

**Virtual Worship Service, Third Sunday of Advent  
Crossnore Presbyterian Church, Sunday, December 13, 2020**

**Welcome and Announcements: (included as an attachment)**

**Prelude: *Advent Song* sung at Choral Evensong in Holy Trinity, Dunoon, Argyll**  
<https://youtu.be/YCrMeUbRZoE>

**The Lighting of the Advent Candles of Hope, Waiting, and Watching:**

As we enter into the third week of Advent, we are filled with hope and we are actively waiting and preparing for Christ to come into our lives and into our world once again with love and hope, with peace and joy. This morning we are lighting the Advent Candle of Watching. God calls us to look at our lives and to look at our world and to see the glimpses of God's Kingdom unfolding before our very eyes. We are asked to watch for the coming of Christ in new ways.

Zechariah's angelic vision in Luke 1:18-24 left him unable to speak because he could not believe at such an old age that God would use his life and the life of Elizabeth to be part of the Advent story. But when he came out of the temple, the people realized that something holy had happened, that he had seen a vision. This Advent, are we paying attention and watching with eyes wide open for the angels speaking and the coming of God's Kingdom in our midst?

**Light the Advent Candles of Hope, Waiting, and Watching**

**Let us pray:** Eternal God, you watch over us with grace and mercy; you are slow to anger, and quick to forgive. Help us to watch for the mystery of your presence in ways that we don't always see or understand.

**Call to Worship:**

All creation holds its breath.

**The time is almost here.**

The heavenly choir of angels waits for its cue to sing.

**Excitement is all around us.**

Prepare your hearts—The grace of God takes on human form.

Good news! Emmanuel, God-with-Us, comes to us.

**We gather to make ready our hearts for the coming of Christ, our hope.**

**Hymn of Praise # 93 *Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates***

Text: George Weissel, 1642; Music: Musica Sacra, 1778

**Sing along with Sanctuary Choir:** <https://youtu.be/GkWfYR7mRFI>

**Lift up your heads, ye mighty gates;**

**behold, the King of glory waits;**

**the King of kings is drawing near;**

**the Savior of the world is here!**

**Redeemer, come, with us abide;**

**our hearts to thee we open wide;**

**let us thy inner presence feel;**

**thy grace and love in us reveal.**

**Thy Holy Spirit lead us on**

**until our glorious goal is won;**

**eternal praise, eternal fame**

**be offered, Savior, to thy name!**

**Call to Confession:**

It is difficult at times to stay awake, to be alert, when we feel a film of dreariness is draped over us, lulling us into sleep walking through our days. It is difficult to examine our lives, only to realize that we are stuck in the tediousness of a pandemic that is infecting the lives of so many, even our family and friends. We come before God with our despair, our fear, our brokenness as we pray together.

**Unison Prayer of Confession:**

God of light and love, we confess our lack of attention to the prophets and messengers you send. We confess that we do not keep our eyes peeled and our ears open to the ways that you are revealing yourself and announcing your message of hope and healing in our lives. We confess that we dismiss those who might be speaking for you who in our minds are not old enough, not educated enough, not refined enough. Open our hearts, our eyes, our ears, and our minds to watch and listen for your Word of Life being proclaimed among us this day and always (moment of silent confession). Amen.

**Words of Assurance: (based on Isaiah 61)**

Friends, we can rejoice in the Lord! With an everlasting covenant sealed by love and mercy, God has clothed us with salvation. God has covered us with righteousness. The prophets have promised this good news: In Jesus Christ, our coming Lord, we are forgiven and made whole and life is worth living!

**Scripture Reading:****Sermon:****Roger Wise, CLP****Advent Affirmation of Faith:**

We believe in God the Father, Creator of heaven and earth.  
The one who is full of patience,  
who is not afraid of silence,  
who does not need to fill each moment with activity and noise.  
The one who is beyond bluster and flurry,  
and who does not jostle for attention.

We believe in God the Son, Savior of creation,  
who slipped into Bethlehem one night, mostly unnoticed,  
who lived thirty years without headlines or hurry,  
who frequently took time alone with his patient Father,  
who waited for the right time to become the suffering servant,  
who stood quietly before the noise of his accusers,  
whose silence overpowered their words,  
who died, then rose again on a quiet Sunday morning.

