



*"An inclusive community, celebrating God's unconditional love"*



November 28, 2021

1st Sunday of Advent



*"Hope: How Will Current Distress Move Us?"*

# The Love of God Gathers Us

Gathering Music

*You are invited to greet those around you or sit quietly.*

Ringing of the Bell

Prelude

“Come Thou Long Expected Jesus”

*arr. M. Hayes*

Sharon Neuenfeldt

Words of Welcome

Pastor Clare Gromoll

**\*\*\*Opening Hymn**

“Hark the Glad Sound!”

#335

1 Hark, the glad sound! The Sav - ior comes, the Sav - ior  
2 He comes the pris - oners to re - lease, in Sa - tan's  
3 He comes the bro - ken heart to bind, the wound - ed  
4 Our glad ho - san - nas, Prince of Peace, your wel - come

prom - ised long! Let ev - ery heart pre -  
bond - age held; the gates of brass be -  
soul to cure, and with the trea - sures  
shall pro - claim; and heaven's e - ter - nal

pare a throne, and ev - ery voice a song.  
fore him burst, the i - ron fet - ters yield.  
of his grace to en - rich the hum - bled poor.  
arch - es ring with your be - lov - ed name.

### \*\*\*Advent Candle Lighting

Sam Gromoll & Kathy Iverson

One: Advent is a season of waiting and watching for God's presence with us. Today we light the first candle: The candle of **HOPE**.

**All: As our congregation seeks to fulfill its purpose; we are wondering, longing, hoping, and expecting the new life that God is bringing forth among us.**

### \*\*\*Advent Candle Song "In the Darkness, Light a Light" *German carol words by Judith Melande*



In the dark-ness, light a light; Ad-vent can-dle warm and bright; Fire of hope in



dark of night. Em-man-u-el! We wait for you, O Je-sus.

### \*\*\*Prayer of Longing

One: Silent Word, Creative Act, Hidden Truth, Revealed Love:

**All: We wait for you to come and set things right. We are concerned and on edge about many things.**

One: We often miss or refuse your guidance, yet want you to intervene on our behalf.

**All: We seldom pause to consider that you are waiting for us—waiting for genuine acts of openness; waiting for us to repent and turn around; waiting for us to listen and respond with a burning passion to your truth, justice, and compassion.**

One: Furnish us with humble hearts and willing spirits to receive you as you come to us.

**All: Holy One, we are waiting for your revealed love. Amen.**

*prayerful silence*

**\*\*\*Assurance of Grace & Invitation to Pass the Peace**

Pastor: The peace of Christ be with you! **All: And also with you!**

**Proclaiming God's Love**

**A Time with Young People**

*Pastor Clare invites children forward to the front row of pews.*

**Blessing One Another**

Children : God be with you

**All: And also with you**

*Children may follow leaders to Children's Activity or remain in worship*

**Scriptures**

Jeremiah 33:14-16; Luke 21:25-36

*The Inclusive Bible*

**Jeremiah**

The days are surely coming, says God, when I will bestow on Israel and Judah all the blessings I promised them.

In those days and at that time I will raise up a righteous branch from the line of David, who will bring justice and integrity to the land.

In those days Judah will be safe and Jerusalem will be secure.

They will call the land, 'God is our Justice.'

## Luke

Jesus said... “Signs will appear in the Sun, the moon and the stars. On the earth, nations will be in anguish, distraught at the roaring of the sea and the waves. People will die of fright in anticipation of what is coming upon the earth. The powers in the heavens will be shaken. After that, people will see the Chosen One coming on a cloud with great power and glory. When these things begin to happen, stand up straight and raise your heads, because your ransom is near at hand.”

And he told them in a parable: “Look at the fig tree, or any other tree. You see when they’re budding and know that summer is near. In the same way, when you see all these things happening, know that the reign of God is near. The truth is, this generation will not pass away until all this takes place. The heavens and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

Be on your guard lest your spirits become bloated with indulgence, drunkenness and worldly cares. That day will suddenly close in on you like a trap, It will come upon all who dwell on the face of the Earth, so be on your watch. Pray constantly for the strength to escape whatever comes, and to stand secure before the Chosen One.”

### **Morning Message**

“Hope: How Will Current Distress Move Us?”

