

## **THE ADVENT WREATH**

The Advent Season is the time for preparing for the coming of Christ and the celebration of the Incarnation of the Eternally-begotten Son of God, the second Person of the Holy Trinity. The season begins with St. Andrew's Day, November 30, and is observed in worship the four Lord's Days preceding Christmas Day. Believers remember how the Hebrews longed for the coming of the Messiah, and how their prophets foretold the birth of Christ. Our anticipation of Christmas is coupled with our anticipation of the Second Advent of Christ, when He Who is Blessed Hope will come again. The beauty and symbolism of the Advent Wreath reminds Christians to "prepare the way of the Lord."

**THE FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT** - The Prophets' Candle, the first purple candle, which represents Christ's royalty and the sinner's repentance, is lighted. The coming of Christ was indeed foretold by the prophets of the Old Testament hundreds of years before the Incarnation of Christ.

**THE SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT** - The Bethlehem Candle, the second candle, is lighted pointing to the Messiah being born of the Virgin Mary in Bethlehem as foretold by the prophet, Micah.

**THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT** - The Shepherds' Candle, the third candle, is lighted to remind us that the birth of the Messiah was announced to humble shepherds, and that we, straying sheep, must go to Him, believe in Him and tell to others the Good News of salvation.

**THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT** - The Angels' Candle, lighted as the Festival of the Incarnation nears, reminds us of the angelic announcement and calls us to focus on Christ's finished work on the cross and to anticipate His second coming.

**CHRISTMAS EVE** - The Christ Candle, the white one in the center of the wreath, proclaims the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Light of the World, Who gives the Light of Salvation to those who walked in sin's darkness. It is lighted on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

# **THE FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

**TRINITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

**MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA**

**NOVEMBER 28, 2021**

# MORNING WORSHIP

## THE SILENT MEDITATION UPON ENTERING THE SANCTUARY

*In faith and love Paul gives a brief summary of all godliness. All godliness can be summed up in faith and love; believing God's promises and His Word, trusting in Jesus as He is offered in the gospel – faith, love, loving God, loving one another, loving our neighbors.*

- JOHN CALVIN

*Faith like Job's cannot be shaken because it is the result of having been shaken.*

- ANONYMOUS



## APPROACHING GOD'S THRONE

The Christian Greeting and Call to Preparation

8:25 and 10:55 a.m.

The Prelude

*Wachet Auf Ruft Uns Die Stimme*  
*(Awake, the Voice Calls Us!)*

J. S. Bach

*"Wake, awake, for night is flying," the watchmen on the heights are crying,  
"Awake, Jerusalem, at last!" Midnight hears the welcome voices,  
and at the thrilling cry rejoices: "Come forth, ye maidens, night is past!  
The Bridegroom comes; awake, your lamps with gladness take; alleluia!  
And for His marriage feast prepare, for you must go to meet Him there."*

*Please maintain social distancing. Masks are requested in the sanctuary;  
masks are mandatory in the Westminster Room and in the Spires Room.*

The Striking of the Hour

O love, how deep, how broad, how high. How passing thought and fantasy,  
that God, the Son of God, should take our mortal form for mortals' sake.

All glory to our Lord and God for love so deep, so high, so broad:  
the Trinity Whom we adore Forever and forevermore.

The Call to Worship

Based on Psalm 127

Mr. Cooper

The Lord has done great things for us! And we are filled with joy! Our God has turned  
our weeping into singing, our tears into songs of joy! O Christ of God, come anew in our  
hearts this day, and remain in us forever.

† The Hymn No. 196

*Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus*

HYFRYDOL

Come, Thou long expected Jesus, born to set Thy people free;  
from our fears and sins release us, let us find our rest in Thee.  
Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth Thou art;  
dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart.

Joy to those who long to see Thee, Dayspring from on high, appear;  
come, Thou promised Rod of Jesse, of Thy birth we long to hear!  
O'er the hills the angels singing news, glad tidings of a birth:  
"Go to Him, your praises bringing Christ the Lord has come to earth."

Come to earth to taste our sadness, He Whose glories knew no end;  
by His life He brings us gladness, our Redeemer, Shepherd, Friend.  
Leaving riches without number, born within a cattle stall  
this the everlasting wonder, Christ was born the Lord of all.