We believe in God the Holy Spirit,  
who strengthens, empowers, renews and refreshes,  
sometimes arriving with obvious power,  
sometimes with the quiet breath of a whisper.

We believe in one God  
who patiently waits for us,  
and who longs for us to do the same.  
(written by Dave Hopwood/engageworship.org)

## **Hymn of Meditation # 103 *Come, Now, O Prince of Peace***

Text and Music: Geonyong Lee, 1988

\*This is a new hymn for us. It was composed for a 1988 world conference for the peace and reunification of the Korean Peninsula. A hymn we still need to sing today!

Sing along with First Plymouth Church, Lincoln, NE: <https://youtu.be/vPF9nDMt8UM>

**Come, now, O Prince of Peace; make us one body.**

**Come, O Lord Jesus; reconcile all people.**

**Come, hope of unity; make us one body.**

**Come, O Lord Jesus; reconcile all people.**

### **Prayers of the People:**

O God, in days to come the mountain of your house will be established, and your joy shall reign. We pray for our church, Crossnore Presbyterian Church, and all communities of faith that proclaim your eternal love and mercy. Teach us your ways and that we might walk in your paths.

Come Lord Jesus, **and hear our prayer.**

Out of Zion shall go forth instruction, and you, O God, shall judge between the nations. We pray for our nation, and all nations, that your peace would be manifest in every corner of the earth.

Come Lord Jesus, **and hear our prayer.**

In your Kingdom, O Lord, wolves lie down with lambs and children play with serpents without fear. We pray for the sick, the suffering, and those in distress of any kind that you would heal all injuries, comfort all grief, and settle all wrongs.

Come Lord Jesus, **and hear our prayer.**

In your Kingdom, O Lord, even the wilderness and dry land are glad and rejoice. We pray for those who rejoice this week as they celebrate their birthdays and anniversaries, that they might obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing might flee away.

Come Lord Jesus, **and hear our prayer.**

In the fullness of time, O God, you sent your son, to be born of Mary. And his name was Emmanuel: God With Us. We thank you for your Presence with us, and we pray that you might be always present with those whom we love but see no longer.

Come Lord Jesus, **and hear our prayer.**

O Christ, hear our prayers, restore us, and show us the glorious light of your countenance, that we might be made whole. Come Lord Jesus. **Amen.**

### **Presentation of Our Tithes and Offerings:**

We bring our offerings of time, talents, and treasures before God this morning with the promise that God will use them to feed those in need physically and spiritually through us and through all who hear God's call.

### **Unison Prayer of Dedication and Thanksgiving:**

**Generous God, we thank you for bringing us to this season of faith, hope, and love. As we look at our lives, we see evidence of the countless ways that you have provided for our needs. Let gratitude well up in our hearts and overflow in generosity to others. Draw us outward to see ways that we can joyfully share what you have given. Let our acts of kindness as a church bear good fruit in the world. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

**Closing Hymn # 104 *O Lord, How Shall I Meet You***

Text: Paul Gerhardt, 1653; Music: Melchior Teschner, 1614

Sing along with Geneva Presbyterian Church, Laguna Hills, CA: [https://youtu.be/d\\_up\\_TRb7GIO](https://youtu.be/d_up_TRb7GIO) Lord, how shall I meet you,

how welcome you aright?

Your people long to greet you,

my hope, my heart's delight!

O kindle, Lord Most Holy,

your lamp within my breast

to do in spirit lowly

all that may please you best.

Love caused your incarnation,

love brought you down to me;

your thirst for my salvation

procured my liberty.

O love beyond all telling,

that led you to embrace,

in love all love excelling,

our lost and fallen race!

You come, O Lord, with gladness,

in mercy and goodwill,

to bring an end to sadness

*and* bid our fears be still.

In patient expectation

we live for that great day

when a renewed creation

your glory shall display.

**Charge and Benediction:**

Be filled with hope, prepare and be ready, watch for the signs of Christ's coming in those you know and love, those you don't understand, and those God is bringing into your life this week.

The grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ,

The Love of God

And the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you.

Amen.

**Postlude: *Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus* sung by St John's College Choir, Cambridge**

<https://youtu.be/JEE0uWnDGs>