

Bower Hill Community Church (Presbyterian USA)  
Order for Worship ~ Second Sunday of Advent ~ 10 December 2023

Preparation for Worship:

Peace: *"I took a deep breath and listened to the old bray of my heart: I am, I am, I am."*  
~Sylvia Plath

**Prelude**

*Ding dong merrily on high*

*Charles Callahan*

**Choral Introit**

**Call to Worship:**

Leader: A messenger from God is coming.

**People: Prepare the way of the Lord!**

Leader: A new day of mercy is dawning.

**People: Prepare the way of the Lord!**

Leader: A voice is crying in the wilderness.

**People: Prepare the way of the Lord!**

**Litany for Advent:**

O Root of Jesse, rising as a sign for all peoples, before you earthly rulers will keep silent, and nations give you honor: Come quickly to deliver us.

**Come, Lord Jesus.**

O Key of David, Scepter over the house of Israel, you open and no one can close, you close and no one can open: Come to set the prisoners free.

**Come, Lord Jesus.**

God of all generations, though signs and seasons change, your promise is faithful and your word will never pass away. Give us courage and strength as we watch and wait for Jesus Christ, our redeemer, who is coming in glory to reign.

**Amen.**

**Lighting of the Advent Candles:**

Webler Family

Leader: On this second Sunday in Advent, we light the candle of peace. "The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid..."

**People: The calf and the lion and the fatling will lie down together, and a little child shall lead them."**

**Prayer of Adoration**

God our Savior, your word shakes the wilderness, washes away evil, and causes all flesh to rejoice. Make us ready to greet you at the coming of your holy realm; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**\*Hymn 97 watchmen, tell us of the night**

**Call to Prayer**

There is a voice crying out in the wilderness of sin. God is calling to us with love. Let us confess our sin, trusting in God's saving grace.

**Prayer of Confession**

**We confess, O God, that we are not prepared to welcome your way of righteousness, justice, and peace. You call us to repentance, but we refuse to change our ways. You call us to resist oppression, but we resign ourselves to evil. You call us to be reconciled, but we remain divided and afraid.**

**Forgive us, God of grace. Pour out your Spirit in our lives so that we may be forgiven, set free, and made ready to meet you at the coming of your holy realm; through Jesus Christ our Lord. [Silent prayers]**

**Words of Assurance**

Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain made low, and the crooked made straight, and the rough made smooth, and all flesh shall see the salvation of God. This is the good news we are waiting for: In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

**\*The Gloria**

*Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!*

**\*The Peace**

Leader: The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

**People: And also with you.**

Leader: Let us greet one another with the peace of Christ.

**Time with the Children**

*All children from preschool through fourth grade are invited to the front steps for the children's sermon.*

**Prayer of Illumination**

Speak to us this day, O Lord. Visit us with your wisdom, overshadow us with your Spirit, and let it be with us according to your Word: Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

**First Scripture Reading**

Isaiah 40:1-11

Leader: The Word of the Lord

**People: Thanks be to God.**

**\*Hymn 87 comfort, comfort now my people**

**Second Scripture Reading**

Mark 1:1-8

**Bell Anthem Bring a torch, Jeanette Isabella Cathy moklebust**

**Sermon**

**"The Beginning of the Good News"**

Rev. Dr. Brian Snyder

**Response**

**sing we now of Christmas Linda scholes**

**\*Affirmation of Faith**

*(From A Brief Statement of Faith, PCUSA)*

**We trust in Jesus Christ, fully human, fully God.**

**Jesus proclaimed the reign of God: preaching good news to the poor**

**and release to the captives, teaching by word and deed**

**and blessing the children, healing the sick**

**and binding up the brokenhearted, eating with outcasts,**

**forgiving sinners, and calling all to repent and believe the gospel.**

**Unjustly condemned for blasphemy and sedition,**

**Jesus was crucified, suffering the depths of human pain**

**and giving his life for the sins of the world.**

**God raised this Jesus from the dead, vindicating his sinless life,**

**breaking the power of sin and evil, delivering us from death to life eternal.**

**Offerings and Gifts of Self**

**Offertory**

**It Came Upon A Midnight Clear, autumn Grella, clarinet**

**\*The Doxology**

*Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow\**

Old Hundredth

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow! Praise God, all creatures here below!*

*Praise God above, ye heavenly host! Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost! Amen.*

*\*For a gender-neutral version, use hymn 607.*

**\*Prayer of Dedication**

**Pastoral Prayer and 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 forever. Amen.**

Or "Mother" or "Parent"

**Welcome and Next Steps**

**\*Closing Hymn**      **143angels from the realms of glory**

**\*Charge and Benediction**

**Choral Extrait**

**Postlude**      **lift up your head, you mighty gates , Wilbur held**

*Feel free to exit during the postlude, mindful of those who wish to stay and listen.*