

2nd Sunday of Advent



**December 6, 2020
at 10:30 a.m.
on Facebook **Live****

**or on our church website at
westminsterakron.org**

COME

Opening Voluntary Recit: Then Shall the Eyes of the Blind Be Opened...
He Shall Feed His Flock (Messiah) G.F. Handel
Elizabeth Crabtree, 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.

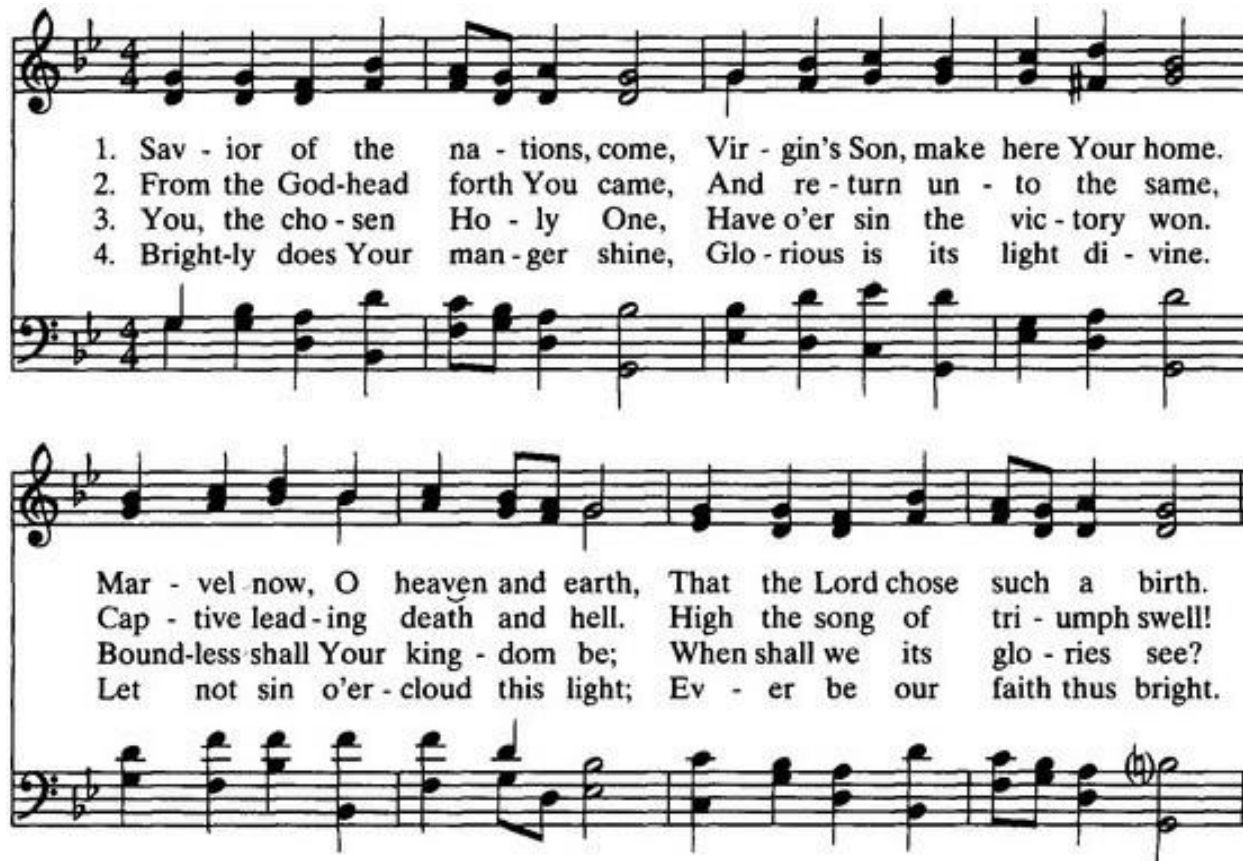
If you are joining us on Facebook Live, then you can find a copy of today's bulletin on our church website at westminsterakron.org.

*Call to Worship Jacquie Mabry

A voice cries in the wilderness,
"Prepare the way of the Lord; make God's way clear.
Lift up every valley; lower every mountain.
For the glory of the Lord shall be revealed."

CHORAL INTROIT Wait for the Lord Taizé

*Hymn 14 Savior of the Nations, Come NUN KOMM DER HEIDEN HEILAND



1. Sav - ior of the na - tions, come, Vir - gin's Son, make here Your home.
2. From the God-head forth You came, And re - turn un - to the same,
3. You, the cho - sen Ho - ly One, Have o'er sin the vic - tory won.
4. Bright-ly does Your man - ger shine, Glo - rious is its light di - vine.

Mar - vel now, O heaven and earth, That the Lord chose such a birth.
Cap - tive lead - ing death and hell. High the song of tri - umph swell!
Bound-less shall Your king - dom be; When shall we its glo - ries see?
Let not sin o'er - cloud this light; Ev - er be our faith thus bright.

Lighting of the Advent Candles

Jacquie Mabry

We light these candles 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.

Let us walk in the light of the Lord.

