



December 7, 2025

Second Sunday of Advent

When we're running out of hope, God is at work

PRELUDE (A Time for Quiet Meditation)

*Come, Savior of the Gentiles Johann Pachelbel, arr.
by John Weston*

WORDS OF WELCOME / ANNOUNCEMENTS

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING – Peace

Bev Wahl

One: In a world full of fear, where do we find hope?

All: We see glimmers of peace in the quiet of early morning, when people shake hands or share a hug, when loved ones say they're sorry, and when the church sings together.

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

Light the second 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: Family of faith, God is at work!

All: God is healing and creating, redeeming and dreaming,

One: Calling and sending, listening and loving.

All: God is at work in our world.

One: Let us worship our God who never gives up.

All: Let us worship our God who holds onto hope.

***GATHERING SONG #109** *Blest Be the God of Israel
(verse 1)*

Merle's Tune

Blest be the God of Israel, who comes to set us free; who visits and redeems us, who grants us liberty. The prophets spoke of mercy, of freedom and release; God shall fulfill that promise and bring the people peace.

*Please stand as you are able.

(verse 2)

God from the house of David a child of grace has given; a Savior comes among us to raise us up to heaven. Before him goes the herald, forerunner in the way, the prophet of salvation, the harbinger of day.

(verse 3)

On those who sit in darkness the sun begins to rise, the dawning of forgiveness upon the sinner's eyes. God guide the feet of pilgrims along the paths of peace. O bless our God and Savior with songs that never cease!

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CALL TO CONFESSION

One: We can be honest with God about our innermost thoughts, because God always meets us with grace, tenderness, and mercy. Friends, let us be honest; let us go to God in prayer:

UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Gracious God, with anxious hearts, we cry out to you, 'Will things get better? Will change ever come? Will I even make a difference?' We have every reason to hope; to believe that the sun will rise, that flowers will bloom, that spring will come. And yet, too often, hope slips through our fingers. Soothe our wandering hearts and show us the places where the sun is shining and you are at work. With open hearts we pray.

(Time of Silence)

WORDS OF FORGIVENESS

One: Family of faith, in our honesty,

All: We are heard.

One: In our worries,

All: We are held.

One: In our failings,

All: We are forgiven.

One: In our fear,

All: We are not alone.

One: Friends, this is the good news of the gospel; when we are running out of hope, God is still at work.

All: Thanks be to God. Amen.

***SONG OF RESPONSE #92**

While We Are Waiting, Come

Waiting (Cason)

(verse 2)

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

Text by Claire Cloninger / ©1986 Word Music, LLC / CCL #11043756

***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

Merciful God, we need bread to eat and a hand to hold; we need laughter and music; we need work to do and a chair to sit on and rest. But maybe more than anything, we need your Word and a reason to hope. So speak to us today only as you can, with a word of hope that enters deep into our weary bones. Amen.

FIRST SCRIPTURE READING *Isaiah 43:19-21*

¹⁹ I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert. ²⁰ The wild animals will honour me, the jackals and the ostriches; for I give water in the wilderness, rivers in the desert, to give drink to my chosen people, ²¹ the people whom I formed for myself so that they might declare my praise.

CHORAL ANTHEM

Prepare

Hannibal & Nolan

SECOND SCRIPTURE READING

Matthew 11:1-11

Now when Jesus had finished instructing his twelve disciples, he went on from there to teach and proclaim his message in their cities.

² When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples ³ and said to him, ‘Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?’ ⁴ Jesus answered them, ‘Go and tell John what you hear and see: ⁵ the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. ⁶ And blessed is anyone who takes no offence at me.’

⁷ As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: ‘What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? ⁸ What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. ⁹ What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ¹⁰ This is the one about whom it is written, “See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.”

¹¹ Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

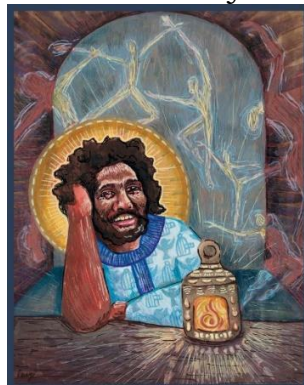
THE MESSAGE

“God Is at Work”

Rev. Dr. John Wahl

TIME OF SILENT REFLECTION

(Visio Divina – “Hope Like a Dancer” by Lauren Wright Pittman)



UNISON AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We believe in a with-us-God. We believe in the hope of tomorrow. We believe that good news is louder than fear. We believe this good news is for all people. So, even when our knees shake, when our voice trembles, when fear is all around us, we will hold onto that good news. We will reach for each other, look for God in our midst, sing songs of joy, and proclaim: unto us, love is born. Amen.

