

December 14, 2025 Third Sunday of Advent

Even In Our Fear, We Are Called Forward

PRELUDE (A Time for Quiet Meditation)

Pastorale (from Christmas Concerto) Arcangelo Corelli

WORDS OF WELCOME / ANNOUNCEMENTS

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING – Joy

Mary & Penny Hatch

One: In a world full of fear, where do we see glimmers of joy?

All: We see glimmers of joy in birthday candles and homemade cards; in the laughter of children and the delight of grandparents; in meals around the table and the singing of Christmas songs.

One: Even in a fearful world, joy is all around us. Today, we light the candle of joy as a reminder of this good news. May this flicker of light help us remember that even in a fearful world, joy is here; joy is real; we only have to look for it.

Light the third candle

All: Thanks be to God! Amen.

CONGREGATION SINGS

We're Not Alone (refrain) Adeste Fideles

When fear grows deep inside us, remember what unites us. No, nothing can divide us; we're not alone.

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*RESPONSIVE CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Jeremiah said, "I am only a boy." Moses said, "Who am I to do this work?" Mary said, "How can this be?"

All: We often say, "But God, I am afraid."

One: And yet, even when we are afraid, God invites us closer,

All: So that we may trust the Inviter.

One: May we hear and accept God's invitation.

All: May we summon our courage, and sing God's praise.

*GATHERING SONG #749 Come! Live in the Light! (verse 1)

We Are Called

Come! Live in the light! Shine with the joy and the love of the Lord! We are called to be light for the kingdom, to live in the freedom of the city of God.

^{*}Please stand as you are able.

(refrain)

We are called to act with justice; we are called to love tenderly; we are called to serve one another, to walk humbly with God.

(verse 2)

Come! Open your heart! Show your mercy to all those in fear! We are called to be hope for the hopeless so hatred and violence will be no more.

(refrain) (verse 3)

Sing! Sing a new song! Sing of that great day when all will be one! God will reign, and we'll walk with each other as sisters and brothers united in love.

(refrain)

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CALL TO CONFESSION

One: Often, when we make mistakes, we want to keep them to ourselves: we don't want to advertise our failings; we can be tempted to brush those things under the rug and move on. But God welcomes and loves our full, honest, and messy selves – mistakes and all. And so, trusting that there is nothing we need to hide from God, let us pray:

UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Holy God, you invite us to live into our callings: to act, to trust, and to serve. But instead of responding with a resounding "yes," we often hide our faces, dig in our heels, and wait for someone else to volunteer. Speak courage to us, Holy God, and remind us that every person is capable of making a difference; that – even when we are scared – we are not alone. In hope, you invite us forward.

WORDS OF FORGIVENESS

One: No matter where your path has led you in the past, today is a new day. So, hear this good news: we are known; we are forgiven; we are sent to serve.

All: Thanks be to God. Amen.

*SONG OF RESPONSE #92

While We Are Waiting, Come

Waiting (Cason)

(verse 3)

Come, Savior, quickly come; come, Savior, quickly come. Jesus, our Lord, Emmanuel, while we are waiting, come.

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*SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

One: In Christ we discover a peace that surpasses all human understanding. Let us share that same peace with one another. The peace of Christ be with you.

All: And, also, with you.

^{*}Please stand as you are able.

UNISON PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Holy One, the story of this season is not new – we have watched the plays and sung the songs – but we long to hear it as if it is. So, awaken our spirits; call forth attention, awareness, and reverence in us. Allow us to hear this ancient tale with new ears. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING *Luke* 1:26-38

²⁶ In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷ to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. 28 And he came to her and said, 'Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you.' 29 But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. 30 The angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God, 31 And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. 32 He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. ³³ He will reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.' 34 Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be, since I am a virgin?' 35 The angel said to her, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. 36 And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. 37 For nothing will be impossible with God.' 38 Then Mary said, 'Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.' Then the angel departed from her.

SCRIPTURE RESPONSE "We Are Called Forward"

John Wahl

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE LORD'S PRAYER

CHRISTMAS MUSIC PROGRAM

*FINAL BLESSING

POSTLUDE Christians, Be Joyful (from The Christmas Oratorio)

Johann Sebastian Bach

*Please stand as you are able.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Knitting For Others



The group will not be meeting in December.