Born Thy people to deliver, born a child and yet a King,  
born to reign in us forever, now Thy gracious kingdom bring.  
By Thine own eternal spirit rule in all our hearts alone;  
by Thine all sufficient merit, raise us to Thy glorious throne.

† The Prayer of Invocation

† The Lord's Prayer

**Our Father Which art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy Name.  
Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in 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, for ever. Amen.**

## **SEEKING GOD'S FACE**

The Personal Prayer of Confession

The Corporate Prayer of Confession

**Lord God, our lives are filled with sin. We forget our neighbor's needs and do not love You above all else. We need a Savior. Holy Spirit, help us to pray without ceasing, "Open the way of the Lord into my heart. O come, O come, Emmanuel, Savior of the world. Amen."**

The Assurance of God's Pardon

Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. Your sins are pardoned. The penalty is paid. Thanks be to God. Believe the gospel; live in peace.

All praise to Thee, eternal Lord, clothed in a garb of flesh and blood;  
choosing a manger for Thy throne, while worlds on worlds are Thine alone.

Once did the skies before thee bow; a virgin's arms contain Thee now:  
angels who did in Thee rejoice now listen for Thine infant voice.

A little child, Thou art our guest, that weary ones in Thee may rest;  
forlorn and lowly is Thy birth, that we may rise to heav'n from earth.

Thou comest in the darksome night to make us children of the light,  
to make us, in the realms divine, like Thine own angels round Thee shine.

All this for us Thy love hath done; by this to Thee our love is won:  
for this we tune our cheerful lays, and shout our thanks in ceaseless praise.

The Offering of His Tithes and Our Gifts Beyond the Tithe

## HEARING GOD'S VOICE

The Anthem

*Comfort, Comfort Now My People* Geneva 1551, arr. Ferguson  
Alice Williams, *recorder*; Laura Nabholz, Derrick Muraya, *clarinets*

“Comfort, comfort now My people; tell of peace!” So says our God.  
Comfort those who sit in darkness mourning under sorrow's load.  
To God's people now proclaim that God's pardon waits for them!  
Tell them that their war is over; God will reign in peace forever!

For the herald's voice is crying in the desert far and near.  
Calling us to true repentance, since the Kingdom now is here.  
Oh, that warning cry obey! Now prepare for God a way!  
Let the valleys rise to meet Him, and the hills bow down to greet Him!

Straight shall be what long was crooked, and the rougher places plain!  
Let your hearts be true and humble, as befits His holy reign!  
For the glory of the Lord now on earth is shed abroad,  
And all flesh shall see the token that God's word is never broken.

† The Reading of God's Word

The Old Testament Lesson

Psalm 50:1-6

The Mighty One, God the Lord, speaks and summons the earth from the rising of the sun to its setting. 2 Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God shines forth. 3 Our God comes; He does not keep silence; before Him is a devouring fire, around Him a mighty tempest. 4 He calls to the heavens above and to the earth, that He may judge His people: 5 "Gather to Me My faithful ones, who made a covenant with Me by sacrifice!" 6 The heavens declare His righteousness, for God Himself is judge! *Selah*

The New Testament Lesson

I Thessalonians 3:9-13

9 For what thanksgiving can we return to God for you, for all the joy that we feel for your sake before our God, 10 as we pray most earnestly night and day that we may see you face to face and supply what is lacking in your faith? 11 Now may our God and Father Himself, and our Lord Jesus, direct our way to you, 12 and may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, as we do for you, 13 so that he may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints.

All men are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field.

**The grass withers and the flowers fade,  
but the Word of our God shall stand forever. Amen.**

The Children's Message ~ Heidelberg Catechism Question Number 26

*Children in 3rd grade and younger are invited to the front steps of the Chancel  
for the children's message.*

Q. Why is the Son of God called "Jesus," meaning "savior"?

A. **Because He saves us from our sins, and because salvation should not be sought and cannot be found in anyone else.**

The Hymn of Preparation

*Away in a Manger*

MUELLER

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,  
the little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head;  
the stars in the bright sky looked down where He lay,  
the little Lord Jesus, asleep on the hay.

