



Hope

Peace

Joy

Love

Service for the Lord's Day
4th Sunday of Advent

December 22, 2019

10:30am

** indicates that the congregation may stand as they are able.
Bold text indicates where the congregation joins in unison.*

WE GATHER IN GOD'S NAME

Prelude & Ringing of the Bell

Gathering Music

In the Bleak Midwinter

Hymn #36

Welcome & Announcements

***Call to Worship (responsive)**

Look! The young woman is with child;

She will call him Emmanuel, for God is with us.

A ruler will come from Bethlehem,

and he will be the shepherd of peace.

The mystery of the ages is now revealed.

To God be the glory forever! Amen.

***Opening Prayer (unison)**

God of grace, your eternal Word took flesh among us when Mary placed her life at the service of your will. Prepare our hearts for his coming again; keep us steadfast in hope and faithful in service, that we may receive the coming of his kingdom for the sake of Jesus Christ, the ruler of all, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now forever. Amen.

***Hymn #14**

Savior of the Nations, Come

Lighting of the Advent Candles

The Emery Family

Last Sunday we lit the candle of joy. We light it and the candles of hope and peace again as we remember that Christ will come again and bring to the world everlasting hope, peace, and joy.

The first three candles are relit.

The fourth candle of Advent is the Candle of Love. It's light is meant to remind us of the love God has for us.

Jesus shows us God's perfect love. He is God's love in human form. The Bible says that "God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that whoever believes in him should not perish, but have eternal life."

Love is patient, love is kind and envies no one. Love is never boastful or conceited, rude or selfish. Love is not quick to take offence, it keeps no records of wrongs, it does not gloat over other people's troubles, but rejoices in the right, the good, and the true. There is nothing that love cannot face, there is no limit to its faith, to its hope, to its endurance. Love never ends.

We light this candle today to remind us of how God's perfect love is found in Jesus.

The fourth candle is lit.

Advent Song *Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah*

vs. 4

Light four candles to watch for Messiah:

let the light banish darkness.

He is coming; tell the glad tidings.

Let your lights be shining.

Call to Confession

Happy are those whose help is the Lord.

Let us seek God's help as we confess our sins.

Prayer of Confession (unison)

God our Savior, we ask for mercy. Though we have heard Mary's song, we still seek security in pride and power and possessions. Though we know your story, we resist the costs of following you. We pass by those considered lowly in this world. We turn away from hungry people who still wait to be filled. Forgive us, we pray. Help us to work for the justice you intend. Make us messengers of the peace you bring. As we wait for you, turn our apathy into acts of love and service. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, Emmanuel. Amen.

Silent Confession

**Sung Response *While We Are Waiting, Come*
While we are waiting, come; While we are waiting, come.
*Jesus our Lord, Emmanuel, While we are waiting, come.***

Assurance of Pardon

Every valley is lifted up; every mountain, made low. Now the glory of the Lord is revealed, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.
In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.
Thanks be to God. Amen.

***Gloria Patri**

***Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be,
World without end. Amen. Amen.***

***Sharing the Peace of Christ**

Since God has forgiven us in Christ, let us forgive one another.
The peace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

And also with you.

Exchange words of peace and reconciliation with one another.

***Sung Response**

Halle, Halle, Hallelujah!

Halle, halle, hallelujah! Halle, halle, hallelujah!

Halle, halle, hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

WE LISTEN FOR GOD'S WORD

Children's Message

Prayer of Illumination (unison)

Overwhelm us with Your Spirit, O God, that the words we hear will speak to our hearts as Your Word, made known to us in Christ the Lord. Amen.

Scripture Reading

Isaiah 7:10-16

Anthem

Breath of Heaven

arr. Barrett

Chancel Choir

Scripture Reading

Matthew 11:25-30

Sermon

"The Hope of Christmas Future"

Pastor Christina

Final in a series, "The Redemption of Scrooge"

***Hymn #12**

People, Look East

WE GIVE THANKS TO GOD

Prayers of the People

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.

Sung Response *In the Lord, I'll Be Ever Thankful*

In the Lord I'll be ever thankful; In the Lord, I will rejoice!

Look to God; do not be afraid.

Lift up your voices; the Lord is near.

Lift up your voices; the Lord is near.

Morning Offering

Offertory

*Doxology

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;

Praise Him, all creatures here below;

Praise Him above, ye heavenly hosts;

Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

*Prayer of Dedication (unison)

God of grace, it is our delight and our devotion to give these gifts to you. All we are and all we have are yours alone. Accept this joyful offering as a token of our abiding love: use it to bring peace, justice and comfort to all the world, Amen.

