

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



**December 12, 2021 at 10:30 a.m.**

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

## ***Welcome Reverend Tom Ulrich and the Congregation of New Covenant Community Church!***

*Throughout the Advent season the congregations of New Covenant Community Church and Westminster Presbyterian Church are coming together to share the gifts of New Covenant's Pastor, The Reverend Tom Ulrich, and Westminster's Music Ministry under the direction of Interim Music Director and Organist, Bob Carlyon. Members and Elders of both congregations will participate in lighting the Advent candles during Sunday worship services and the lighting of congregational candles for the traditional singing of Silent Night on Christmas Eve.*

Each Sunday following worship, refreshments will be served in the Fellowship Hall. Please spread the word of Peace, Joy and Love this holiday season as these neighboring churches celebrate the birth of Christ together.

# COME

*At the ringing of the chimes please silence your conversations and prepare your hearts and minds for an encounter with the Living God. We also ask that you power off your cell phones to prevent interference with our live-streaming and recording equipment.*

***Bolded text is read or sung by all.***

*\*Please rise in body or spirit.*

*Today, we are celebrating the Sacrament of Holy Communion. During this time of pandemic, you are encouraged to take a pre-made Communion packet prior to the service, which will be distributed along with your bulletin.*

## Voluntary

# Of the Father's Love Begotten

## Divinum Mysterium *Setting by Wibur Held*

## \*Call to Worship

Kinsie Willis

Leader: During Advent, let us gather together to discern new manifestations of God's presence among us.

**People: May the Lord open our eyes to see God's light in the darkest times.**

Leader: In the midst of the world's confusion, God's truth is spoken.

**People: Amid the storms of fear and anxiety, God blesses us with peace.**

Leader: In unexpected places, new life is born.

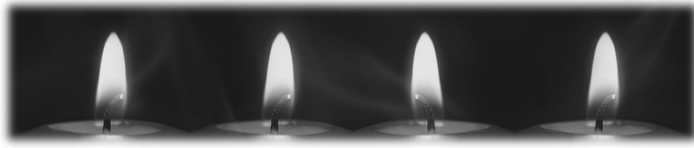
**People: Let us prepare ourselves to share our gifts generously, to serve God faithfully, and to see God among us constantly.**

\*Hymn #8

# Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates

TRURO

## Lighting of the Advent Candle



*Tim Meyer and Susie Stevenor*

Reader 1: Having lit the candle of hope, we anticipate a new reality for all humanity; and having lit the candle of peace, we look forward to the day when swords will be refashioned into plowshares, and no one will learn war anymore.

Reader 2: During Advent, we acknowledge that the signs of God's kingdom are being revealed among us, and we commit ourselves to the proclamation of the good news of great joy, so that we will not allow our preparations to push joy from our lives.

Reader 1: This morning we light the candle of joy because we celebrate our identity as God's beloved children.

Reader 2: We light this candle to accentuate that God's promised Deliverer will bring the gift of a new life and impart true and everlasting joy to all people. *(light the candle)*

Reader 1: Joy is God's melody amid the discord of life. Through this chorus that renews all creation, we anticipate the music of God's newness.

Reader 2: As the candle illumines our lives, may God bless us with the kind of joy that cannot be contained, but must be shared.

**All: God of grace, Lord of love, Companion of all creation, You bestow on us the gifts of light and life, and You lead us into the radiance of rejoicing. Create in us a fountain of joy; stir in us a spirit ready to dance; and kindle in us the fire of gladness, so that we may look forward to the day when Your joy may be in us and our joy would be complete. Amen.**

## ENCOUNTER

Call to Confession

As we make our Advent journey, we know that we have not always followed God's path. We have not lived by God's Word, and we have not searched our hearts or faced our sins. So we gather here in a community of faith to confess our sins to God, so that we may not only experience God's grace and mercy, but we will also receive a fresh sense of God's presence and a new resolve to live for God's glory. Let us pray:

