

A night sky with a bright star in the upper left corner, emitting a vertical line of light. The sky is a deep blue with scattered stars. In the foreground, the dark silhouettes of evergreen trees are visible against the night sky.

Hope
Peace

Service for the Lord's Day
2nd Sunday of Advent

December 8, 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 *Once in Royal David's City* Hymn #49

Welcome & Announcements

***Call to Worship (responsive)**

A voice cries out in the wilderness:

Prepare the way of the Lord!

God has promised us a new creation

where righteousness will be at home.

Blessed is the Holy One our God,

who has sent a mighty Savior to redeem us.

***Opening Prayer (unison)**

Merciful God, you sent your messengers the prophets to preach repentance and prepare the way for our salvation. Give us grace to heed their warnings and forsake our sins, that we may greet with joy the coming of Jesus Christ our redeemer, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

***Hymn #8** *Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates*

Lighting of the Advent Candles

The Owen Family

Last Sunday we lit the first candle in our Advent Wreath, the candle of hope. We light it again as we remember that Christ will come again to fulfill all of God's promises to us.

The first candle is relit.

The second candle of Advent is the Candle of Peace. It is sometimes called the Bethlehem Candle to remind us of the place in which preparations were made to receive and cradle the Christ Child.

Peace is a gift that we must be prepared for. God gives us the gift of peace when we turn to him in faith.

The prophet Isaiah calls Christ the "Prince of Peace." Through John the Baptist and all the other prophets, God asks us to prepare our hearts so that he may come in.

Our hope is in God, and in his son Jesus Christ. Our peace is found in him. We light this candle today to remind us that he brings peace to all who trust in him.

The second candle is lit.

Advent Song *Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah*

vs. 2

***Light two candles to watch for Messiah:
let the light banish darkness.
He shall feed the flock like a shepherd,
gently lead them homeward.***

Call to Confession

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. In humility and faith let us confess our sin to God.

Prayer of Confession (unison)

O Lord, darkness surrounds us like a cold stone tomb, until your light bursts into our lives like a clear, bright dawn. We cover our eyes, we're so unprepared for your coming. Your light blazes forth like a white-hot fire, consuming all that it touches. How can we stand before you, Lord? The road that we thought was straight and wide is now exposed as a twisted, crooked path, blocked by a mountain of sin. Where can we turn? Who will guide us back to the way of peace—the way that leads to you?

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

"The days are coming", says the prophet Isaiah, "when all God's promises will be fulfilled." These promises of hope, peace, joy, and love are for you. Receive the peace that God offers to you today.

***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 11:1-10

Anthem *The First Noel/Pachelbel's Canon* arr. Clawson
Chancel Choir

Scripture Reading Matthew 4:18-23

Sermon "Christmas Past: Jesus, the Redeemer" Pastor Christina
Second in a series, "The Redemption of Scrooge"

*Hymn #15 *Rejoice! Rejoice, Believers*

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 Nathan Nettleton

We believe in God, creator and lover of the earth, origin and destiny of us all.

We believe in Jesus the Christ—God coming to us in the fragile promise of a baby yet unborn—who emerges as the herald of hope, God's laughter in the face of despair. Plunged into death and hell, he broke free the captives, and is leading the way to the land of promise where justice and peace will flourish.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, who implants the seed of truth, brings us to birth as the body of Christ, and empowers us to confront and transform all that is corrupt, degrading and deceitful.

We believe in the coming reign of God. Announced by the Baptist, it has drawn near to us in Jesus, and will be consummated in the glorious marriage of earth and heaven, when all who have passed through the world's deep sorrow will be raised from the waters, robed in righteousness, and gathered into the joyous fulfilment of God's desire.

**For the coming of that day on this day, we work and pray:
Come, Lord Jesus, Come!**

***Hymn #11**

O Lord, How Shall I Meet You?

***Benediction**

***Postlude**

Today's Reading

Isaiah 11:1-10

A shoot will grow up from the stump of Jesse; a branch will sprout from his roots. The Lord's spirit will rest upon him, a spirit of wisdom and understanding, a spirit of planning and strength, a spirit of knowledge and fear of the Lord. He will delight in fearing the Lord. He won't judge by appearances, nor decide by hearsay. He will judge the needy with righteousness, and decide with equity for those who suffer in the land. He will strike the violent with the rod of his mouth; by the breath of his lips he will kill the wicked. Righteousness will be the belt around his hips, and faithfulness the belt around his waist. The wolf will live with the lamb, and the leopard will lie down with the young goat; the calf and the young lion will feed together, and a little child will lead them. The cow and the bear will graze. Their young will lie down together, and a lion will eat straw like an ox. A nursing child will play over the snake's hole; toddlers will reach right over the serpent's den. They won't harm or destroy anywhere on my holy mountain. The earth will surely be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, just as the water covers the sea. On that day, the root of Jesse will stand as a signal to the peoples. The nations will seek him out, and his dwelling will be glorious.

Matthew 4:18-23

As Jesus walked alongside the Galilee Sea, he saw two brothers, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew, throwing fishing nets into the sea, because they were fishermen. "Come, follow me," he said, "and I'll show you how to fish for people." Right away, they left their nets and followed him. Continuing on, he saw another set of brothers, James the son of Zebedee and his brother John. They were in a boat with Zebedee their father repairing their nets. Jesus called them and immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him. Jesus traveled throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues. He announced the good news of the kingdom and healed every disease and sickness among the people.

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:

The Family of Randy Jenison, who died on 11/29; John & Nancy Allen; The Bovee Family, on the loss of Roger Bovee; Pastor Christina's family, on the loss of her Great Uncle Bill; Jim & Cecille Bowen and family, on the loss of Jim's mom, Jo; Pastor Tom Whitesel; Sally Nester; Jill Nester; Jackie Hartsaw; Karen Moore; Stacy Bosley Mockridge; Sharon Froom; Bonnie Smith; Garret Miniard; Al Bartholomew; 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; Randy Jenison; Christina Latoski & family; 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:

- Men's Breakfast – Tuesday, 8:30am – Hearthstone Oven
- Team Meetings – Tuesday, 7:00pm – Fireplace Room
- Food Pantry – Wednesday, 9:30am – Food Pantry
- Mid-Week Soup/Service – Wednesday, 6:00pm – Fireplace Room

Next Week's Volunteers – December 15, 2018:

- Vickie Thum, Lay Leader
- Brad & Vickie Thum, Greeters
- Brad & Vickie Thum, Ushers
- Sandy Parr & Jackie Bowen, Coffee Hour
- Carolyn Gruesbeck & Kathy Vanderbeek, Counters



Giving Tree Presents Due December 22

There are still a few tags left on the Giving Tree – if you feel so moved, please help make Christmas merry and bright for our two families! If you took a tag from the Giving Tree for our adopted family, thank you! The gifts are due back in 2 week, December 22, wrapped, with the tag attached. If you'd like to help with this mission project, but didn't get a tag, you can donate toward the groceries that we provide for the family. See Karen Emery for more details.

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
Cynthia Smith, Liturgist
Bob Crist, Music Director
Ken & Nola Owen, Greeters
Cynthia Smith & Joy Heinlein, Ushers
Rick Teal & Kathy Vanderbeek, 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).