

# 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent



**December 5, 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.*

Voluntary                      O Come, O Come Emmanuel                      Calvin Hampton  
Nik Stackpole, guest organist

\*Call to Worship Brad Hall

Leader: The season of Advent challenges us to see God's vision of what is yet to be.

**People: The season of Advent summons us to hear God's voice calling anew.**

Leader: The season of Advent invites us to inhale the fragrant blessings of God in our world.

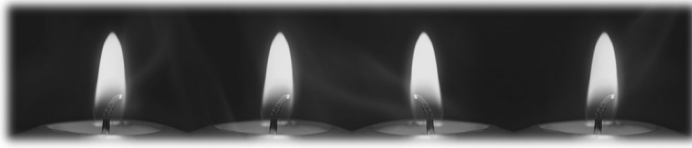
**People: The season of Advent leads us to walk along the path that God has prepared for us.**

Leader: The season of Advent embraces us with God's love that we are to share with others.

**People: The season of Advent prepares us for the moment when the Savior of the nations comes.**

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

## Lighting of the Advent Candle



*Brian Rodabaugh, Andrew Kypriano, and Leo Wendler*

Reader 1: On this second Sunday of Advent, we are warmed by the candle of peace.

Reader 2: As God's people, let us gather together in the light of peace where divisions dissolve and unity is established.

Reader 1: The peace of God passes all understanding, and the light of Advent invites us to follow God's way of peace.

Reader 2: May the light from this Advent candle lead us to work for the day when all swords are refashioned into plowshares and all spears molded into pruning hooks.

Reader 1: Let us serve as a sign of God's peace in the world by lighting these Advent candles. *(light the candle)*

Reader 2: And may these candles illumine our way in the world so that all creation may know and experience God's peace.

**All: God of peace, who can assuage every anxiety, quell every conflict, and mediate our misunderstandings, prepare the way of peace for us and for our world, so that we may truly welcome the One who is the Prince of peace, for it is in His name that we pray. Amen.**

## ENCOUNTER

### Call to Confession

Sometimes we fear that when we confess all that is wrong, we will be exposed and condemned. However, God's grace offers a different message — that when we confess, we discover the way to mercy and forgiveness. Therefore, trusting in God's hope and grace, let us now make our confession to God.

## Prayer of Confession

**God of the Coming One, although the words of the prophets challenge us to prepare the way for the Messiah, we confess that we have failed to abandon our old patterns of living. Forgive us for remaining captive to our culture. Have mercy upon us for ignoring the needs of our neighbors. Cleanse us from the stain of sin that prefers deception rather than devotion. Redeem us through Your grace, and call us from the narrowness of our traditions to new ways of being the church, so that we may serve as creative witnesses for newness, justice, and peace, for we ask it in the name of the One whose way is sure and whose word is true, Jesus Christ our Lord.**

*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 Luke 1:78-79)

Leader: By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us.

**People: God will give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, and God will guide our feet into the way of peace.**

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.*

Moment for Ministry

Stacy Franzmann/Jazz Vespers

Time for Church Life and Call for the Offering

In gratitude for the promise of this season and for the generosity awakened in us by Christ's coming into the world, let us offer our gifts and our lives in service to Christ and Christ's church, so that we may share God's love and grace with all people everywhere.

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

Offertory

Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming    *Arr. Michael Praetorius*  
*Text may be found at hymn #48*

\*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

Walter Hayes

*Following the Time with Young Disciples, children are invited to remain with their families, participate in the children's K-6 choir rehearsal in room 207 or visit with our childcare staff in the nursery.*

## GROW

Prayer for Illumination

Almighty God, as the candles of Advent shine in our darkness, we pray that You would illumine us with the truth of Your word. Grant that the Scriptures we read today will forever inspire us to live according to Your message of love, hope, and peace, so that we may reflect Your glory to the ends of the earth, for we ask it in the name of the One who is to come, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

2 In days to come the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be raised above the hills; all the nations shall stream to it.

