

Hillcrest Presbyterian Church (USA)

A SERVICE FOR THE WORSHIP OF GOD

The Hanging Of The Greens

December 3, 2017

 **Opening Hymn #1 Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus**

A Word of Welcome and News from Our Church

Lighting Of The Advent Candle

Isaiah 2:1-5

Reader 1: The Prophet Isaiah announced that people of all nations will come to the mountain of the Lord and learn God's ways.

Reader 2: God, when we look at our suffering world, we know we need to learn your ways and to follow you.

Reader 1: God will settle disputes among great nations. Weapons of war will be sculpted into agricultural tools. The nations will live in peace-no more will they prepare for war.

Reader 2: On this first Sunday in Advent, we long to believe these promises of God. We light this candle of hope, inspired by a vision of the world where children grow into adulthood, and parents live to old age.

(The candle of Hope is lit.)

Let us pray together (in unison):

Living God, come to our world and show your face to us. We trust your promises and we wait in hope. Come, Lord Jesus. Amen.

  **Hymn #5**

Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silent

Decorating The Chrismon Tree

Leader: How shall we prepare this house for the coming of Jesus, the King?

People: By decorating the branches of the tree of royalty with symbols which represent the Kingdom of heaven.

Reader: The Lord promises to send the people a righteous king. (Jeremiah 23: 5-6)

The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. And this is the name by which he will be called: "The Lord is our righteousness."

  **Hymn #23**

Angels We Have Heard On High

(Hang ornaments as we sing)

Hanging Of The Wreath

Leader: How shall we prepare this house for the coming of Jesus, Our Savior?

People: With wreaths of holly and ivy, symbolizing his passion, death, and Resurrection.

Reader: Isaiah 53: 1-6

The prophet describes the redeemer of Israel as the Suffering Servant. Tradition holds that this passage of Isaiah describes the suffering of Jesus, who saved us from our sins by his death on the cross, and his being raised from the dead. In ancient times, the holly was considered the symbol of Christ's passion: its prickly leaves suggested the crown of thorns, its red berries the blood of the Savior, and its bitter bark the drink offered to Jesus on the cross. The simple shape of the circle of the wreath – unending, without beginning or end, points to the eternal nature of Christ.

Who has believed what we have heard?
And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?
For he grew up before him like a young plant,
and like a root out of dry ground;
he had no form or majesty that we should look at him,
nothing in his appearance that we should desire him.
He was despised and rejected by others;
a man of suffering and acquainted with infirmity;
and as one from whom others hide their faces
he was despised, and we held him of no account.
Surely he has borne our infirmities
and carried our diseases;
yet we accounted him stricken,
struck down by God, and afflicted.
But he was wounded for our transgressions,
crushed for our iniquities;
upon him was the punishment that made us whole,
and by his bruises we are healed.
All we like sheep have gone astray;
we have all turned to our own way,
and the Lord has laid on him
the iniquity of us all.

 Hymn #9

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

(Hang wreath as we sing)

Preparing Our Hearts

Leader: How shall we prepare our hearts for the coming of Jesus, the son of God?

People: By hearing again the words of the prophets who foretold God's saving work.

Reader: Isaiah 7:14, John 1:1-5, 9-14

Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

Responding To God

Prayer of Dedication

Offering

Let us offer our tithes, our gifts and our offerings

Offertory

*Doxology

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.

Holy Baptism

Jane Mitchell – Renewal of Baptism

Preparing For Communion

Prayer Of Confession (In unison):

O God of love, O God of peace, we confess that we do not always follow your ways of peace. We are quick to express our anger at slights and

perceived wrongs done to us and we are slow to forgive. We so easily fail to see our own wrongs done to others. We neglect justice, consume far more than we need as we seek what we call the good life. Forgive us for thinking that we can exist as an island of prosperity amidst an ocean of poverty and wrong. By your spirit make us aware of the needs around us and enable us to stand against all forms of evil, both those without and those within us. Renew us so that we might rededicate ourselves to be useful servants of Jesus who came so that all may have life abundant Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

Holy Communion

Invitation (All who proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior are invited to participate)

Distribution Of The Elements (Will be served by intinction. You are invited to come forward and take a piece of bread from the common loaf and dip it in the cup as you return to your seat)

Lifting our prayers

The Light Of Christ

Reader: As we continue the preparation of the coming of Jesus, the Light of the world, we will light the Chrismon tree. In this Advent season, whenever we see a lighted Chrismon tree, let it call to mind Jesus who brings light to our darkness, healing to our brokenness and peace to all who will receive him.

Hymn #2

Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus

 **Benediction**

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.
With power and glory come; with power and glory come.
Jesus, our Lord, Emmanuel, while we are waiting, come.
Come, Savior quickly come; come, Savior, quickly come.
Jesus, our Lord, Emmanuel, while we are waiting, come.*

 - **Postlude**

 = Those for whom it is comfortable are invited to stand.

Today's Advent Readers: Barbara Garten & Sonja Scott