Flowers

The flowers today are given by the Gurd family in loving memory of Dr. Alan Gurd.

Alternative Gift Giving



THE ALTERNATIVE CHRISTMAS GIFTS If you are considering giving alternative gifts, there are some brochures on the Mission bulletin board in the hallway. Heifer, Habitat for Humanity, and Presbyterian Gift Catalogs are there for you to look at. You can copy down their website

or phone number, if you are interested. Mission Commission

CFPCC Food Bank Needs

Please consider donating the following items to help stock the shelves at Chagrin Falls Park Community Center:



Canned sweet potatoes, canned turkey gravy, Stove Top stuffing mix, cooking oil, mayo, butter, celery, white potatoes, onions, eggs, cranberry sauce, sweet relish, a turkey, green beans, corn, corned bread mix, broth, cream mushroom, elbow macaroni, pie

(no pumpkin please*), anything seasonal (no pumpkin please*), or anything you would like to donate.

CFPCC is receiving donations at your car. Someone will come out and retrieve donations. You can, also, leave them in the blue donation bin in the Narthex. *The CFPCC community does not use pumpkin as part of their autumn / holiday meals.

\$5 for Feet, Fingers, and Fares for North Church



In this season of giving, we can give the gift of warmth to our neighbors at North Church in Cleveland. Your contributions will provide hats, gloves, socks, and



fares for those in need. Envelopes will be available in the Narthex and Fellowship Hall through Sunday,

December 14. Thank you for generously supporting this mission. In Christ, your Mission Commission

Longest Night Service

During the Advent Season, we will be crafting worship and devotions around the theme: *Insisting on Hope*. We look to God to provide comfort and hope in the midst of our fears.

But the Christmas Season can be a difficult time, especially for those experiencing the pain of loss. Therefore, we invite any and all to join us for a brief, informal Longest Night Service, held on the night of the solstice – Sunday, December 21, at 5:00 p.m. There will be time and space for silence and singing, candle lighting and prayers; inviting hope into even the difficult parts of our lives.

North Church Partnership

One of Valley's most enduring and impactful ministry partnerships is with North Presbyterian Church in the St. Clair neighborhood of Cleveland. This spring, Rev. Charlie Hurst retired, and North Church welcomed its new pastor, Rev. Katherine Chilcote.

North Church is a predominantly homeless and housing insecure population. Four Sundays each year, Valley prepares and serves a meal at North; Sunday volunteers depart from Valley at 10 a.m. (taking prepared food with them) to attend the 11 a.m. worship service at North, and help serve the lunch to participants following. Three-to-five people are requested for each Sunday.

Upcoming Date

Sunday, December 21 (cooking on Friday, December 19, at 9:30 a.m.)

Notice from Treasurer's Office

If you would like to have your 2025 pledges credited to 2025, please turn them into offering basket no later than Sunday, December 28.

Offering Envelopes for 2026

For those that receive offering envelopes, please retain the current box you have for 2026. If at any time you are in need of more envelopes, please contact the office. If you do not receive envelopes and would like to, please contact the church office.

Donations - Credit Card or Zelle

17560 Chillicothe Road

Phone: (440) 543-1071

Chagrin Falls, OH 44023

Email: valleypc@netlink.net

Credit card donations are available on-line at the Valley Presbyterian website below: http://valleypresbychurch.org

Look for "Give Now" button. Can only be used for donations. Can not pay for holiday flowers, VBS, books, etc. at this link.

Use the following QR Code to donate via **Zelle**:



VALLEY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH www.valleypresbychurch.org

www.valleypresbychurch.org
VPC Guest Wifi Password: VPC12345

Rev. Dr. John Wahl, Pastor Cell Phone: (216) 287-2405 Email: revjohnwahl@netlink.net Heart of Valley Preschool Heidi Cregar, Director Phone: (440) 708-2572 Email: hovep@netlink.net

Director of Music: Nancy Sullivan Organist: John Kautzman

Liturgist: Jim Obman Greeter: Holly & Dale Cooper