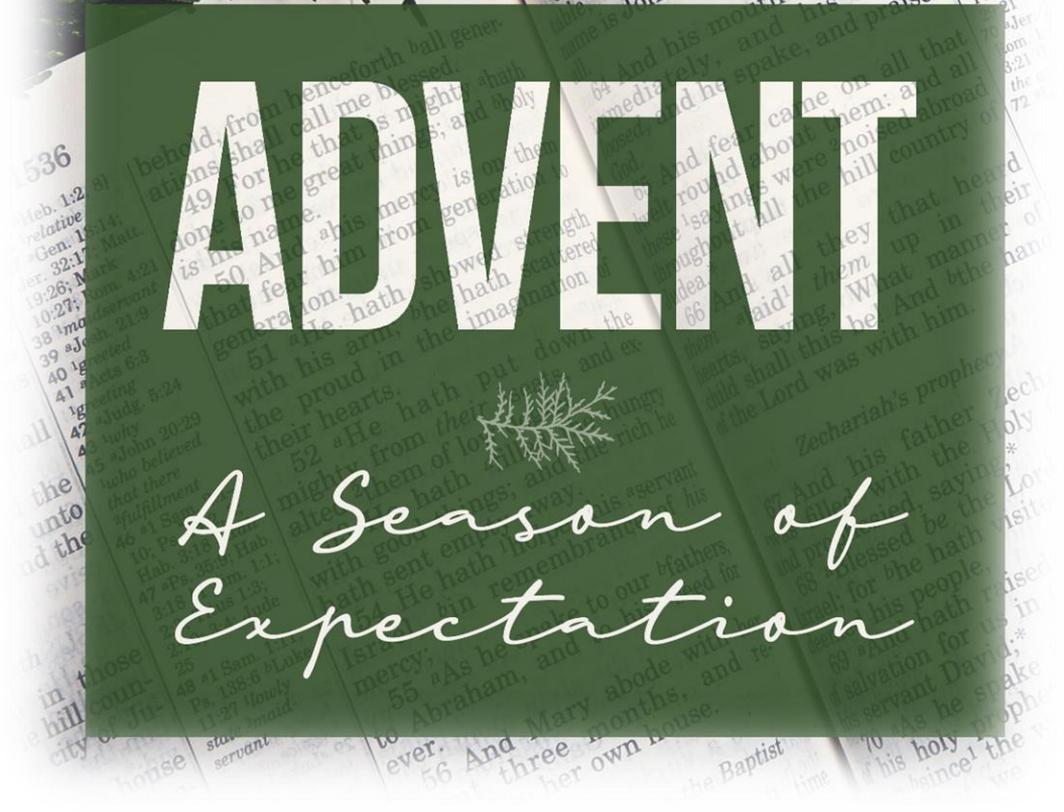




1537
63 And he asked for a writing and wrote, saying, His name is written here.
64 And they marveled at him. And his mouth was opened and his tongue
65 things
66 discussed
66 ^aLuke 2:19
11:21 ^bkept them
67 ^aJoel 2:28
68 ^a1 Kin. 1:46
Ps. 106:48
3:16
69 ^a2 Sam.
Ps. 132:17

ADVENT

A Season of Expectation





West Richmond Church of the Brethren

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November 27, 2022

First Sunday in Advent

A new church year, a new season, a new focus. Thank you, Creator God, for the coming weeks to prepare our hearts anew for the arrival of your Son.

Welcome and News

Prelude Duet

He Comes To Us

Gilbert M. Martin

He Comes To Us by Gilbert M. Martin

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GIVE PRAISE TO GOD

* Invitation to Worship

based on Isaiah 2:1-5, adapted from John Killinger

Praise God for dappled things, as the poet put it. For cloudy skies, brindled cows, speckled trout, turning leaves, tie-dyed jeans, and even lives that have been mottled by mistakes. There is nothing for which we cannot praise God, if only we have eyes to see and ears to hear the original blessing of all things. Let us, in the spirit of the ancient prophet Isaiah, see all nations streaming to One who shows the way of love. That love can arbitrate for many peoples, turning violence into the ways of peace. Let us, on this first Sunday of advent, walk in the light of God, in the hope of restored life and peace.