WE GO OUT IN GOD'S NAME

*Affirmation of Faith

-by Ann Siddall

Our souls magnify the Lord,
and our spirits rejoice in God our Savior,
for he looks with favor upon us
and sees our unrealized potential.
In the tradition of Mary,
and all who have said "yes" to God,
we stand here today,
to add our assent to theirs.
Like Mary, we feel overwhelmed;
we wonder if we are worthy,
or capable, of following the calling.
Like Mary, we have our questions
and we will not be afraid to ask them.
Like Mary, we will hear and ponder
the assurance that God will empower us.
Like Mary we will strive to say -
"Let it be with us according to your will."
To whatever God is inviting of us
at this time in our lives,
and relying on God's grace,
we say "yes."

*Hymn #20

Watchman, Tell Us of the Night

*Benediction

*Postlude

Today's Readings

Isaiah 7:10-16

Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz: "Ask a sign from the Lord your God. Make it as deep as the grave or as high as heaven."

But Ahaz said, "I won't ask; I won't test the Lord."

Then Isaiah said, "Listen, house of David! Isn't it enough for you to be tiresome for people that you are also tiresome before my God? Therefore, the Lord will give you a sign. The young woman is pregnant and is about to give birth to a son, and she will name him Immanuel. He will eat butter and honey, and learn to reject evil and choose good. Before the boy learns to reject evil and choose good, the land of the two kings you dread will be abandoned.

Matthew 11:25-30

At that time Jesus said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you've hidden these things from the wise and intelligent and have shown them to babies. Indeed, Father, this brings you happiness.

"My Father has handed all things over to me. No one knows the Son except the Father. And nobody knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son wants to reveal him.

"Come to me, all you who are struggling hard and carrying heavy loads, and I will give you rest. Put on my yoke, and learn from me. I'm gentle and humble. And you will find rest for yourselves. My yoke is easy to bear, and my burden is light."

Prayer List:

Loving God, we lift the following in prayer to You. Hold these people and situations in Your hands, and in them, may Your will be done. Amen.

Concerns:

Tina Castillo and her mom, Gail; Ken Yordy; John & Nancy Allen; Marian Bouchey; Sally Nester; Jill Nester; Jackie Hartsaw; Stacy Bosley Mockridge; Sharon Froom; Bonnie Smith; Garret Miniard; The Rev. George Gillette; Brenda Bollman; Rhonda Handley; Geneva Foster; Soulemayne Galadi, serving in the Congo; Those who make decisions that affect others; Those living with mental illness; Our military and veterans; Our police, fire, and other emergency responders; Our country

Thanksgivings:

Miracles and healing mercies granted; Our church family; The church office volunteers; New jobs and the opportunities that come with them; For birthdays and anniversaries; For those who help others in crisis; For the angels in our church family

Continuing Prayers:

John & Nancy Allen; Penny Arnold; Marian Bouchey; Christina Latoski & family; Karen Moore; Barb Pharr; Rick & Mary Rimmel; Karen Rozen; Shelly & Jamie Sanders; Randy Smith; Shelley Zamarron & family

If you would like someone added to the prayer list and announced during the Prayers of the People, please contact the church office or speak to Pastor Christina.

Happening this Week:

- Blue Christmas – Sunday, 3:00pm – Sanctuary
- Men’s Breakfast – Tuesday, 8:30am – Hearthstone Oven
- Christmas Eve Service – Tuesday, 7:00pm – Sanctuary
- Cookies & Carols – Sunday, 12/29, 10:30am – Fireplace Room
- **The office will be closed December 25-January 3. Pastor Christina will be in occasionally to check messages. If there is a pastoral emergency, please call or text Pastor Christina at 248-217-7178.**



Memorial Service Information for Randy Jenison

A memorial service will be held for Randy Jenison on Sunday, December 29, from 2-4pm. It will be held at the Clubhouse at the Countryside Apartments, 1346 Charles Ave., Alma. **This information is corrected. The information last week was incorrect.** For more information, see Rick Teal or Vickie Thum.

*The music printed in this bulletin is covered under CCLI #11388530.
Some of the prayers and responsive readings came from the Book of
Common Worship from the Office of the General Assembly.*

You are invited to join us for a

Blue Christmas Service

Sunday, December 22, 2019 - 3:00pm

Ithaca First Presbyterian Church

218 E. Newark, Ithaca, Michigan

We understand that the holidays are not always a happy time, especially in the face of the loss of a loved one.

All are welcome to join us for this heartfelt service of prayer and thanksgiving, as we remember those who are not with us this holiday season.

A tea and cookie reception will follow the service.



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To learn more about our congregation, visit our website:
www.ithacapres.org
and our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/ithacapres

Leading Worship Today:

The Rev. Christina L. Jensen, Pastor
Jamie Sanders, Liturgist
Bob Crist, Music Director
Joy Heinlein & Karen Emery, Greeters
Joy Heinlein & Karen Emery, Ushers
Dale Nester & Tom Heinlein, Counters

Staff:

The Rev. Christina L. Jensen, Pastor
Bob Crist, Music Director
Chris Shemes, Treasurer
Shelley Zamarron, Custodian



The First Presbyterian Church of Ithaca, Michigan, is a congregation of the Presbytery of Lake Huron of the Presbyterian Church (USA).