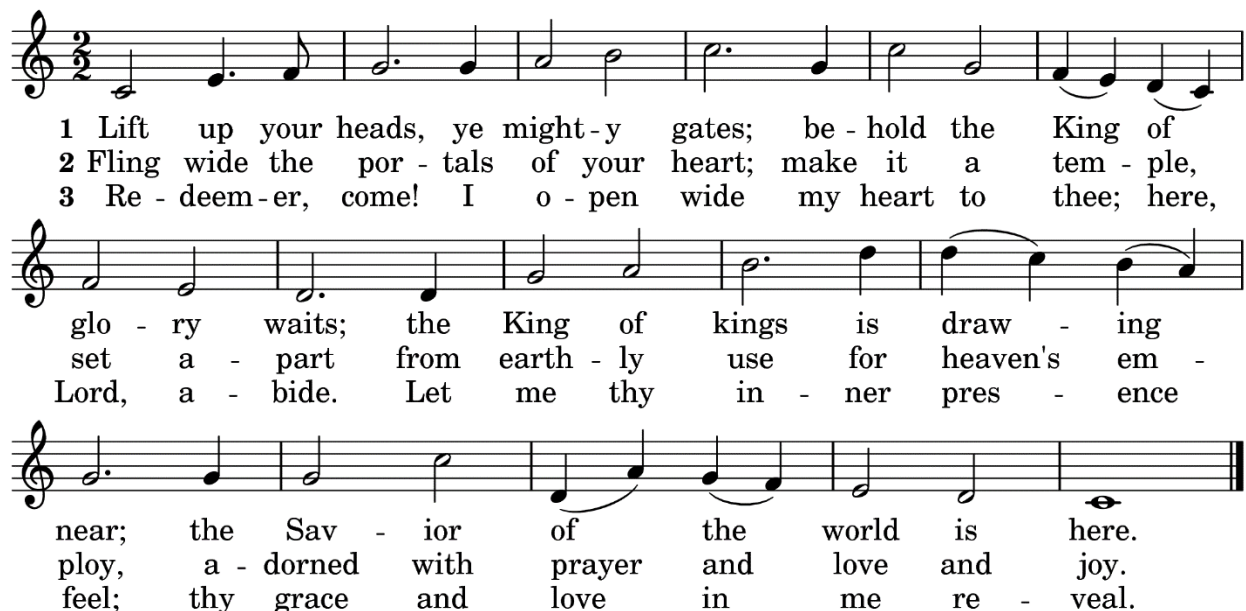
Prayer following Communion

**God of all hope, we bless and thank you for nourishing us with Christ, the bread of life. Help us to live free from all desires for anything else that promises to satisfy. Strengthen us now to offer this bread to all who hunger. Through Jesus Christ, the living bread, Amen.**

\*Hymn 8

Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates

TRURO



1 Lift up your heads, ye might-y gates; be - hold the King of  
2 Fling wide the por - tals of your heart; make it a tem - ple,  
3 Re - deem - er, come! I o - pen wide my heart to thee; here,  
glo - ry waits; the King of kings is draw - ing  
set a - part from earth - ly use for heaven's em -  
Lord, a - bid. Let me thy in - ner pres - ence  
near; the Sav - ior of the world is here.  
ploy, a - dorned with prayer and love and joy.  
feel; thy grace and love in me re - veal.

\*Charge and Benediction

Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing. Witness to the light of Christ so that all might believe through him.



Now may the God of peace call forth your complete dedication;  
may the light of Christ shine upon you;  
and the Holy Spirit fill you completely,  
now and forever.

Voluntary But Who May Abide...For He Is Like a Refiner's Fire G.F. Handel  
*Elizabeth Crabtree & Paul Stewart, soloists*

++ *This response replaces the Gloria Patri during Advent.*

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Poinsettias/Flowers Memorials for Christmas** The deadline is Tuesday, December 15, 2020. Your gift in memory or in honor of loved ones enables the Flower Committee to provide a beautiful setting in the Sanctuary for Advent and Christmas. Send the name of the person (s) you would like to remember along with your donation (there is no set amount) to the church office, attn.: Debby Evrard. Please indicate "In Loving Memory of, or In Memory of, or In Honor of." Checks should be made payable to Westminster Presbyterian Church or donate online by going to [westminsterakron.org](http://westminsterakron.org), choosing "online giving" and donating under Chancel Flowers.

**Giving Tree Drop Off** We will be collecting your gifts today on December 13 and December 20 between the hours of 1:00 and 2:30 pm.

CALENDAR of CHURCH EVENTS for the week of December 13 - 19, 2020	
<b>Sunday, 12/13</b> 9:00 am Youth Zoom Conversation 9:15 am Choir Rehearsal (Sanctuary) 9:45 am Tween Sunday School via Zoom 10:30 am Worship Service on Facebook Live 1:00 pm Giving Tree Drop Off	<b>Tuesday 12/15</b> 7:00 pm Zoom Properties Meeting
<b>Monday, 12/14</b> 7:00 pm Bible Study Zoom Meeting 7:00 pm Book Discussion via Zoom	<b>Wednesday 12/16</b> 7:00 pm Zoom Deacons Meeting
	<b>Thursday 12/17</b> 9:30 am Zoom WPC Staff Meeting 7:00 pm Zoom Adult Education
	<b>Saturday 12/19</b> 8:00 am Food For Life (Kitchen)



Westminster Presbyterian Church  
1250 West Exchange Street, Akron, Ohio 44313  
[westminsterakron@gmail.com](mailto:westminsterakron@gmail.com) - 330-836-2226  
[www.westminsterakron.org](http://www.westminsterakron.org)