### Prayer of Confession

**Merciful God, as we come to the well of salvation, we pray that You would forgive us. Forgive us for indulging ourselves in excess rather than living in simplicity. Have mercy upon us for drinking from the cups of privilege rather than sharing the chalice of equality. Redeem us from enjoying the taste of aggression rather than savoring the sweetness of humility and meekness. Cleanse us with the water from salvation's well, so that in the dry wilderness of our sin, Your streams of mercy would flow over us, and we would be refreshed to follow Your way of life and love, through Jesus Christ our Lord, in whose name we pray.**

*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

(adapted from Titus 3:4-5)

Leader: When the goodness and lovingkindness of God our Savior appeared, God saved us, but not because of any works of righteousness which we had done.

**People: God saved us according to the mercy of our Lord, through the water of rebirth and renewal through the Holy Spirit.**

Leader: Friends, believe the good news of the gospel:

**People: Through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!**

\*Response #23, Refrain\*\*

GLORIA

Gloria in Excelsis Deo

\*Passing the Peace

Greet both friends and strangers saying,

**The peace of Christ be with you.**

*During this time of pandemic, a nod of the head and wave of the hand will suffice.*

**The Christmas Story:**

*See the list of participants page 11.*

*Following the pageant, children are to return to their families. During the time for the offering, children are to bring their gifts forward for the Children's Services Holiday Toy Room.*

Call for the Offering      *Offering plates may be found as you exit the sanctuary.*

In a time of year where giving and receiving gifts occupy a great amount of our time, we realize that God gave us the greatest gift in Jesus Christ. Let us therefore offer our gifts to God – the gifts of our time, our resources, our talents – as we seek to promote God's work among us, and let us use this opportunity to express God's love for all people.

Offertory

A Shoot Shall Come Forth

Richard Horn

*A shoot shall come forth out of Jesse, and a bud shall grow out of his roots.  
The spirit of life shall be with him, the spirit of wisdom and truth.  
Then the lamb shall lie down with the leopard, and the lion eat straw with the ox,  
for the hand of a Child shall lead them, to the peaceable kingdom of God.  
From out of the wells of salvation will he draw us the water of life;  
His waist shall be girdled with justice, the heart of his heart shall be Love.  
He'll come from the end of his heaven, and the earth shall be torn from its place;  
our lives shall be filled with his radiance as floodwaters cover the sea.*

\*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.**

*After the OFFERTORY, 3-5 year-olds are invited to the Nursery. K-6 choir members are invited to a party in Room 207.*

# GROW

## Prayer for Illumination

Almighty God, as we read and listen to Your Scripture, translate the words we hear into the way we live, so that Your timeless truth would affect our daily actions, and Your messianic message would inspire us to continue Your work, for we ask it in the name of the One who is to come, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### The First Lesson

Psalm 126:1-6

Old Testament

- 1 When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who dream.
- 2 Then our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy; then it was said among the nations, ‘The Lord has done great things for them.’
- 3 The Lord has done great things for us, and we rejoiced.
- 4 Restore our fortunes, O Lord, like the watercourses in the Negeb.
- 5 May those who sow in tears reap with shouts of joy.
- 6 Those who go out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing, shall come home with shouts of joy, carrying their sheaves.

### The Second Lesson

Isaiah 12:1-6

Old Testament

- 1 You will say on that day: I will give thanks to you, O Lord, for though you were angry with me, your anger turned away, and you comforted me.
- 2 Surely God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid, for the Lord God is my strength and my might; he has become my salvation.
- 3 With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.
- 4 And you will say on that day: Give thanks to the Lord, call on his name; make known his deeds among the nations; proclaim that his name is exalted.
- 5 Sing praises to the Lord, for he has done gloriously; let this be known in all the earth.
- 6 Shout aloud and sing for joy, O royal Zion, for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.

