



**Greenhills Community
Church, Presbyterian**
21 Cromwell Road,
Cincinnati, Ohio 45218
513-825-8400
ghccp.org

First Sunday of Advent: WATCH
November 27, 2022, 10:00 am

Guest Speaker
Karen Cartier, REPI

Zoom Codes: 824 7351 2283
pw 994319

[* At this sign, please rise in body or in spirit; **bold text** indicates congregation's responses.]

Welcome and Announcements

Liturgist: Jim Hadley

Prelude

Lighting the Advent Candle

Our God is the One who comes to us in a burning bush, in an angel's song, in a newborn child.
Our God is the One who cannot be found locked in the church, not even in the sanctuary.
Our God will be where God will be with no constraints, no predictability.
Our God lives where our God lives, and destruction has no power and even death cannot stop the living.
Our God will be born where God will be born, but there is no place to look for the One who comes to us.

When God is ready God will come even to a godforsaken place like a stable in Bethlehem.

Watch . . . for you know not when God comes.

Watch, that you might be found whenever, wherever God comes.

Prayer of the Day

God of yesterday, today, and tomorrow, God of the beginning and the end times: as we begin this journey through Advent and start a new year in our Christian story, we remember that your time is different from our time. We must stay awake and pay attention because your peace is not our peace, and your ways are not our ways. We do not know the hour or the day when you are coming, but we know that we must be watchful for all the ways you will appear. Even as we remember this beginning, we know that you will be with us to the end. With hope, peace, joy, and love, we pray. **Amen.**

*Hymn # 88

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel
(V. 1, 6, 7)

VENI EMMANUEL

Call to Reconciliation

We may not know the time, but our every moment is held in God's hands. We may not do and say what we should or could, but God offers us words of forgiveness. Join me as we pray together, saying,

Unison Prayer for Forgiveness

Sometimes it is hard for us to take you seriously, God of our lives. With variants still stalking us, how can we think of traveling and being in crowds? With bullies being given unlimited access on social media, why shouldn't we respond with anger and vindictive

slights? With our hopes turned to ashes, how can we become beacons of light for those in the shadows?

Forgive us, God of holy seasons, and have mercy. In the days to come, may we discover the grace which has always been ours, so we can share it with others. May we taste the sweet goodness of your love, and feed those around us. May we be filled with the peace of your Spirit, so we may expect you to come in those we least expect, in places which surprise us, in moments we overlook, just as you did in Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior.

Silence is kept.

Assurance of Pardon

Reach out and touch the kingdom, for it is right next to you. Breathe in and feel the Spirit of peace and hope. Trust and believe this good news: God is nearer than you might ever imagine.

Thanks be to God, we are forgiven! We can set aside our differences and embrace everyone, we can seek peace for all in our lives, our neighborhoods, our world. Amen.

*Response #83

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus
(v. 1)

STUTTGART

The Peace

Jesus showed us that shalom—wholeness, justice—sometimes means confronting those forces that would withhold justice from the most vulnerable. Because of Emmanuel, God-with-us, we can live in peace with God and work for peace with one another. May the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. **And also, with you.**

Prayer for Illumination

Faithful God, through the gift of your word you offer us instruction, encouragement, and hope. By the power of your Spirit teach us to live in hope, sharing joy and peace with the world, in the name of Jesus our Lord. **Amen.**

Old Testament Lesson

Isaiah 2:1-5

NRSV OT, p. 631

Musical Offering

Gospel Lesson

Matthew 24:36-44

NRSV NT, p. 27

Sermon

Karen Cartier

[remain seated]

Hymn #104

O Lord, How Shall I Meet You

VALET WILL ICH DIR GEBEN

We Present Our Tithes and Offerings

(Prayer concerns may be placed in the offering plates.)

Invitation

In the season of Advent, we remember that God came as a gift to and for us. As we enter this season of preparation, may we bring our own gifts to and for God.

Offertory

*Doxology

Avery & Marsh

[Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all creatures here below; Praise God, above ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen, Amen, Amen, Amen, Amen, Amen, Amen.]

***Prayer of Dedication**

Our gifts seem so insignificant considering the need, so paltry when we look at the brokenness around us. But in the days to come, you promise to take them so that others might be fed, clothed, housed, and embraced in your grace and hope. **Amen.**

Joys and Concerns

Prayers of the People

O God, we lift up to you the names of those we have spoken aloud . . . and those not spoken but held deeply within our hearts, as well as those who have no one else to pray for them. Give them your shalom, we pray.