ENCOUNTER

Call to Confession

God does not want anyone to perish, but rather for all to come to repentance. Therefore, let us confess our sins, for God's salvation is at hand.

Prayer of Confession

Faithful God, we confess that we have not led lives of holiness. We suffer from impatience, apathy, and greed; we have not been at peace. We repent of these offenses and turn to you in love. Forgive our iniquity and pardon our sins, that we may walk in righteousness to the glory of your name. 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

Brothers and sisters, by the mercy of Christ, your sins are forgiven, for salvation is at hand for all who turn to God.

*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

The Lord will give what is good, and our land will yield its increase. May your righteousness go before God and prepare a pathway for the Lord. Let us offer our lives and labor to God and fulfill our vows to the Most High.

Anthem O Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem John Blow
Valerie Stewart, soloist

O pray for the peace of Jerusalem. They shall prosper that love thee. Peace be within thy walls, and plenteousness within thy palaces. For my brethren and companions' sakes, I will wish thee prosperity. Yea, because of the house of the Lord our God, I will seek to do thee good.

*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

Sheila Svoboda

GROW

Prayer for Illumination

Mighty God, send your Holy Spirit to speak peace, that the good news of this age may be proclaimed through your word, which stands forever. **Amen.**

The First Lesson

Isaiah 40:1-11

Old Testament

- 1 Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God.
- 2 Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins.
- 3 A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.
- 4 Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain.
- 5 Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."
- 6 A voice says, "Cry out!" And I said, "What shall I cry?" All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field.
- 7 The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the LORD blows upon it; surely the people are grass.
- 8 The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand forever.
- 9 Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, do not fear; say to the cities of Judah, "Here is your God!"
- 10 See, the Lord GOD comes with might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him.
- 11 He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead the mother sheep.

The Second Lesson

Mark 1:1-8

New Testament

- 1 The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

2 As it is written in the prophet Isaiah, “See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way;

3 the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,’”

4 John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

5 And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

6 Now John was clothed with camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey.

7 He proclaimed, “The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals.

8 I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

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

Sermon

Forever

The Reverend Jon Hauerwas

SERVE

*Affirmation of Faith

As followers of Jesus Christ, living in this world - which some seek to control, and others view with despair - we declare with joy and trust: Our world belongs to God! From the beginning, through all the crises of our times, until the kingdom fully comes, God keeps covenant forever. God is our King: Let the earth be glad! Christ is victor: his rule has begun! The Spirit is at work: creation is renewed! Hallelujah! Praise the Lord!

Prayers of the People

As heralds of good tidings, let us lift up our voices with strength this day praying to the One who comforts, restores, and heals.

Let us pray for all leaders and people of the world. You have created one human family to live in righteousness and peace. Give us the wisdom to order our common life according to your loving purposes, that your glory may be revealed and all people shall see it together.

Let us pray for your church. You have given us the gift of the Messiah so that your church may be steadfast and true. Give us strength to follow your Son until all have come to repentance and are reconciled by his love.

Let us pray for those who are sick, who suffer need, who are exiled or in danger. You have made us for a holy purpose, to comfort and care for each other. Give us compassion to love our neighbor and patience to care for those in need.

Let us pray for your creation. Your faithfulness springs up from the ground, and your goodness looks down from the sky. Rid us of the laziness and greed that diminish life as you teach us to care for your creation together.

Let us remember those who have died. Ever-living God, one day in your presence is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. Make us one with the saints, who have found their eternal home in you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

And finally, together as the people of God, let us offer the words of the Lord's Prayer, saying in one voice:

