



Altamont Reformed Church
Third Sunday of Advent
December 17, 2023

Prelude

“Of the Father's Love Begotten”

Wilbur Held

Audrey Daly-Gilman, Organist

THE LITURGY OF APPROACH

Votum

Call to Worship

In the beginning was the Word.

The Word was the light of all people.

Prophets bore witness to the light.

We ourselves are given the light.

As we worship, God, kindle your light in us.

May we shine in this world as signs of your coming. Amen.

Advent Candle Lighting

Song: “Wait for the Lord” (Purple) #90

We wait for the coming of Christ,
whose steadfast love for the world is everlasting.

Your saving work in our lives is cause for great joy,
continue to bring healing and wholeness into our brokenness.

Inspire our worship of You,
that we may shout with joy for all that you have done for us.

As we light the third candle, the candle of joy, let us reflect on our experiences of joy in the world, in our friends and family, and in God.

Song: “Wait for the Lord” (Purple) #90

Prayer of Confession

Lord, we have not kept watch for you.
We have occupied ourselves with our own concerns.
We have not waited to find your will for us.
We have not noticed the needs of the people around us.
We have not acknowledged the love that has been shown to us.
Forgive our lack of watchfulness.
Help us to wait to know your will.
Help us look out for the needs of others.
Help us to work and watch for your coming. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon: Malachi 3:1-4
The Law of God

***Passing of the Peace**

The peace of Christ be with you!
And also with you!

***Gloria Patri (Purple) #581**

Glory be to the father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost: as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world with-out end. Amen, Amen.

Carol Sing

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

Children's Message

***Hymn**: "Savior of the Nations, Come" (Purple) #102

Prayer for Illumination

Scripture Reading: Ezra 1:1-4; 3:1-4, 10-13 (Old Testament pp. 421, 422, 423)

Sermon

***Affirmation of Faith**

We believe that God has come to us;
that God brought us into being,
that this God gave us breath and purpose,
that we have been blessed to be a blessing to others,
that we have fallen short of this commandment
but that God has nevertheless loved us despite our brokenness.
We believe that God is coming to us;
that God is not happy to leave us alone,
that this God will come to us as a particular human being,
that God will be made known to us in flesh and bone like ours,
that Mary will soon give birth and Joseph will soon clap his hands in joy,
that Jesus Christ will be born and our salvation made complete.
We believe that God will come to us;
that God will have the final word and that Word will be good,
that this God will give us the presence of the Spirit to continue our work,
that we are called to be disciples to all the corners of the earth,
that the day is coming when tears and pain will be no more,
and all will gather at the Table to sing an endless and perfect "Alleluia!"
Amen.

Service of Healing and Wholeness

Sharing of Concerns

That the divine healing power may enable each of us to become whole persons, able to love and be loved, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

That we might find the strength and openness to forgive and also to be forgiven, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

That we will always remember that we are members of Christ's body, and that whenever one person suffers, we all suffer, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

That God will grant us relief from every illness and disease, and from all suffering and anxiety, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

That God will grant mercy, courage, patience, and dignity to all who are survivors of serious disease, and to those who are disabled in any way, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

That God will grant us forgiveness of sins and freedom from fear, compulsions, and addictions, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

That the Lord will enter our lives and be present with us in our pain, hurt, grief, separations and loss, and in our brokenness, confusion, darkness and doubt, bringing us divine mercy and the sweet soothing balm of the Holy Spirit, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

That through the Holy Spirit we may bring our suffering siblings in Christ your peace, love, healing, and consolation, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

Finally, that the power of the all-holy, good, and life-giving spirit will sanctify this oil and all who are anointed with it, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

O God, who in Jesus Christ called us out of the darkness into your marvelous light; enable us always to declare your wonderful deeds, thank you for your steadfast love, and praise you with heart, soul, mind, and strength, now and forever. **Amen.**

James 5:13-16

Invitation

Laying on of Hands and Anointing with Oil

Prayer of Thanksgiving with the Lord's Prayer

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

THE LITURGY OF RESPONSE

Announcements

Offering

***Doxology**

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise God all creatures here below: Praise God above, ye heav'n-ly host; Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

***Prayer of Dedication**

***Closing Hymn: "People Look East" (Purple) #105**

***Choral Benediction #126 Blue Hymnal**

***Benediction**

Postlude **"Allegro Maestoso from Sonata II"** Felix Mendelssohn

** indicates the congregation stands, if able.*

WELCOME as we worship together. Please join us for coffee hour fellowship after our worship service.

ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17

PLEASE SPEAK TO A GREETER ABOUT ANY OF THE FOLLOWING:

CHILDREN BULLETINS AND SACK COLORING PAGES are available in the front of the sanctuary.