*Children age four through kindergarten may leave to attend Children's Church.*

The Sermon      **AN ENCOURAGING REPORT BRINGS THANKSGIVING**      Mr. McRoberts  
I Thessalonians 3:9-13  
*First Sunday of Advent*

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **I. PAUL'S PASTORAL LONGING FOR THE CHURCH AS THESSALONICA ~ 1:1-3:8**

### **II. PAUL'S PASTORAL REACTION TO TIMOTHY'S REPORT ~ 3:9-10**

### **III. PAUL'S PASTORAL PRAYER FOR THE THESSALONIANS ~ 3:11-13**

## **CONCLUSION**

The Closing Prayer

## BELIEVING GOD'S PROMISES

The Sacrament of Baptism (8:30)

Mr. Howell

The Words of Instruction and Exhortation

† The Hymn No. 221                      *Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming*      EST IST EIN' ROS' ENTSPRUNGEN

Lo, how a rose e'er blooming from tender stem hath sprung,  
of Jesse's lineage coming, as men of old have sung.  
It came, a flow'ret bright, amid the cold of winter, when half-spent was the night.

O Savior, child of Mary, Who felt our human woe;  
O Savior, King of glory, Who dost our weakness know,  
bring us at length, we pray, to the bright courts of heaven and to the endless day.

† The Introduction of the Covenant Family

### LILLIAN LOUISE HOWELL

*Parents:* Abby and Jake Howell

*Assisting:* Teaching Elder/Grandfather Michael Howell  
Grandfather Dr. David L. Morrison  
Ruling Elder/Shepherd Chet Moeller

† The Confession of Our Faith

The Apostles' Creed

**I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord, Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into Heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.**



## The Biblical Promise

For to you is the promise, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call unto Him. And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your seed after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto you and to your seed after you. Believe on the Lord Jesus, and you shall be saved, you and your household (Acts 2:39; Genesis 17:7; Acts 16:31). All authority in Heaven and on earth has been given to Me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age (Matthew 28:18-20).

## The Covenant Vows

1. Do you acknowledge your child's need of the cleansing blood of Jesus Christ, and the renewing grace of the Holy Spirit?
2. Do you claim God's covenant promises on her behalf, and do you look in faith to the Lord Jesus Christ for her salvation, as you do your own?
3. Do you now unreservedly dedicate your child to God, and promise, in humble reliance upon divine grace, that you will endeavor to set before her a godly example, that you will pray with and for her, that you will teach her the doctrines of our holy religion, and that you will strive, by all the means of God's appointment, to bring her up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord?

### *Vow of the Congregation*

Do you as a congregation undertake the responsibility of assisting these parents in the Christian nurture of their child?

## The Baptism

### The Baptismal Benediction

### The Covenant Prayer

## FOLLOWING GOD'S SPIRIT

† The Doxology (8:30)

OLD HUNDREDTH

Praise God from Whom all blessings flow; praise Him, all creatures here below;  
Praise Him above, ye heav'nly host, praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

† The Hymn No. 224 (11:00)

*Go Tell It On the Mountain*

GO TELL IT

Refrain: Go, tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere;  
go, tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born.

While shepherds kept their watching o'er silent flocks by night,  
behold, throughout the heavens there shone a holy light. [*Refrain*]

The shepherds feared and trembled when, lo! above the earth  
rang out the angel chorus that hailed our Savior's birth. [*Refrain*]

Down in a lowly manger our humble Christ was born,  
and God sent us salvation that blessed Christmas morn. [*Refrain*]

† The Benediction of God's Grace

The Threefold Amen (*sung by all*):

The musical notation is for a threefold Amen in G major and 4/4 time. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The melody is written in the treble clef, and the bass line is in the bass clef. The lyrics 'A - men, A - men, A - men.' are placed below the treble staff. The first 'A' is on a quarter note, 'men,' on a quarter note, 'A' on a quarter note, 'men,' on a quarter note, 'A' on a quarter note, and 'men.' on a quarter note. The final 'men.' is on a half note. There are fermatas over the final 'men.' in both staves. The piece ends with a double bar line.

The Postlude

*Von Himmel Hoch*  
*(From Heaven Above to Earth I Come)*

From heaven above I come to you, to bear good news to ev'ry home;  
glad tidings of great joy I bring whereof I now will gladly sing!

*Following the 8:30 service, the congregation is encouraged to greet the Howells at the front of the church. Join them in their excitement, thanksgiving and anticipation of God's faithfulness to His covenant promises. Please use this time to assure them that you will indeed be there for them in prayer, with encouragement, as a source of refuge and partnership, as well as an aid in instructing Lillian in the fear and admonition of the Lord.*