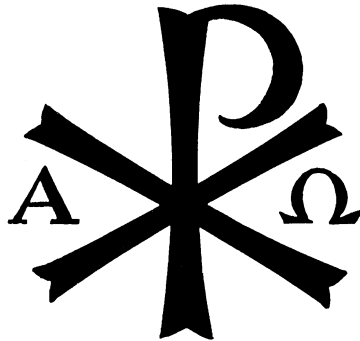


**The Second Sunday in Advent**  
**December 4, 2022**



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**

Father in heaven, our hearts desire the warmth of your love, and our minds are searching for the light of your Word. Increase our longing for Christ, our Savior, and give us the strength to grow in love, that the dawn of his coming may find us rejoicing in his presence and welcoming the light of his truth. We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

### **\*Call to Worship**

Psalm 117:1-2

### **\*Prayer of Adoration**

### **\*Song of Advent**

*Hymn No. 203*

*HARK! THE HEARLD ANGELS SING*

## **-HAVING OUR HEARTS CLEANSED-**

### **Confession of Sin**

Merciful God, always with us, always coming: We confess that we do not know how to prepare for your Advent. We have forgotten how to hope in miracles; we have ignored the promise of your kingdom; we get distracted by all the busyness of this season. Forgive us, O God. Grant us the simple wonder of the shepherds, the intelligent courage of the Magi, and the patient faith of Mary and Joseph, that we may journey with them to Bethlehem and find the good news of a child born for us. Now, in the quiet of our hearts, we ask you to make us ready for his coming. Amen.

*Silently add your own confession of sin.*

**Assurance of Pardon**

John 1.9-13

**Lighting of the Second Advent Candle**

Old Testament Reading

Malachi 3.1

New Testament Reading

Matthew 3.1-3

**\*Song of Advent**

*Hymn No. 201*

*O LITTLE TOWN OF BEHTLEHEM*

**Prayer for the Church and the World**

**-ATTENDING TO THE WORD-**

**Sermon**

“The Joy of Justification”

Romans 5.1-11

Rev. Ron Gonzales

\*Song of Response

# The Sands of Time Are Sinking

Anne Ross Cousins (1857)

Connie Dever

Based on the Letters of Samuel Rutherford



- 1. The sands of time are sink - ing, the dawn of Hea - ven breaks;
- 2. The King there in his beau - ty, with - out a veil is seen;
- 3. O Christ, he is the foun - tain, the deep, deep well of love;
- 4. With mer - cy and with judg - ment my web of time He wove;
- 5. Oh! I am my Be - lov - ed's and my Be - lov - ed's mine!
- 6. The bride eyes not her gar - ments but her dear Bride-groom's face;



- The sum - mer morn I've sighed for, the fair sweet morn a - wakes;
- It were a well spent jour - ney though sev'n deaths lay be - tween;
- The streams on earth I've tast - ed, more deep I'll drink a - bove;
- and al - ways dews of sor - row were lus - tred with his love;
- He brings a poor, vile sin - ner in - to his "house of wine;"
- I will not gaze at glo - ry but on my King of Grace:



- Dark, dark hath been the mid - night but day - spring is at hand,
- The Lamb with his fair ar - my doth on Mount Zi - on stand,
- There to an o - cean full - ness his mer - cy doth ex - pand,
- I'll bless the hand that guid - ed, I'll bless the heart that planned,
- I stand up - on his mer - it, I know no oth - er stand,
- Not at the crown he giv - eth, but on his pier - ced hand;



- and glo - ry, glo - ry dwel - leth in Im-man - uel's land.
- and glo - ry, glo - ry dwel - leth in Im-man - uel's land.
- and glo - ry, glo - ry dwel - leth in Im-man - uel's land.
- when throned where glo - ry dwel - leth in Im-man - uel's land.
- not e'en where glo - ry dwel - leth in Im-man - uel's land.
- The Lamb is all the glo - ry of Im-man - uel's land.

## 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.

## **\*Song of Thanksgiving**

*Hymn No. 214*

ANGELS WE HAVE HEARD ON HIGH

### **-GOING FORTH TO SERVE-**

**Benediction**

2 Corinthians 13.14

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### **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: "The Joy of Justification" (Romans 5.1-11)**

## **Prayer Concerns**

*The Nearness of God:* David prayed, “The LORD is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth” (Ps 145.18). In addition to strength and healing, pray that *Paul Carmichael, George Carpenter, Sandy Cupolillo, Mike Givens, Nancy Hoeft, Judie Jud, Tom Manning, and Rick & Vickie Myers* might know the nearness of God as they call upon him this week.

*The Persecuted Church:* There are some 10,000 Christians out of 4.6 million people in *Mauritania*. For Christians, public worship carries a constant threat. Churches must not proselytize Muslims, baptisms must be done in secret, and radical Islam is on the rise. Pray for Christian converts who face intense pressure from government, family, and community. Pray for the problem of slavery and its victims; this heinous reality stems from religious extremism. And pray that God strengthens the church and its leaders.

*Rev. Alister & Sarah Torrens (Ukraine):* Alister recently spent a month in Ukraine and was encouraged that, despite the air strikes and the harm that has come to the electrical infrastructure, life in Kyiv remains pretty normal. He was able to reconnect with colleagues, see the seminary and their home (both of which are in good shape), and some of the families with whom they were church planting. Alister is now back in Northern Ireland, where he and the family will remain, and from where he will be teaching, until it is safe to return. Pray the war ends soon and that a hunger for God is awakened in many Ukrainians through these perilous times.

## **Announcements**

*Advent Services:* Tonight we will have the first of three Sunday evening Advent services, from 6:00 to 7:00 PM. In addition to Scripture readings and Christmas carols, tonight we will consider the Revelation of God’s Presence, first in the Old Testament and finally in his Incarnate Son.

*The Women of Covenant* will be having a Christmas Brunch from 9:00 to noon on Saturday, December 10. Mark your calendars. We will be discussing 1 and 2 Timothy. Please come whether you have studied it or not. And bring a dish to share.

### **Explanation of Cover Symbol**

The Chi Rho symbol is one of the most ancient Christian symbols. XP, the first two letters of the Greek “Christ,” is an abbreviation of the name of the Lord. This symbol is often, as here, accompanied with other symbols, in this case “Alpha” and “Omega,” the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. The symbol originates from Revelation 22.13: “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End” (cf. Revelation 1.8, 17; 21.6). This particular symbol dates from the first few centuries of the Christian era and is often found on tombs.