ASSISTED LISTENING DEVICES are in the back of the sanctuary.

LARGE PRINT HYMNAL: If you are visually challenged, a larger version of the *Glory to God* hymnal is available in the front or back of the sanctuary. The covers are black.

VOLUNTEERS FOR TODAY

Greeters & Counters.....Jeff Counterminne & Jeff Gregory
Side Door Greeter.....Sallie Townsend
AV Support.....Tim Boink

FUTURE VOLUNTEERS

	Dec. 24	December 31	January 7
Greeters	Michelle Stevens & Kelli Moore	Angie Stewart & Marianne Baratier	Craig & Barb Sargent
Offering Counters	Michelle Stevens & Kelli Moore	Angie Stewart & Marianne Baratier	Barb Sargent & Nancy Twaddell
AV Volunteer	Michael Gilman	Ryan Brewer	Tom Boink

COMING UP

Today 11:30 a.m. Coffee Hour in Fellowship Hall

Mon. Dec. 18 7:00 p.m. Men's Study Group

Wed. Dec. 20 7:00 p.m. Consistory

Thurs. Dec. 21 6:00 p.m. Chancel Choir rehearsal

7:00 p.m. Longest Night Worship Service

Sun. Dec. 24 9:30 a.m. Chancel Choir rehearsal

10:30 a.m. Worship Service with special music by our Chancel Choir

11:30 p.m. Coffee Hour in Fellowship Hall

6:30 p.m. Candlelight Service

The church office is closed tomorrow morning, December 18 and will reopen at 1:00 p.m.

AT A GLANCE-READ BELOW FOR DETAILS ON THE FOLLOWING:

- Longest Night Worship Service This Thursday, December 21
- Candlelight Worship Service Sunday, December 24 at 6:30 p.m.
- Christmas Adopt-A-Family Donations Due Today
- Volunteer Sign Up Sheets for our January 1 Community Dinner Are Out
- Prayer Corner

LONGEST NIGHT WORSHIP SERVICE THIS THURSDAY, DEC. 21 AT 7:00 P.M.

If you are facing the holidays with sadness rather than joy, please consider attending this service that occurs on the longest day of the year. It provides a deeply meaningful worship time to companion with those who struggle during the holiday season, particularly those who are grieving.

CANDLELIGHT SERVICE AT 6:30 P.M. NEXT SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24

Invite a friend and be part of this special worship service. Greeters are Lois Ginsburg and Pam Fialkoff.

CHRISTMAS ADOPT-A-FAMILY GIFTS DUE TODAY

Wrapped gifts are due today. Cash and check gifts are also welcome. There is an envelope to receive them on the board. Checks may be made out to ARC Benevolence with "family" on the memo line.

VOLUNTEER FOR OUR JANUARY COMMUNITY DINNER

Please sign up if you can volunteer for our New Year's Day dinner. Sign-up sheets are in Fellowship Hall, or you can email Nancy at the church office. We still need:

- Two people to set up tables and chairs and wrap silverware on Sunday, Dec. 31
- One volunteer to set out the place settings & salt and pepper at 9:30 a.m. on Monday, Jan. 1
- One person to exchange crockpots and spaghetti
- One person to help cook spaghetti
- Two people to clean used place settings and reset them
- Two people to clean up the hall after the dinner

PRAYERS FOR: **Caitlin**, niece of Michelle Stevens, who is in the ICU on a ventilator with COVID pneumonia; **Jan Davis**, now at Sunnyview for rehab; **Gail Kidder**, sister of Deb McKee

CONTINUED PRAYERS FOR:

Sandra, daughter of Lois and Ron Ginsburg; Angie's sister **Lori**; **Jim Pavoldi**; **Brian**, brother-in-law of Marianne Baratier; **Emmit**, Diane Stedman's grandson; Keith Baratier's father, **Paul**; **Nancy**, sister of Jackie Gregory, expected to go to Boston for serious surgery towards the end of the month; **Curt Damhof**

THOSE WITH LONG-TERM HEALTH ISSUES: **Patti Percoski**; **Paige and Eric Tooker** (Cystic Fibrosis); **Paula and Karen Eagan**; **Lois Wood**; **Becky Bryne**, neighbor of Deb and Steve Ritzko; **Barbara Ryan**

IN LONG-TERM CARE: **Clara and Ralph Lasselle** in Kingsway Community Assisted Living; **Jeanne Picard-Fish** at Daughters of Sarah; **Joan Whinnery** at Judson Meadows Ass't Living in Glenville

REQUESTS AND UPDATES FOR PRAYER CORNER

If you have a name to add to our prayer corner list, or an update, please call the church office or email Nancy at nancymacarc@gmail.com

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