**Prayer Hymn**

“Now Is the Time Approaching”

#609

## Responding To God's Love

### Prayers of the People

*You are invited to speak a brief prayer for yourself, another, or a part of the world.  
Please project your joy or concern so we can hear it.*

One: God, in your love,

All: Hear our prayer

### Lord's Prayer

Eternal Spirit,  
Source of all that is and ever shall be,  
Loving Parent in whom we discern heaven,  
May knowledge of your holiness inspire all peoples,  
And may your commonwealth of peace and freedom flourish on Earth  
Until all of humankind heed your call to justice and compassion.  
May we find the bread that we need for today,  
And for the hurts we cause one another  
May we be forgiven in the same measure that we forgive.  
In times of trial and temptation, help us to be strong;  
When life seems overwhelming, help us to endure;  
And thus from the yoke of sin deliver us.  
May you reign in the power of human love,  
Now and forever.  
Amen.



### Invitation to the Offering

#### Offertory

“When God is a Child”

Carter

#### \*\*\*Offertory Sung Response

“In the Bleak Midwinter”

What can I offer, poor as I am?  
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb.  
If I were a wise one, I would do my part;  
but what can I offer: all my heart.

**\*\*\*Prayer of Dedication**

**God of hope, you are eternally and faithfully present with us. As we wait and watch for a new arrival of the Christ light, we seek to appreciate all the ways you are with us. You listen when we call out to you. You speak to us with holy breath. You guide us to those who care for us. We gratefully dedicate our lives to your work of hope, of peace, of joy, of love. Amen.**

**Going Forth to Share God's Love**

**\*\*\*Singing**

**“Happy Birthday”**

*..Happy birthday dear Andi & Emily*

**\*\*\*Closing Hymn “We Hail You God's Anointed”**

**#104**

**\*\*\*Benediction**

**\*\*\*Sung Response “Let There Be Peace on Earth”**

*by Jill Jackson-Miller and Sy Miller*

**Let there be peace on Earth, and let it begin with me  
Let there be peace on Earth, the peace that was meant to be.  
With God as creator, family all are we.  
Let us walk with each other in perfect harmony.**

**Let peace begin with me; let this be the moment now.  
With ev'ry step I take, let this be my solemn vow;  
To take each moment, and live each moment in peace eternally!  
Let there be peace on Earth, and let it begin with me.**

**Postlude “With Grateful Heart I Thank You Lord”**

*Beall*

## **PRAYER CORNER**

*Please hold these joys and concerns in your prayers:*

\*We give thanks for all offerings of energy, skills and financial resources to support our shared ministry in the year ahead.

\*For **Gloria Phillips** as she nears the end of her life. May the love of God enfold her in deep peace as she transitions.

\*For Cindy and John Siegel's daughter **Jenna Hirte**, who continues healing and recovery in the ICU after brain tumor removal surgery. We pray for God's healing energy to surround Jenna, husband Kevin and daughter Emily.

\*We celebrate birthdays with Andi Favilla (21st) & Emily Wulff (30th)

*And in the wider community...*

\*In the wake of the not-guilty verdict in the Rittenhouse trial, keenly aware that our nation's judicial system has now given further license to white supremacist domestic terror, and as we pray for justice in the case of the killing of Ahmaud Arbery; we pray, "How long, Oh Lord? How long?" (Find words by Rev. Dr. Velda Love, UCC Minister of Racial Justice in the Mid-Week.)

\*Having recently recognized Transgender Day of Remembrance, may we honor people as the whole persons they know themselves to be. May we speak and act out against transphobic injustice in all its forms.

\*As the pandemic rages on (having killed 5.2 million people worldwide thus far, with 9.3 million current cases in this land), may we each do our part to protect one another from the virus.