3 Many peoples shall come and say, 'Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths.' For out of Zion shall go forth instruction, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

4 He shall judge between the nations, and shall arbitrate for many peoples; they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

Hymn #376

Love Divine, All Loves Excelling HYFRYDOL

The Second Lesson

Luke 1:67-79

New Testament

67 Then his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke this prophecy:

68 'Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has looked favorably on his people and redeemed them.

69 He has raised up a mighty savior for us in the house of his servant David,

70 as he spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets from of old,  
71 that we would be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us.

72 Thus he has shown the mercy promised to our ancestors, and has remembered his holy covenant,

73 the oath that he swore to our ancestor Abraham, to grant us

74 that we, being rescued from the hands of our enemies, might serve him without fear,

75 in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.

76 And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways,

77 to give knowledge of salvation to his people by the forgiveness of their sins.

78 By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us,

79 to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.’

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

Sermon

Are You There?

The Reverend Tom Ulrich

## SERVE

\*Affirmation of Faith

(adapted from the SALT Project)

**As Christians, we believe in a God who creates all things: people, religions, languages, beauty, and every color in the rainbow.**

**As Christians, we believe in a God who becomes flesh, is born in a stable, a refugee with nowhere to lay his head.**

**As Christians, we believe in a God who fills us with the courage to serve our fellow human beings, to feed the hungry, and to love the foreigner because we are descendants of the Israelites who were foreigners in the land of Egypt.**

**This is who we are as Christians: people created to love, to welcome the stranger, and to walk, hand-in-hand with all God’s people, through God’s starry night and into the dawn.**

Prayers of the People

Gracious God, because You are the Anointer of prophets and the Sender of our Savior, You continue to send Your messengers to proclaim Your word to us. As we persevere in preparing a way for You to enter our hearts, our lives, and our world, we ask that You would open our ears to hear Your voice calling us to repentance and righteousness, so that Your purifying power would refine us and reinforce us as Your people. Grant that Your liberating word would rescue us from all efforts to silence the life and love that You have, not just for us, but for all humanity. Through Your refiner’s fire that burns in our souls and illumines our lives, remove from us any darkness that obscures Your truth...

and kindle within us a deeper faith, a greater hope, and a more unconditional love, so that we may be enlightened with new ways to serve You and reach out to our fellow human beings. Through the fuller's soap that You send among us, cleanse us of all selfish desires to care only for our needs or to absorb ourselves only in our indulgences, and instead immerse us once again in Your grace and mercy, so that as we remember the waters of baptism flowing over us, we may be inspired to participate with You in embracing all Your people and in cherishing the miraculous gift of creation that You have granted to us.

During the advent-ure through Advent, help us to discern how we could be more faithful in our preparations. Shape us, and reshape us, according to Your design, so that as we draw closer to You, You would transform any poverty of spirit into an abundance of faithfulness, and You would replace any neglect of the truth with a commitment to Your gospel. Help us to reflect the light of Your dawn which breaks upon us, so that all Your people may be more aware of Your holy intrusions... and lift us above the trivial trappings of desserts, delights, and decorations, so that we may ascend the true summit of this season, where we anticipate the day when there will be peace on earth, and where Your Son will be born once and for all in our hearts and in our homes... for we ask all these things in the name of Jesus Christ our Savior and our Lord, the One who taught us, 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.**

\*Hymn #20                      Watchman, Tell Us of the Night                      ABERSTWYTH

\*Charge and Benediction

Now, during this season of Advent, go out into the world in peace, but as you go, remember -- that it was in the goodness of God that you were born; it is in the providence of God that you have been kept to this hour; and it is in the love of God that you are redeemed. And may the grace of



our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you and all those whom you love, this day and forevermore. Amen.