CALL TO OFFERING

We take this time to reflect and recognize all contributions of time, talent, and treasure. A basket is available for making monetary donations.

OFFERTORY

Let Us Break Bread Together on Our Knees

Robert Lau

***DOXOLOGY #314**

Longing for Light, We Wait in Darkness

Christ, Be Our Light

(verse 2)

Longing for peace, our world is troubled. Longing for hope, many despair. Your word alone has power to save us. Make us your living voice. Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the darkness. Christ, be our light! Shine in your church gathered today.

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***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE LORD'S PRAYER

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

SHARING THE BREAD AND CUP

UNISON PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Loving God, in a world racked with fear, you set the table and meet us here. You nourish our bodies and our spirits. You remind us that this is a joyful feast, and that fear cannot win every time. So, send us – with renewed courage, hope, and conviction – out into the world. Help us to feed others as you have fed us. With gratitude we pray; Amen.

***SENDING SONG #702**

Christ Be Beside Me

Bunessan

(verse 1)

Christ be beside me; Christ be before me; Christ be behind me, King of my heart. Christ be within me; Christ be below me; Christ be above me, never to part.

*Please stand as you are able.

(verse 2)

**Christ on my right hand, Christ on my left hand, Christ all around me,
shielding in the strife. Christ in my sleeping, Christ in my sitting, Christ
in my rising, Light of my life.**

(verse 3)

**Christ be in all hearts thinking about me; Christ be on all tongues telling
of me. Christ be the vision in eyes that see me; in ears that hear me
Christ ever be.**

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***CHORAL BENEDICTION**

Celtic Advent Carol

Barrett

***FINAL BLESSING**

POSTLUDE

Prepare the Royal Highway

James Mansfield

*Please stand as you are able.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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.

Annual Christmas Angel Tree Project



The Angel Tree

Each Christmas season Valley has an Angel Tree project. This year, we will be supporting Geauga County Family Services. We are collecting gift cards this year. The suggested cards are Amazon, Giant Eagle, Walmart, Aldi. There will be a box in the Narthex for the gift cards.

Please return the gift cards today, Sunday, December 7. Thank you so much for your support. In Christ, The Mission Commission

Here We Come A Caroling!!!!



The Valley Church Choir and the Musicians from the Bainbridge Community

Church would like to invite any Valley Church members who are interested to go CAROLING with us **today, December 7th.**

Please meet in the church parking lot at 12:30 p.m., and then we will be going to two Nursing Homes (TBA) in the area.

2025 Year-long Bible Study

Every Day for Everyone
365 Devotions from Genesis to Revelation

This collection of reflections encompasses the entirety of the Bible - taking you on a journey from the beginnings of creation and humanity's journey with God in Genesis through the history of Israel to the life of Jesus and the birth of the church in the New Testament.

Each daily devotion includes:

- Scripture reference (usually not more than one chapter);
- A one-page, thoughtful commentary on that day's passage;
- A prayer echoing the Scripture and reflection from that day.

Join Pastor John on a 2025 journey through the Bible; group times for discussion will be planned throughout the year. Books are available through the church office for \$17.

Every Day for Everyone – Daily Bible Study discussion

Those participating in the Every Day for Everyone Daily Bible Study (and anyone else interested) are invited to gather for questions and discussion.

Group Discussion Time


Sunday, December 7

5:00 p.m. in the Church Library

Alternative Gift Giving



**THE ALTERNATIVE CHRISTMAS GIFTS
THAT KEEP ON GIVING**



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

Knitting For Others



The group will not be meeting in December.

Festival Choir – The Christmas Gift

Valley's Festival Choir would like to invite you to join us this year for our
Christmas Program



“THE CHRISTMAS GIFT”

to be presented during the church service on

December 14th.

Christmas Dinner with the Man in the Red Suit

Sunday, December 14, after the 10:30 a.m. worship service

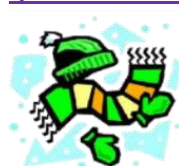
Look for a sign-up link in the December newsletter.



Bring a wrapped package for your child or anyone (around \$15.00).

Santa's bag will be in the library for you to slip it in!

\$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 beginning Sunday, November 23

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



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.)

Donations – Credit Card or Zelle

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

VPC Guest Wifi Password: VPC12345

17560 Chillicothe Road
Chagrin Falls, OH 44023
Phone: (440) 543-1071
Email: valleypc@netlink.net

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: hovcp@netlink.net

Director of Music: Nancy Sullivan
Liturgist: John Hoffman

Organist: John Kautzman
Greeter: Holly & Dale Cooper