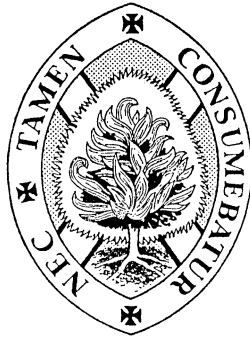


The Fourth Sunday in Advent
December 18, 2022



COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
A Congregation of the Presbyterian Church in America
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*Upon entering the sanctuary, please be sensitive
to the congregation's preparation for worship, and please make sure
all electronic devices are turned off or set to silent mode.*

-DRAWING NEAR TO GOD-

Welcome and Silent Prayer

You surprised a world, O God, by coming not in clashing thunder or flashing lights but in the quiet and simple splendor of a child's radiant face. Help us to understand this mystery of love beyond all loves, that we may be led to a new kind of love: a love that loves not by what we can get but in what we can give, a love that counts not who is worthy to receive but is showered freely on all. Show us the way of Bethlehem's child, that in seeing, we may believe, and in believing, we may learn again how to love. Amen.

***Call to Worship**

Psalm 34.1-3

***Prayer of Adoration**

***Song of Advent**

Hymn No. 26

TELL OUT, MY SOUL, THE GREATNESS OF THE LORD

-HAVING OUR HEARTS CLEANSED-

Confession of Sin

Merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean, and we have sinned against you in thought, word and deed; not only in outward transgressions, but also in secret thoughts and desires that we are unable to understand, but which are all known to you. We, therefore, flee for refuge to your infinite mercy, seeking and imploring your grace, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we can delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy Name. Amen.

Silently add your own confession of sin.

Assurance of Pardon

Jeremiah 33.14-16

Lighting of the Fourth Advent Candle

Old Testament Reading

Micah 5.2-5a

New Testament Reading

Luke 2.8-15

***Song of Advent**

Hymn No. 218

ANGELS, FROM THE REALMS OF GLORY

Prayer for the Church and the World

ATTENDING TO THE WORD-

Sermon

“God With Us”
Isaiah 7.1-8.8
Rev. Ron Gonzales

*Song of Response

Hymn No. 213

WHAT CHILD IS THIS

Worship of God with Tithes and Offerings

**DOXOLOGY*

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;

Praise Him, all creatures here below;

Praise Him above, ye heav'nly host;

Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Words Thomas Ken, 1709; music Genevan Psalter, 1551; Public Domain

-OBSERVING THE SACRAMENTS-

The Lord's Supper

We celebrate the Lord's Supper by coming forward (generally from the back of the sanctuary to the front) and partaking of the bread and the cup. Wine is served in the inner ring of each tray, grape juice in the outer rings. We warmly invite to the Table all baptized Christians, who are living under the authority of Christ and his body, the Church. By eating the bread and drinking of the cup, you are acknowledging that you are a sinner, without hope except in the sovereign mercy of God, and that you are trusting in Christ alone for salvation. If this does not describe you, we are glad you are here and commend the following prayers for your use during this time.

A Prayer for those Searching for the Truth

Jesus, you claim to be the way, the truth, and the life. Grant that I might be undaunted by the cost of following you as I consider the reasons for doing so. Guide me, teach me, and open to me the reality of who you are. Give me an understanding of you that is coherent, convincing, and leads to the life you promise. Amen.

A Prayer of Belief

Lord Jesus, I admit that I am weaker and more sinful than I ever believed, but through you I am more loved and accepted than I ever dared hope. I thank you for paying my debt, bearing my punishment on the cross, and offering forgiveness and new life. I turn from my sins and receive you as Savior and Lord. Amen.

A Prayer for those Struggling with Sin

Lord Jesus, grant that I may see in you the fulfillment of all my need and may turn from every false pleasure to feed on you, the true and living bread. Enable me to lay aside the sin that clings so closely, and run with perseverance the race set before me, looking to you, the author and perfecter of my faith. Amen.

***Song of Thanksgiving**

Hymn No. 215

WHILE BY THE SHEEP WE WATCHED AT NIGHT

-GOING FORTH TO SERVE-

Benediction

Numbers 6.24-26

Gatherings

Home Fellowship Group, led by Pastor Ron, meets on the first and third Tuesdays of each month at Chad and Heidi Leinweber's, from 6:00 to 7:30 PM. They are studying Romans and all are welcome.

The Men's Group meets Fridays, from 6:00 to 7:00 AM, in the Coffee Hour room. They are going through a series, led by Kirk Alden, entitled "Leading by the Book," in which fifty-two leadership principles related to personal development, relationships, and life skills are studied from a biblical perspective. All men and older sons are invited.

A Men's Leadership Bible Study, led by Kirk Alden, meets at Tate's Umapine Mercantile on Thursdays, from 6:30 to 7:30 PM. All men are invited. For more information, talk to Kirk.

Prayer Meeting: We meet the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month, at 5:15 PM in the sanctuary, to pray for one another, for the kingdom, and the world. Please join us.

Women's Studies: This fall women are meeting in pairs or small groups to study 1 and 2 Timothy. Study guides are available on the literature table. If you need help finding a partner or a group, please let us know.

Sermon Notes: "God With Us" (Isaiah 7.1-8.8)

Prayer Concerns

Saint Andrews Presbyterian Church: Rev. Craig Harris is planting a church in Yakima. Pray for God's blessing as he gives himself to this work, and that the Lord leads him to many who are hungry to hear and respond to the gospel.

Rev. Drew & Jessica Burdette (Boise State University): Pray for the Burdettes and the RUF staff as they reach out to students with the gospel and disciple those who know Christ and are eager to grow in their faith.

Peace in Christ: Jesus said to his disciples, "I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world" (Jn 16.33). In addition to strength and healing, pray that *Paul Carmichael, George Carpenter, Sandy Cupolillo, Mike Givens, Nancy Hoeft, Judie Jud, Tom Manning, Rick & Vickie Myers* and *Danielle Parker* might be sustained by the peace of Christ no matter the difficulties in the week ahead.

The Persecuted Church: There are 32,000 Christians out of 36 million people in *Morocco*, which is an Islamic nation. Although relatively tolerant compared to other countries in the region, it is illegal to evangelize and Christians who do so risk criminal charges and arrest. Converts to Christianity are punished in other ways, such as losing inheritance rights and custody of children. Pray that laws will change, making it legal for Christians to share their faith. Pray for perseverance for new believers, especially those from Muslim backgrounds. And pray for the church in Morocco, that God strengthens and uses it to bring life and hope to many.

Announcements

Advent Service: Tonight we will consider the revelation of God's character, beginning with Exodus 34 and culminating in John 1. Join us from 6:00 to 7:00 for Scripture readings, Christmas carols, and time exploring God's mercy, steadfast love, and faithfulness as revealed in the Law, the Prophets, and the Lord Jesus himself.

Daily Bible Reading: Reading through the Bible regularly is vital to our spiritual growth. Many of us will be doing so again in 2023 using M'Cheyne's daily schedule, which is available on the literature table. Please consider joining us

Visitors: Welcome to Covenant! We are glad you are here and would love to have you join us for some refreshments and fellowship following the service.

Explanation of Cover Symbol

Since the time of the Reformation, the burning bush has been a symbol of the Church. The Latin words are taken from Exodus 3.2 and read "...and yet it was not consumed." In one of his letters, Samuel Rutherford reminded his correspondent, "The bush has been burning these five thousand years, and no man yet saw the ashes of that fire."