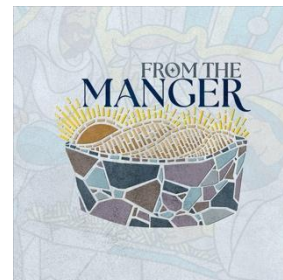


The Presbyterian Church of Okemos

December 1, 2024

First Sunday of Advent



Preparation: “When we grasp our humanity in all its vulnerability, seeing it unvarnished amid our suffering, the meaning of incarnation penetrates deeper within us. God enters our frail bodies, our hemorrhaging landscapes, and our troubled times. *God is with us* where trauma hits hardest. That God will rise, scars still etched in skin, should not surprise us, given God’s first advent in a land replete with injustice and pain.” – Theologian Kelley Nikondeha, 2022 *The First Advent in Palestine*.

Gathering As a People of God

Invitation to Our Shared Ministry

Pastor Lisa Schrott

Prelude

Comfort, Comfort These My People
Dr. Marlene Brewbaker, organ

Michael Burkhardt

Welcome and Lighting the Advent Candle of Hope

Nina Roya & Jill Schaberg

One: A long time ago, a baby was born in a town called “House of Bread.” His name was Jesus. Mary, his mother, laid him in a feeding trough to rest. Soon, he would grow up to be called the Bread of Life. He would fill their hungry bellies; then, he would feed their hearts with love and truth.

All: **Today, we light the candle of hope. Hope is believing things can get better with compassion and imagination.**

One: As we light this candle we are reminded that, from the manger, hope is growing... growing to be God with us. His name is Jesus, the Bread of Life.

Choral Introit

From the Manger
PCO Chancel Choir
Westin Sorrel, director

Amanda Meisenheimer
Arr. Andrea Hamilton

A quiet town called House of Bread a newborn baby falls asleep.
A bed of hay beneath his head, Immanuel begins to dream.
For all creation to be fed; Hope from the ground to the breaking of bread.
From the manger hope grows. He will be God with Us.
From the manger hope grows. Bread of Life, Jesus.

*** Call to Worship**

Juan Carlos Roya, Liturgist

One: Today we begin the journey to Bethlehem, to the city called “House of Bread.”

All: **We take one step toward Christmas, the first step of many. Let this journey transform us from beginning to end.**

One: Whether your belly is full or empty, whether your heart is broken or whole, look toward the manger, toward the stars over the city of David, and find hope.

All: We look with hope because Christ is coming to fill hearts and satisfy bellies with goodness and peace.

One: Come, let us worship as we journey to the House of Bread, where Jesus will be born.

All: Glory to God, there is hope today. Let us worship!

* Hymn #87

Comfort, Comfort Now My People, vs. 1-3

[Genevan 42]

Prayer of Confession

Rebecca Mattern

One: Let us confess the ways in which we have reacted to the needs of the world with hopelessness.

All: God who cares for every sparrow and every child, we confess the enormity of the world's hunger feels overwhelming. We do not know what to do about famine and starvation, so we look away and distract ourselves from suffering people and all creatures, great and small. We confess we neglect small acts of generosity because the problems seem so big. We confess we shrink back from true solutions because the sacrifices seem too great. May your hope compel us to make choices reflecting our love for our neighbors and creation. May you take our feeble efforts and magnify your glory. May the world be fed with hope. (silent confession) Amen.

Promise of the Gospel and Passing of the Peace

Rebecca Mattern

One: Hear the good news: God is a loving parent with endless compassion who desires all people to flourish. Even when our hope falters, and we feel helpless to address the hunger in our world, God's steadfast love emboldens us to persevere so all creation can be fed. Receive God's pardon and be at peace.

All: Thanks be to God. Amen.

One: Hope compels us to make peace with others because we know we will be serving alongside one another to meet everyone's needs. So take this moment to pass peace to your family, friends, and neighbors, for we cannot make this long Advent journey to the manger alone. May the peace of Christ be with you.

All: And also with you. *Please greet your fellow worshippers in ways you feel comfortable.*

* Act of Praise #583

Gloria, Gloria

Jacques Berthier

[Gloria]

(Will be sung once by soloist; please join on the second time)

Gloria, gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Gloria, gloria, alleluia, alleluia!

The Word

Children's Message: Journey to the Manger

Pastor Lisa Schrott

Prayer of Illumination

sung

#88 *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*, vs. 1

We that once were lost and scattered
in communion's love have stood.
Taste and see the grace eternal.
Taste and see that God is good.

The Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

Rebecca Mattern

All: And also with you.

One: Lift up your hearts.

All: We lift them up to God.

One: Let us give thanks to God.

All: It is right to give both thanks and praise.

The Lord's Prayer

in unison

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.

Breaking of the Bread

Pastor Lisa Schrott

Communion of the People

Communion will be served by intinction. Please take a piece of bread and dip into the cup of juice. The bread is gluten, soy, nut and dairy free so all may partake together.

Communion Prayer

All Who Hunger, Gather Gladly #509 v. 3

sung

All who hunger, sing together;
Jesus Christ is living bread.
Come from loneliness and longing.
Here, in peace, we have been led.
Blest are those who from this table
live their days in gratitude.
Taste and see the grace eternal.
Taste and see that God is good.

Sent Out As a People of God

* **Hymn** #106

Prepare the Way, O Zion, vs. 1-3

[Bereden Väg För Herran]

* **Benediction**

One: May Christ, the Bread of Life, who brings hope to the hopeless, be with you.
May the love of our Creator, who calls us to care for the hungry and the oppressed,
surround you.

And may the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, who empowers us to imagine a realm where all hunger is satisfied, strengthen you now and always.

All: We go in hope to feed the hungry, comfort the afflicted, and share the good news of Christ's coming.

Postlude

People, Look East!
Dr. Marlene Brewbaker

Kristina Langlois

During the postlude we invite you to come forward to decorate the Chrismon Tree on the chancel.

** Please rise in body or spirit*

Ushers: Keith Camann, Jane Paterson, Tom Schaberg, Jill Tribell

This Morning's Fellowship Team: Thank you to church members who contributed to the Agape meal and the Youth Group for our snacks and to Tom Schaberg and Wayne Scott for taking care of the coffee.

Education Hour: Advent Workshop.

Make your own nativity scene. Materials, instructions, and guidance provided. Learn the scripture verses to go with each part!

Next Week: December 8, 2024 Second Sunday of Advent

Scripture: Isaiah 11:1-10; Luke 2: 1-7

Education Hour: Nativity Display and Scavenger Hunt. View nativity displays collected by church members and friends from around the world. To share your nativity scenes: bring them to the church by Wednesday, December 4. Include your name and where the nativity is from. Or write a 2 or three sentence description about where you got it or its meaning to you.

The art and the adapted liturgy for the Advent *From the Manger* series are from Illustrated Ministry. © 2024 Illustrated Ministry, LLC. illustratedministry.com

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