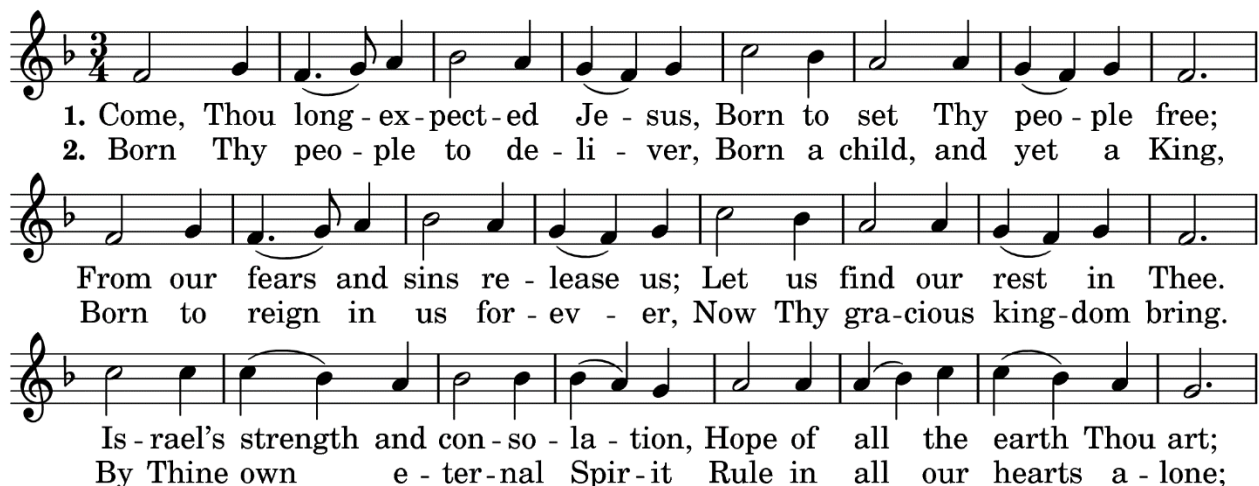
The Lord's Prayer

**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.**

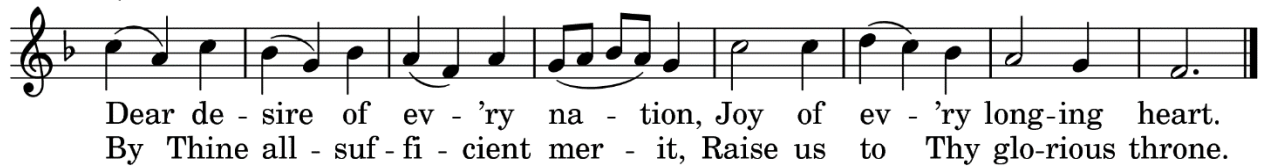
*Hymn No. 2

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

HYFRYDOL



1. Come, Thou long - ex - pect - ed Je - sus, Born to set Thy peo - ple free;
2. Born Thy peo - ple to de - li - ver, Born a child, and yet a King,
From our fears and sins re - lease us; Let us find our rest in Thee.
Born to reign in us for - ev - er, Now Thy gra - cious king - dom bring.
Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion, Hope of all the earth Thou art;
By Thine own e - ter - nal Spir - it Rule in all our hearts a - lone;



*Charge and Benediction

The day of the Lord is coming;
therefore strive to live in peace,
for God's salvation is near.

May faithfulness spring up from the ground and righteousness look down from
heaven as you walk the way of peace,
and may the blessing of God,
Eternal Majesty, Living Word, and Holy Comforter,
Be with you now and always.

Voluntary

Savior of the Nations, Come

Paul Manz

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Flowers in the Chancel are given by Marian Wahl in loving memory of her parents, Glenn and Ruth Clark and her husband, Whitey Wahl.

Christmas Food Baskets Our annual Christmastime delivery of food baskets to Greater Akronites in need will take place on Saturday, December 12. The groceries purchased from Acme #1 will be assembled in the church parking lot with deliveries beginning at 9:00 a.m. You can help make another family's Christmas a little brighter by delivering and/or contributing money to help fill the baskets. Donations are of vital importance this year as COVID has damaged the local economy. Baskets and gift cards (for apartments) are valued at \$40 each, but any donation amount is appreciated. You can give online at westminsterakron.org under "electronic giving." Or send a check to the church with "Christmas Baskets" in the memo line. We also need plenty of delivery drivers to make this a success. Email elabbe@roadrunner.com if you can help.

Poinsettias/Flowers Memorials for Christmas 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.” The deadline is Tuesday, December 15, 2020. Checks should be made payable to Westminster Presbyterian Church or donate online by going to westminsterakron.org, choosing “online giving” and donating under Chancel Flowers.

Giving Tree Drop Off The Christmas Giving Tree will be done in a slightly different way this holiday season. As in the past, ACCESS Inc. will be the benefactor of our donations. ACCESS is dedicated to addressing the plight of homeless women and children in our community. This agency encourages the development of self-esteem and the attainment of self-sufficiency through its commitment to provide a holistic, safe and supportive environment, and through its programs of housing, advocacy and empowerment. The needs of ACCESS Inc. are many. Traditionally, Westminster has donated hats, mittens, gloves and scarves. There have also been various other similar items included in the mix. That includes educational and health related goods. ACCESS and our church encourage you to be imaginative in your giving. Our Giving Tree will be placed in Wright-Herberich Hall. We will be collecting your gifts today on December 6, 13 and 20 between the hours of 1:00 and 2:30 pm. And remember, during these unusual times, it has been even more trying for the underprivileged. So this year, please pay even closer attention to those in need, and donate. freely. Thank you!

First Sunday Food Drive-In/Drop-Off Collection is today, December 6 from 1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. Thank you for your generosity!

Children Services needs for Christmas 2020 Please bring your food contribution and gift cards to help supply the Toy Room for Children’s Services foster parents, today from 1:00 to 2:30 during the 1st Sunday Food Collection.

CALENDAR of CHURCH EVENTS for the week of December 6 - 12, 2020	
Sunday, 12/6 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, First Sunday Food Drop Off & Gift Cards Collection for Toy Room Monday, 12/7 7:00 pm Bible Study Zoom Meeting	Tuesday 12/8 5:45 pm Endowment Committee Meeting via Zoom Wednesday 12/9 6:00 pm Outreach Zoom meeting 7:00 pm Zoom Discipleship Meeting Thursday 12/10 9:30 am Zoom WPC Staff Meeting 12:00 pm Staff Appreciation Lunch 7:00 pm Zoom Adult Education Saturday 12/12 7:00 am Christmas Baskets