* Prayer of Gathering

based on Psalm 122:1-9, adapted from Diane Tucker

One: O Lord of all things, including bodies, God who has come forth as human, creator of head to toe, who called it “very good,” who walks in dust with feet of flesh, even in the babe of Bethlehem.

All: All-Divine Incarnate, thank you for our senses, for our skin, for bones and breath and voices, ears and elbows, for all you fashioned fit to live your praise.

One: May there be peace in the streets, peace beyond towers of might, peace within walls, peace in hearts, peace glimpsed in One whose advent long ago brings hope to all.

All: As we have come to this place of worship, seeking a mountain-like vision of your love, show us your ways, that we might walk in your paths.

One: We light an advent candle as a sign of hope, our joyous hope that we can be restored – our faith restored, our strength restored, our confidence restored, our joy restored, as we watch and wait with all God's people for the promise to be fulfilled. Amen.

*** Hymn**

To Us a Child of Hope is Born

259 VT

(lighting of the advent candle of hope)

Verse 1:

To us a child of hope is born, to us a son is giv'n.

Him shall the tribes of earth obey, him all the hosts of heav'n,
him shall the tribes of earth obey, him all the hosts of heav'n.

Verse 2:

His name shall be the Prince of peace, forevermore adored,
the Wonderful, the Counselor, the great and mighty Lord,
the Wonderful, the Counselor, the great and mighty Lord.

Verse 3:

His pow'r, increasing, still shall spread, his reign no end shall know.

Justice shall guard his throne above, and peace abound below,
justice shall guard his throne above, and peace abound below.

CELEBRATE GOD'S FAMILY

Time with our Children

Verse 1:

At the dawn of your creation, God, you spoke: "Let there be light!"
You divided earth from heaven, you created day and night.
You made sunbeams dance with shadows, you created energy!
Peaceful evenings, bright tomorrows, all began with "Let there be!"

Verse 2:

By your word, you formed creation: dry land, water, ocean breeze.
Soon there burst forth vegetation: plants with fruit, majestic trees,
rain and snow and changing seasons, creatures filling land and sea.
God, your very good creation all began with "Let there be!"

Verse 3:

When you made us as your children, sending us throughout your lands,
you commanded, "Have dominion, care for earth; it's in your hands."
Yet we hurt this world you've given; we harm earth and sky and sea.
We forget it's your creation, you, who once said, "Let there be!"

Verse 4:

At this joyful celebration, may we hear your word anew:
may we care for your creation, knowing it's a trust from you.
Just as daily there's a dawning, bringing light to all we see,
so we daily hear your calling, you, who once said, "Let there be!"

WORSHIP IN GIVING

Thoughts on Giving

based on Matthew 21:36-44

The God who said "Let there be," also came forth in Jesus and inspires us to watch amid all the daily affairs of life, amid eating, drinking, birthing, marrying, relating, working, and dying. God comes in this advent season, in every season, in every moment of life, calling us to be faithful in our looking, our loving and our sharing. We are to echo the gift of the Christ child in the giving of our resources and ourselves to the world.

Verse 1:

Sing to the God of harvest a song of love and praise;
with joyful hearts and voices your alleluias raise.
By God's command the seasons in fruitful order move;
so thank the God of harvest with hymns of heartfelt love.

Verse 2:

God gives the rain and sunshine; the deserts bloom and spring;
all creatures leap in gladness; the children laugh and sing.
God fills them with abundance; all living things increase;
the year is crowned with kindness, with plenty and with peace.

Verse 3:

Bring to the holy table gifts God in goodness gave:
the wheat of gospel planting, the world Christ died to save;
and bring the cup of blessing, the fruit of field and vine,
and thank the God of harvest who calls us now to dine.

