



**Welcome to
Crestholme Presbyterian Church
The Second Sunday of Advent
December 6, 2020**

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

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

Gather for Worship

PRELUDE

"From Heaven Above to Earth I Come"

E. Pepping

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AQS6JbUAR9E>

THE BELLS

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHORAL CALL TO WORSHIP "Of the Father's Love Begotten"

Choir

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9luH_nCBJYo

LIGHTING OF THE SECOND ADVENT CANDLE

Tom and Beverly Rudwick

One: But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times. We light the second Advent candle as a hint of God's promised light in the darkness.

All: In the last days the mountain of the Lord's temple will be established as the highest of the mountains; it will be exalted above the hills, and all nations will stream to it. May the Light sent from God shine in the darkness and offer us God's love on our way!

One: Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the temple of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths." The law will go out from Zion, the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. He will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks.

Hear the Word of God

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

Holy Spirit of Love, apply your Word to our hearts as only you can do. Open our ears to hear since faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. Amen.

OT READING

Isaiah 40:1-11

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah%2040%3A1-11&version=NIV>

Psalm READING

Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+85%3A1-2%2C+8-13&version=NIV>

CHORAL ANTHEM

"A Communion Hymn for Christmas"

Choir

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E0fOi2ZUrsA>

NEW TESTAMENT READING

2 Peter 3:8-15a

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Peter+3%3A8-15a&version=NIV>

GOSPEL READING

Mark 1:1-8

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark+1%3A1-8&version=NIV>

SERMON

"Love, Faithfulness, Righteousness and Peace." Dr. Carlos Baladez
Psalm 85:10-11

It was such a pretty spring morning. The sun was out, not a cloud in the azure sky. A young mother decided to take her three year old daughter to the park. The one with a lake. Surrounding the lake were all sorts of flowers in bloom. Ducks were also wading in the water. As the young mother took in all the beauty surrounding her, the young child darted in the direction of the body of water. Before the mother could react the child was already at the edge of the waterline. Reaching for a duck, the child plunged into the deep quickly disappearing out of sight.

Earlier that day, a certain young man also decided to stroll the park. His slender and muscular body gave witness to his national swimming champion status. Standing at a distance, he saw the whole scene unfold before him. It all seemed to have moved in slow motion, right up till the point when the child sank. He suddenly felt his body move towards the child as if it had a mind of its own. Ignoring the signs, "No swimming," "No trespassing," "Do not enter the water," posted next to the water's edge, he dove right in. He swam to the bottom, grabbed the child's arm, pulled her next to him, and swam upwards towards the sky. Together they swam back to

safety where the child's mother waited anxiously. Immediately, the mother embraced her child who was rescued from certain death by a total stranger. Once the mother regained her composure, she lavished her gratitude and praise upon the young man embracing him together with her child in her arms.

Towards the rear of the crowd now gathered were a few who were criticizing the mother, the child, and the young man. "The mother should know better than not keeping an eye on her child," said one. Another exclaimed, "What a brat!" Yet a third chimed in, "The audacity of that young man not respecting the law. Those signs are clearly posted and it forbids anyone getting into the water." The last one blamed the city planners. "They should have seen this coming."

We are imperfect creatures living in a fallen world and yet capable of some very perfect acts. The young man was moved with compassion. He was aware of two things; first the three year old was going to die if he did not act. The second, he had the skills and the ability to rescue her.

The law was there to protect not to forbid. He actually upheld the spirit of the law by breaking the letter of the law. His actions protected the life of the small child. He acted lovingly, faithfully, and righteously bringing peace.

Growing up, I was presented with a God who demanded justice, which was code for keeping the letter of the law. You would have found me with the crowd at the end of this story judging the actions of the child, mother, and the young man. I had been presented a stern God carrying a BIG Stick ready to whack you back into obedience at the first sign of any deviation. I was also given theological explanations, reasons, and verses which "proved" this view of God to be true.

As I grew older, I was introduced to the God of Grace. Imagine my surprise. I was delighted and angered at the same time. Delighted at knowing a loving, merciful and forgiving God loved me, and angered knowing I had wasted all that time "trying" to please God and live up to his standards while not given any credit for my hard earned selfish efforts. In the end, love won out!

I offer you something to consider. What is the right (righteousness) response for an All Powerful, All Knowing, All Loving God to do regarding sinful man? Is it not to rescue him? Just like the young man in our story, God has the ability to save from death, the love to forgive the breaking of the laws, and the strength to restore to life. I submit to you, this is exactly what God did.

Notice verses 10 and 11 of today's passage. "Love and faithfulness meet together; righteousness and peace kiss each other. Faithfulness springs forth from the earth, and righteousness looks down from heaven." God acts in love and does the right thing. He loves his creation. He sees humanity's dilemma, rescues them, and restores them to life. Humanity responds in faithfulness, loving God in return. God and creature kiss thus restoring peace. Advent. The appearance of Love. Yes Love, we have been expecting you. Spring is restored. Love, Faithfulness, Righteousness and Peace in that order. Together for ever, amen.

To God alone be all the glory now and forever, amen.

- * **HYMN** "Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence" **Blue Hymnal #5**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3QU3-E5mWNg>

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

Please, continue to support the life and work of Crestholme. You can mail your tithes pledges and offerings to...

CPC
PO Box 23919.
SA TX 78223-0901

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

* **PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

Unto thee O Lord we offer these gifts. Please take, bless, and multiply for your glory and work. Amen.

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

* **PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

Lord, in the silence of our hearts and in the sound of our voices, hear our prayers. Amen.

CELEBRATE THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

Invitation to the Table
Prayer of Thanksgiving and the Lord's Prayer
Words of Institution
Our Celebration of Communion
Prayer of Thanksgiving

- * **CLOSING HYMN** "Once In Royal David's City" **Blue Hymnal #49**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TT3cfXd3Shk>

* **BENEDICTION**

May the Grace of the Son, and the Love of the Father, and the Communion of the Holy Ghost be with you from this time and forever. Now, go in his love and in his hope and share it. Amen.

- * **POSTLUDE** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fwyUIToD0GQ>
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 illustrious CRE Larry Sears will be leading us in our third Advent Worship Service of 2020. Welcome, Larry!