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

Sermon                      From the Wells of Salvation                      The Reverend Tom Ulrich

## SERVE

*Pre-made Communion packets are available for you. Please see the ushers for assistance. In keeping with social distancing protocols, the congregation will not be coming forward to receive the elements. Instead, you are encouraged to receive the elements in your pew at the appropriate time.*

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.**

It is truly right and our greatest joy to give You thanks and praise, eternal God, our Creator, for just as the light from the Advent candles seeks to dispel the darkness of chaos, You illumine our paths through the bright and Morning Star of Your grace. Shine Your light upon the paths of our sisters and brothers, and gather all of us together so that we may join our voices with the choirs of heaven and with all the faithful of every time and place in praising You and singing to the glory of Your name:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,**

**heaven and earth are full of Your glory.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

You are holy, O God of majesty, and blessed is Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who healed and taught, challenged and comforted, welcomed and saved, forming a community of faith, and bidding His disciples to continue His mission of hope and healing in the world. Even when He was betrayed by those closest to Him, He continued to love all people, refusing to return evil for evil, and giving His life so that the world could be set free from suffering and sin. Through Your power, O God, You raised Jesus from the dead, and we ask that You would fashion our lives into a holy and living sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, so that we may boldly and faithfully proclaim the mystery of faith:

**Christ has died,**

**Christ is risen,**

**Christ will come again.**

Gracious God, in these holy moments pour out Your Holy Spirit upon those of us gathered here and upon the gifts which grace this sacred table. Nourish us through the broken bread that can reshape our fragmented lives into instruments that serve You faithfully; and as we partake of Your cup of grace, grant that we may be renewed to lead all people to the joy that flows from the wells of Your salvation. Unite us now at Your table, and through sharing one loaf and a common cup, make us one in Christ Jesus so that our life of faith would ignite our witness in the world. Through this Eucharistic celebration, inspire us to welcome all people as You have welcomed us, so that we may not only embrace the neighbor and the newcomer, the resident and the refugee, the persecuted and the impoverished, but we would also discover what they have to teach us, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who taught His disciples, when praying, to say together:

**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.”

The Sharing of the Bread and the Cup



Communion Hymn #517

We Come as Guests Invited

Prayer following Communion

Loving Lord, not only do You nourish Your people with the word of life, but You also bless us with an abundance of gifts and sustain us the bread of heaven. Continue to strengthen us through this sacrament so that we may have the courage to speak Your truth and to shine forth as lights for the world, communicating Advent's hope, peace, and joy to all humanity, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

\*Hymn #2

Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus

HYFRYDOL

\*Charge and Benediction

Now, my friends, go out in joy (3<sup>rd</sup> Advent candle)

and be led forth in peace (2<sup>nd</sup> Advent candle)

abounding in hope (1<sup>st</sup> Advent candle)

sharing the gifts from the wells of salvation,

so that we may grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord.

And may the Lord bless you and keep you; may the Lord make His face

to shine upon you and be gracious unto you; may the Lord lift up His

countenance upon you and give you peace, now and forevermore. Amen.

Voluntary

Savior of the Nations, Come

NUN KOMM, DER HEIDEN HEILAND J.S. Bach

\*\* This response takes the place of the *Gloria Patri* during Advent.

**Our USHERS Today** are Donna Gorrington, Dan Gorrington, Bob Leonard, Don Rearick and Dave Stobbs (head usher).

**Greeters from New Covenant Community Church Today**

are Ken Williams and Nancy Williams.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**The Flowers on the Chancel Last Sunday** were given by Marian Wahl in loving memory of Ruth Clark and Whitey Wahl.

**The Flowers on the Pedestal** are given in honor of Polly Fisher's 102<sup>nd</sup> birthday. Polly has been a member of Westminster Presbyterian Church since January 18, 1976.

**Poinsettias/Flowers Memorials for Christmas** Please include your dedication with your check and email to Denise Hochevar at [wpcffinance1250@gmail.com](mailto:wpcffinance1250@gmail.com) before the deadline **Thursday, December 16, 2021** for inclusion in the Christmas Eve bulletin.