Congregational Prayer

adapted from John Killinger

O God, we thank you for the love that cradles us all the days of our lives; for the quietness of our times alone, and the enthusiasm of our times together; for the things we see with our eyes and the things we see with our minds; for the seasons of life, even this advent season, each season with its challenges and each with its gifts; for the witness of artists and musicians, who show us the beauty and music of the world; and for the witness of those who see not only the world, but the spirit within and beyond, touching, shaping, forming all in eternal love. Let us savor the world in the highest sense, so that we care for its beauties and treasures, and pass them on to future generations. Amid all sufferings and struggles, break upon us like a gentle, cloudless morning with birds singing, that our spirits soar in simple wonder at your original blessing in all creation. Amen.

LISTEN FOR GOD'S WORD PROCLAIMED

Special Music

Call to Advent

J. Jerome Williams

Call to Advent by J. Jerome Williams

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Scripture Lesson

Song of Songs 1:1-2, 15-2:6;

Colossians 1:15-20 (*NRSV*)

Song of Songs 1:1-2, 15-2:6 (*NRSV*)

The Song of Song's, which is Solomon's. Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth! For your love is better than wine. Ah, you are beautiful, my love; ah, you are beautiful; your eyes are like doves. Ah, you are beautiful, my beloved, truly lovely. I am a rose of Sharon, a lily of the valleys. As a lily among brambles, so is my love among maidens. As an apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among young men. With great delight I sat in his shadow, and his fruit was sweet to my taste. He brought me to his banqueting house, and his intention toward me was love. Sustain me with raisins, refresh me with apples; for I am faint with love. O that his left hand were under my head, and that his right hand embraced me.

Colossians 1:15-20 (*NRSV*)

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions, or rulers or powers – all things have been created through him and for him. He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of the cross.

Sermon

“The Wisdom of Original Blessing”

GO IN GOD'S NAME

* Hymn

Nothing is Lost on the Breath of God

653 VT

Nothing is Lost on the Breath of God by Colin Gibson

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Verse 1:

Nothing is lost on the breath of God, nothing is lost forever;
God's breath is love, and that love will remain,
holding the world forever.

No feather too light, no hair too fine,
no flower too brief in its glory;
no drop in the ocean, no dust in the air,
but is counted and told in God's story.

Verse 2:

Nothing is lost to the eyes of God, nothing is lost forever.
God sees with love, and that love will remain,
holding the world forever.

No journey too far, no distance too great,
no valley of darkness too blinding;
no creature too humble,
no child too small for God to be seeking and finding.

Verse 3:

Nothing is lost to the heart of God, nothing is lost forever;
God's heart is love, and that love will remain,
holding the world forever.

No impulse of love, no office of care,
no moment of life in its fullness;
no beginning too late, no ending too soon,
but is gathered and known in its goodness.

*Prayer of Blessing and Sending

based on Romans 13:11-14

O God, bless us with watchfulness, that we might see you in the original blessing revealed in creation, and in the saving love incarnated in Jesus. Clothe us in your light, even amid darkness,

since we know no beginning is too late, no ending too soon, as all is gathered and known in your goodness. Amen

Postlude

All Earth Is Waiting

Alberto Taule

All earth is waiting to see the Promised One,
A virgin mother will bear Emmanuel,
All the world, bound and struggling seeks true liberty
It cries out for justice and searches for the truth.

Mountains and valleys will have to be made plain;
Open new highways, new highways for the Lord.
He is now coming closer, so come all and see
And open the doorways as wide as wide can be.

* Please stand as able and led



Ministers	All Members
Pastor.....	David Whitten
Guest Speaker.....	David Brunk
Children’s Time	Sarah Hartman
Special Music	Barbara Beers, David Brunk, Carol Goss & Jeff Goss
Flautist	Sarah Hartman
Organist	Bob Phillips
Dir. of Technology and Media	Kevin Beers