## Sunday Volunteers Needed | **Advent**

Seeking **Advent Wreath candle lighters (acolytes)** for:

Dec. 5, Dec 12, Dec 19, Dec 24 @ 7 pm,  
Dec 24 @ 9 pm & Dec 26

*(a lay reader accompanies the lighting with simple words)*

Seeking **Greeters** for:

Dec. 5, Dec 12, Dec 19, Dec 24 @ 7 pm, Dec 24 @ 9 pm & Dec 26

Please let Kimberly know what dates you are able to participate 651-439-5667  
[office@peoplescongregational.org](mailto:office@peoplescongregational.org)



### Curious about what it means to be a greeter?

- Arrive by 9:15. Find your clipboard and materials by the pulpit.
- Turn on all lights in the breaker box - 5 buttons on top that do not have tape covering them.
- Light all candles.
- Welcome people warmly as they arrive. Help a visitor find a seat.
- Ring the bell as worship begins - you need to pull down hard on this bell.
- Take attendance.
- Pass around any prayer cards for signing during worship (cued by Pastor Clare).
- Immediately following the service, collect and count offering money (detailed instructions on back of clipboard).
- In the sanctuary, pick up all used bulletins and put them into Kimberly's bin on her door.
- Extinguish all candles, turn off sanctuary lights, and lock the front door.

Thank you for volunteering!



## Bayport Light of the Green

Gather with Pastor Clare and others in front of the Bayport Library a little before 6:30 pm on Wednesday, Dec. 1. What a great opportunity to be present as a church in our wider community!



### From the Antiracism Collective (ARC)

Pilamaya ye (thank you!) to all who participated in Sunday's worship and gathering at People's Park and especially to our honored guest, Native Theologian Kelly Sherman-Conroy. (Recipes for the sunflower cookies and white cedar tea enjoyed during fellowship on Sunday can be found in the midweek.

As 29 hardy souls gathered at the People's Park fire ring after worship, Kelly wove together the history of the land on which our church is built and its People, and how Native and Christian beliefs merge in celebrating the unity of all creation.

At the end of the event, some participants asked if there would be an opportunity to process what we learned. That question lies at the center of our entire year's work together—*How will we use what we learn to determine our commitment to actively stand up to racism, not only as individuals but as a community of Christian faith?*

***Stillwater Area Theological Discussion Group***  
***Topical discussions among people of all faiths & spiritual paths***  
**(Bi-monthly Dec., Feb., April, June | 6:30-8 pm)**

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**Dec 2nd | John Emery, Islamic Resource Group in MN**  
**“My Experience with Muslim tradition and the realities of the Muslim experience in MN”**



John Emery served nine years in the US Army as a translator for the Arabic language. He served across the United States, North Africa, the Persian Gulf, and other locales.

After his honorable discharge in 2003, John returned to Minnesota and graduated with a degree in Global Studies. Since his conversion to Islam in 2004, John has engaged in efforts to promote interfaith understanding and cooperation. John volunteers for Gemali Project in Minneapolis, at jails across Minnesota, on the advisory board for the Global Alliance of Muslims for Equality, and on the board of Minnesota Multifaith Network. John is the executive director of Islamic Resource Group.

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Co-hosted by People's Congregational Church, Adult Faith Formation Team

**Please find the zoom link on our website:**  
**[peoplescongregational.org](http://peoplescongregational.org)**

## Volunteer Sign-Up

We have a sign-up clipboard on a table in the Narthex (moved the Fellowship Hall after worship). Please sign up for a date to serve as lay reader, greeter, after-worship fellowship co-host, or service recorder.

## Name Tags

Please grab your name tag in the Narthex before the worship service. When you depart, drop it in a basket by the front door or in the Fellowship Hall.

## Faith Conversations



## Faith Conversations

Our adult ed. Forum | in-person and zoomed  
**Most Sundays, 11-11:45 am**

Join us in the Fireside Room. Bring your 10:30 am after-worship fellowship treats with you!

In 10-minute videos, contemporary progressive faith leaders present key concepts of God, religion, Jesus, salvation, cross, Bible, church. We'll explore biblical texts and faith concepts, applying them to our own lives.

Nov. 28 Topic: Religion | "Jesus" The Revolution of Love"

Thank you for all who made today wonderful: Music Dir. Michael Bjork & Worship Accompanist Sharon Neuenfeldt (beautiful music), Kathy Iverson (liturgist), Sam Gromoll (acolyte), Children's Activity leaders & assistants, Kris Strasberg (greeter), Mindy Peters & Aidan Gromoll (fellowship hosts) and Jill Greenhalgh (Faith Conversations facilitator)



## Peoples Congregational Church

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