## **Calendar of Church Events week of December 12—18, 2021**

### **Sunday, 12/12**

- 8:30 am Nursery Opens
- 8:30 am Children's Choir Pageant Rehearsal in Sanctuary
- 8:45 am Choir Rehearsal in Choir Room
- 9:30 am Sunday School
- 9:30 am Parenting Group
- 10:30 am Worship Service in Sanctuary & on YouTube Livestream
- Children's Christmas Pageant
- Children's Choir party and Costume Return after Pageant

### **Monday, 12/13**

- 11:30 am Men's Lunch at Olive Garden
- 7:00 pm Book Discussion Fellowship at El Rancho Mexican
- 7:00 pm Memorial Garden Meeting in WHH

### **Tuesday, 12/14**

- 2:30 pm Adult Bell Choir Rehearsal in the Chancel
- 7:00 pm Properties Committee Meeting in WHH

### **Wednesday, 12/15**

- 7:00 pm Deacon's Meeting in Room 106

### **Thursday, 12/16**

- 9:30 am WPC Staff Meeting in the Library
- 7:00 pm Adult Ed Zoom Meeting

### **Saturday, 12/18**

- 8:00 am Food For Life in the Kitchen



## **The Christmas Story** **List of Participants**

Lizzie Blaha - Children's Choir, Mary  
Emma Bryson - Youth Choir  
James Crabtree - Sheep  
Paul Crabtree - Children's Choir, Angel  
Dean Gable - Youth Choir, Reader  
Tori Gable - Children's Choir, Youth Choir, Donkey  
Sam Gilbert - Cow  
Ellie Grau - Children's Choir, Angel  
Gabby Gray - Youth Choir  
Sam Gray - King  
William Gray - Shepherd  
Josh Hayes - Reader  
Claire Jopperi - Youth Choir, Reader  
Hunter Jopperi - Reader  
John Jopperi - Reader  
Caden Labbe - Youth Choir  
Holden Labbe - Youth Choir  
Zoe Melver - Youth Choir, Children's Choir, Soloist, Gabriel  
Callen Spring - Children's Choir, King  
Ian Spring - Children's Choir, King  
Desmond Stewart - Children's Choir, Shepherd  
Georgia Vuchak - Children's Choir, Angel  
Vaughn Vuchak - Jesus  
Xavier Vuchak - Children's Choir, Joseph

**ACME Community Cash Back Program** Boxes are in WHH and in the Narthex. Check the bottom of your ACME receipts and when there is money listed after the word "Community Cash Back", those are the receipts needed. The program runs until December 25, 2021 with the collection of tapes until January 25, 2022. Proceeds will be used for Outreach programs.

Staff Schedule in the Office:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Claudine Schooley		Claudine Schooley	Claudine Schooley	Claudine Schooley
WPC Church Office <a href="mailto:wpcoffice1250@gmail.com">wpcoffice1250@gmail.com</a>				
	Margo Works	Margo Works	Margo Works	
Director of Children, Family, and Youth <a href="mailto:wpcchildren1250@gmail.com">wpcchildren1250@gmail.com</a>				
	Bob Carlyon	Bob Carlyon	Bob Carlyon	
Music Director/Organist <a href="mailto:wpcmusicdir1250@gmail.com">wpcmusicdir1250@gmail.com</a>				
Denise Hochevar	Denise Hochevar	Denise Hochevar	Denise Hochevar	
WPC Church Finance <a href="mailto:wpcfinance1250@gmail.com">wpcfinance1250@gmail.com</a>				
Dave Bodnar	Dave Bodnar	Dave Bodnar	Dave Bodnar	
Daytime Custodian <a href="mailto:wpcbuilding@gmail.com">wpcbuilding@gmail.com</a>				

Other Staff:

Val Stewart, Director of Children's Choir [wpcchildrenschoir1250@gmail.com](mailto:wpcchildrenschoir1250@gmail.com)

Bruce Klucharich, Audio-Visual Technician

Traci Range, Director of Childcare [wpcchildcare1250@gmail.com](mailto:wpcchildcare1250@gmail.com)

Volunteers:

Kristy Yates, Director of Adult Bell Choir

Shelley Koutnik, Head of Staff

*The Church Office is open from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., Monday - Friday.*



Westminster Presbyterian Church

come encounter grow serve

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