Voluntary                      Savior of the Nations, Come                      Max Reger, Paul Manz

**\*\* 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 Jim Strandberg, Ken Williams, and Nancy Williams.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### *Nik Stackpole*

***Nik Stackpole is a third year music education student at Kent State University studying organ with Dawn Filler, and viola with Joanna Zakany. He directs a choir and youth bell choir at the United Methodist Church of Kent, and teaches a small private strings studio in Stow. Nik is a scholarship recipient and active member of the Akron Chapter, American Guild of Organists.***

**The White Rose in the Chancel Last Sunday** was in memory of David Gehring Jr. who entered eternal life on November 19.

**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. A gift in any amount is welcome. Make your check payable to Westminster Presbyterian Church or select "Chancel Flowers" if you give online. Please include the wording for your dedication with your check or email to Denise Hochevar at [wpcfinance1250@gmail.com](mailto:wpcfinance1250@gmail.com). The deadline is **Thursday, December 16, 2021** for inclusion in the Christmas Eve bulletin. Poinsettia donors may pick up a poinsettia plant after worship on December 26.

**Children's Pageant** will be next week, on Sunday, December 12.

**WPC Giving Tree** The tree will be available until December 31. Please donate scarves, mittens, hats, and gloves for ACCESS Inc., a shelter for homeless women and children.

**Prayer Quilt Ministry** Please tie a knot and say a prayer for Claudine Schooley and family for the passing of her father, when you go by the quilt hanging in WHH.

**Jazz Vespers** will be on Sunday, December 19 at 4:00 p.m. and will feature the Theron Brown Trio. Don't miss this event! Childcare will be provided.

## **Calendar of Church Events week of December 5—11, 2021**

### **Sunday, 12/5**

- 8:30 am Nursery Opens
- 8:45 am Choir Rehearsal in Choir Room
- 9:30 am Sunday School
- 9:30 am Youth Choir in the Youth Room
- 9:30 am Parenting Group
- 10:30 am Worship Service in Sanctuary & on YouTube Livestream  
Children's Choir Rehearsal in the Choir Room  
First Sunday Food Collection
- 11:40 am Outreach Meeting in Room 106

### **Tuesday, 12/7**

- 2:30 pm Adult Bell Choir Rehearsal in the Chancel

### **Wednesday, 12/8**

- 6:00 pm Endowment Zoom Meeting
- 7:00 pm Discipleship Zoom Meeting

### **Thursday, 12/2**

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

### **Saturday, 12/11**

- 7:30 am Christmas Baskets Assembling and Distribution

For the most recent CDC guidance, we encourage you to visit:  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated-guidance.html>

**Westminster's policy presently includes the following:**

- Masks are now optional for all vaccinated adults. Unvaccinated adults are asked to continue masking.
- Masks are also optional for children and youth of every age, whether they have been vaccinated or not. This is at the discretion of the parent or guardian of the child or youth.
- For the protection of our children, all nursery workers are fully vaccinated and wearing masks.
- Solos and congregational singing will continue both with and without masks.
- We will continue to observe social distancing measures, and the ushers will assist worshippers with seating in the sanctuary. The pews where worshippers are asked to sit are marked with a green sticker. If you would prefer to sit at a greater distance from others, please inform an usher who can guide you to a place where you will feel more comfortable.
- We have returned hymnals, Bibles, and giving envelopes to pews with green stickers. Offering trays and fellowship pads will not be passed at this time. Offering trays may be found at the entrance to the worship space.
- Livestreaming services will continue on YouTube.

**Giving Online** During these difficult times, the church remains grateful for your faithful support. To give electronically on the WPC website click under the tab "online giving" and use this QR Code.



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:wpccchildren1250@gmail.com">wpccchildren1250@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 [wpccchildrenschoir1250@gmail.com](mailto:wpccchildrenschoir1250@gmail.com)

Bruce Klucharich, Audio-Visual Technician

Traci Range, Director of Childcare [wpccchildcare1250@gmail.com](mailto:wpccchildcare1250@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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