



**Welcome to
Crestholme Presbyterian Church
The Third Sunday of Advent
December 13, 2020**

At the *, please stand, if you are able.

Large Print Hymnals and Bibles, and Hearing Assist Devices, are available

Gather for Worship

PRELUDE "Lo How A Rose E'er Blooming" **Brahms**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZB1eagIUxx4>

THE BELLS

ANNOUNCEMENTS and WELCOME

God of grace, ever faithful to Your promises, the earth rejoices in hope of our Savior's coming and looks forward with longing to His return at the end of time. Prepare our hearts to receive Him when He comes, for He is Lord forever and ever.
Amen.

CHORAL CALL TO WORSHIP "Savior of the Nations Come" **Choir**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V2n7zLLYKRM>

LIGHTING OF THE SECOND ADVENT CANDLE

One: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel and ransom captive Israel. We light the third Advent candle as a hint of God's promised light in the darkness.

All: May the light sent from God shine in the darkness and offer us joy on our way!

One: We light the third candle as a sign of our joy!

All: May all the promises of Advent be born in Bethlehem, and in us, this season. With a prophet's promise and a living hope, let us worship God.

*** ADVENT CAROL** "Light the Advent Candle" **Choir and Congregation**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x9wz6oTxF5Q>

“ Light the Advent candle, three: think of heavenly harmony; Angels singing “Peace on earth” at the blessed Savior’s birth. Candle, candle, burning bright, shining in the cold winter night; Candle, candle burning bright, fill our hearts with Christmas light.”

OPENING PRAYER

* **OPENING HYMN** “O Little Town of Bethlehem” **Blue Hymnal #44**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VA0EzQQZVnk>

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Faithful God, we confess that we have not led lives of holiness. We suffer from impatience, apathy, and greed; we have not been at peace. We have lost the joy that knowing you brings. We repent of these offenses and turn to you in love. Forgive our iniquity and pardon our sins, that we may walk in righteousness to the glory of your name.

ASSURANCE OF GOD’S FORGIVENESS

People of God, hear the Good News! God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven! Amen.

* **GLORIA PATRI** **Blue Hymnal # 579**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QUBxpypSblw>

* **SHARE THE PEACE OF CHRIST**

One: Peace be with you!

All: And also with you!

One: As God’s forgiven people, share the peace of Christ with each other (from your seats, please).

Hear the Word of God

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

OT READING

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah+61%3A1-4%2C+8-11&version=NIV>

Psalm READING

Psalm 126

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+126&version=NIV>

CHORAL ANTHEM

“Long Ago, Prophets Knew”

Choir

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S63rjDtYRYg>

NEW TESTAMENT READING

1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Thessalonians+5%3A16-24&version=NIV>

GOSPEL READING

John 1:6-8, 19-28

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+1%3A6-8%2C+19-28&version=NIV>

The Thessalonian church was not like Crestholme Presbyterian Church. It was a new church not one that was 95+ years old. Paul was reminding them of their place in the world based on their location in God. He acknowledges they are living "between" - between Jesus coming as the Savior of the world and Jesus returning in power and might. 2,000 years later, we find ourselves in the same situation. In Advent, we spend time contemplating the birth of Christ, and we are still looking forward to His triumphant return - maybe with doubt that He will ever come back.

Remember 2 Peter 3:8? Peter says, "*But do not let this one fact escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day.*" If you follow this thinking, for the Lord it has only been a couple of days since Jesus was crucified, buried, and rose again to sit at the right hand of God.

Paul gives us 8 imperatives in this passage about how to live our lives. They apply to the corporate body and to our individual lives. The imperatives require *agape* love so that as the body of Christ, we can help one another when things are not going well for individuals.

1. *Rejoice always* – This is based on our trust in God and our understanding that He is in charge.
2. *Pray without ceasing* – An attitude of keeping our eyes on God. Sometimes we think of prayer as a specific request to God to do something for us. Prayer is acknowledging God is in control and watching out for us.
3. *In everything give thanks* – Praise is born in a heart that is thankful and knows that God is with us in the good times as well as the bad times.
4. *Do not quench the Spirit* – The seldom used word for quench means to snuff out a candle. Let the creative Spirit of God have free reign in our lives.
5. *Do not utterly reject prophecies* – With so much time passing, we can easily think a prophecy is not going to happen and is therefore just a myth.
6. *But examine everything* – We need to examine what we hear and see. It is in the corporate sharing that we can gain a better understanding of the Word and how it fits into life today.
7. *Hold firmly to that which is good* – The result of following the first 6 imperatives. That which is good is defined by God for our lives. These can be moral and spiritual matters.
8. *Abstain for every form of evil* – Those things that cannot be treated with *agape* love. (1 Corinthians 13)

We come again to the word "shalom". *May the God of shalom.* Shalom is a concept of completeness and wholeness. It comes from God to perfect us. It is given with grace and mercy from God Who proved His love for us by sending His Son Jesus the Christ to die for us so we can have fellowship with Him.

Paul wraps up this passage with a strong reminder. *The One Who calls you is faithful, and He will do for you and for Crestholme Presbyterian Church what He has promised.* Let us look to the promises of God, those from the past that are completed, and those in the future yet to come.

The One Who calls you is faithful. Amen

- * **HYMN** "Infant Holy, Infant Lowly" **Blue Hymnal #37**
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IaqoeCl_jR0

Respond in Love and Service

* **OUR AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again. So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! Amen.

PRESENTATION OF OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

- * **DOXOLOGY** **Blue Hymnal # 592**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V8TkUuKIh84>

* **PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

- * **HYMN** "HEAL OUR LAND" **Red Hymnal #800**
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qTm_rA54EGw

* **PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

- * **CLOSING HYMN** "What Child Is This?" **Blue Hymnal #53**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3ubXQiMOIkY>

* **BENEDICTION**

Strengthen us, O God, in the power of Your Spirit to bring good news to the poor and lift blind eyes to sight, to loose the chains that bind and claim Your blessing for all people. Keep us faithful in Your service until Christ comes in final victory, and we shall feast with all Your saints in the joy of Your eternal realm. Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor are Yours, almighty God, now and forever. Amen.

- * **POSTLUDE** "Savior of the Nations, Come" **Manz**
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zQxVnNh9v_0

The End of this Worship Celebration — The Beginning of Service

Welcome to worship with us this morning! We're glad that you're here! If you do not have a church home, we invite you to become part of our compassionate church family... ask Fred, Dick, or an Elder about meaningful participation and membership!

Next Sunday our very own RE Fred Archer will be leading us in our fourth Advent Worship Service. Welcome, Fred!