God of hope, we come to you as our waiting time begins—this “already but not yet” time. We look forward just a few weeks and prepare to celebrate your coming years ago. We remember to prepare for your coming again. **We pray in hope.**

God of peace, as part of the preparation for your coming, may we begin to beat our swords into plowshares. May we dismantle our weapons of mass destruction and rid ourselves of our stockpiles of fear. May we sow seeds of connection rather than discontent. May we teach peace to the nations who continue to study war, including our own. **We pray for your peace.**

God of joy, lead us in the joyful work of making peace. May we seek ways to feed those who hunger, to bind up those who are wounded, to get treatment for all who are addicted, to find housing for all who need it, and provide protection for any who are not safe. May our joy be rooted in your promises to care for the stranger, to release the captive, to bring good news to the poor, and to let the oppressed go free. **We pray for such joy.**

God of love, a joy so deep and wide will surely expand our hearts. So today as we pray for those we love already—family, friends, neighbors, colleagues—we pray also for those who are harder for us to love—family, friends, neighbors, colleagues. Love isn't easy, so we ask for your strength and guidance. **We pray to love well.**

As we journey toward Bethlehem to meet you at the manger once again, may we not forget to look for you all around and at all times—wherever we encounter your hope, peace, joy, and love. In the name of Jesus, who taught us to pray, saying . . .

The 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.

***Hymn # 757**

Today We All Are Called to Be Disciples

KINGSFOLD

***Invitation to Discipleship**

In times of uncertainty, when new things are just beginning or when we cannot see the end, we are invited to put our trust in God; we are invited to be ready for anything. We may not know what will happen next, but we know we will not be alone. This week, how can you reach out to someone to let them know they are not alone? How will you remember that God is with you?

*Benediction

Reverend Richard Halverson

You go nowhere by accident. Wherever you go, God is sending you. Wherever you are, God has put you there. God has a purpose in you being there. Christ, who dwells in you, has something he wants to do through you, where you are. Believe this. And go in God's grace, and love, and power. Amen.

Postlude

(Please be seated to enjoy the Postlude.)

Sources:

Connections: Worship Companion, David Gambrell, ed.

lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.com; poem "The Coming of God," by Ann Weems from *Kneeling in Bethlehem*.

Participants:

Guest Speaker: Karen Cartier, REPI

Liturgist: Jim Hadley

Music Director: Brad Caldwell

Ushers: Mary Newcomer, Donna Hadley

Sound: Cliff Kizuka, Jim Hadley

Greeter: Kim Kuhlman

Zoom Hosts: Vince Greene, Jim H.

Counters: Chris Newcomer, Cliff Kizuka

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND DATES

TODAY

Fellowship time downstairs after the service. There will be no *Coffee, Conversations, and Christianity* today, but next week, Lee Sanders will lead us in a final look at "Holy Disruption"—Advent through the lens of the Gospel of Mark.

A form for ordering poinsettias for our Christmas decoration is on the back!

THIS WEEK

Monday, November 28

– AA Meeting, 7:00 p.m., Room 209

Tuesday, November 29

– Square Dance Class, 7:00 p.m., Fellowship Hall

Wednesday, November 30

– Support group, 6:30-7:30, Room 204 (contact Dr. Stephen Benoit for info: call at 513-909-4242 or message at Stephencbenoit@outlook.com)

– AA Meeting, 7:00 p.m., Room 209

– Al-Anon, 7:00 p.m., Room 210

– Square Dancing, 7:00 p.m., Fellowship Hall

Thursday, December 1

Friday, December 2

– AA Meeting, 10:30 a.m., Room 209

Saturday, December 3

– Pro Bono Counseling, 11:00 – 1:00, Room 204 (see contact info above)

POINSETTIA ORDER FORM

Flowers are a beautiful and traditional part of our Christmas Service and offer us an opportunity to make dedications to God, family, and friends.

This year the cost of the Poinsettias is \$14.00 per plant.

Orders are due by **Sunday, December 11th.**

Donor's Name _____

Phone _____

Number of Poinsettias _____

The poinsettia is:

___ In memory of _____

___ In honor of _____

___ To the Glory of God _____

Checks should be made payable to GCCP; please write "Poinsettias" on the memo line. Payment at time of order is greatly appreciated. Place your order and check in the collection plate or return to the GCCP Office.

Thank you.