

Advent 2020: Second Sunday of Advent

Sunday, December 6, 2020

Presbyterian Church of Vinton, IA

Worship Sundays at 10:30 a.m.

Rev. Jessica Crane Munoz

As we enter into worship today, you may wish to have with you the Advent kit for worship that have the symbols of Advent as well as a form of bread and drink for the time of communion.

Welcome and Announcements

Call to Worship

Music **One Small Child**

Advent Poem: Advent candle lighting poetry this year comes from the collection of poems found in *Kneeling in Bethlehem: Poetry for Advent and Christmas* by Ann Weems, Westminster/John Knox Press. Today's reading is the poem entitled "***This Year***"

I wonder if God comes to the edge of heaven each Advent and flings the Star into the December sky, laughing with joy as it lights the darkness of the earth; and the angels, hearing the laughter of God, begin to congregate in some celestial chamber to practice their alleluias.

I wonder if there's some ordering of rank among the angels as they move into procession, the seraphim bumping the cherubim from top spot, the new inhabitants of heaven standing back until they get the knack of it.

(After all, treading air over a stable and annunciating at the same time can't be all that easy!)

Or is everybody – that is, every "soul" - free to fly wherever the spirit moves?

Or do they even think about it?

Perhaps when God calls, perhaps they just come, this multitude of heavenly hosts.
Perhaps they come, winging through the winds of time
Full of expectancy
Full of hope
That this year
Perhaps this year
(perhaps)
The earth will fall on its knees in a whisper of "Peace."

Advent Candle Lighting: The Symbol of the Star

(Please turn on your tea light from your Advent bag at home or use another candle as the symbol of the light of Christ to use this season. Take out your star to reflect on the symbol that leads us to Christ.)

Today we reflect on the star. It is the star that leads us to Bethlehem. It is the stars that for millennia have led us home from long voyages and that have stayed constant in the heavens. God told Abraham that his descendants would be as plentiful as the stars in the sky. Today we understand ourselves to be those descendants, adopted into God's family through Christ Jesus.

Music **Light One Candle to Watch for the Messiah**

performed by Rob Reed: www.robreed.com

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 40:1-11

Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God.

² Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins.

³ A voice cries out: 'In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

⁴ Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low;

the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain.

⁵ Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.'

⁶ A voice says, 'Cry out!' And I said, 'What shall I cry?'

All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field.

⁷ The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the Lord blows upon it; surely the people are grass.⁸ The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand for ever.

⁹ Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings;

lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings,

lift it up, do not fear; say to the cities of Judah,

'Here is your God!'¹⁰ See, the Lord God comes with might,

and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him.¹¹ He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead the mother sheep.

Children's Message

Prayer of Praise

Loving God, you sent your prophet John to prepare your way among us, to call us to repentance and make our pathways straight. Strengthen us to live lives of steadfast love and faithfulness as we await the Messiah's return, that all may see your reign of peace through your just and gracious rule. Amen.

Music **I Wonder As I Wander**

Scripture Reading: Philippians 2:12

Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence, but much more now in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; ¹³for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

¹⁴ Do all things without murmuring and arguing, ¹⁵so that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, in which you shine like

stars in the world. ¹⁶It is by your holding fast to the word of life that I can boast on the day of Christ that I did not run in vain or labor in vain.

¹⁷But even if I am being poured out as a libation over the sacrifice and the offering of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with all of you— ¹⁸and in the same way you also must be glad and rejoice with me.

Message

Music **O Little Town of Bethlehem**

Doxology

Invitation to Offering and Offertory Prayer

We offer our lives and our labor to God. And trust that God will lead us toward right use and righteous living that we may serve the Lord God in all that we do. We do this in the recognition that all we are, and all that we will be, comes from the Lord.

Let us Pray: Eternal One, we give you thanks that in the coming of Christ your steadfast love and faithfulness have met your righteousness and peace were made flesh upon the earth. May the gifts we offer this day uplift those in need and prepare the way of your salvation. Amen.

Communion of the People:

Great Thanksgiving & Words of Institution

Partaking of the Elements

Prayer of Petition and Thanksgiving and The Lord's Prayer

As heralds of God's good tidings, let us lift our voices with strength this day, praying to the One who comforts, restores, and heals.

Let us pray for all leaders and people of the world. You, O Lord, have created one human family to live in righteousness and peace. Give us the wisdom to order our common life according to your loving purposes, that your glory may be revealed and all people shall see it.

Let us pray for the church. You have given us the gift of the Messiah so that your church may know your ways. Give us strength to follow your Son until all have come to be reconciled to you through Christ's love.

Let us pray for those who are sick, who suffer need, who are in danger. You have made us for a holy purpose, to comfort and care for each other. Give us now the compassion to care for those who are in need.

As you shone your light upon Bethlehem, may you shine your light upon us. Guide us ever more closely to you.

Through Jesus Christ, we pray: Our Father...

Benediction

May faithfulness spring from the ground and righteousness look down from heaven as you walk in the way of peace, and may the blessing of God, Eternal Majesty, Living Word, and Holy Comforter, be with you now and always.

Presbyterian Church of Vinton, Iowa

Announcements:

Do you still need an **Advent worship kit**? Let us know and we can get one to you. If you live outside of Vinton, send your address and we will put a kit in the mail to you. We will focus on a different symbol each week.

The **church office hours** are currently shortened due to Covid-19 spread in our community. Office is open Tues & Thurs 8:30-12:30 and Wed 1-5.

Services will be virtual now through December 20. Session will make a plan at their mid-December meeting regarding the Christmas eve service.

Our Christmas Dinner is now taking RSVPs for meals and is seeking volunteers. Sign up online or contact the church office. Links are at vintonpresbyterian.org. Meals are for pick-up and delivery only. Visit <https://forms.gle/uAWHrsZZT34ocEQy5> for meal sign up or call 472-3766.

Per Capita 2020 is \$38.00 per member. The church pays this to the presbytery, synod, and PCUSA on behalf of each member as part of our

commitment to the larger denominational body to support its work, mission, and ministries. For 2021, per capita will be \$38.03 per member. Thank you for helping to support this cost as part of your giving commitment.

Session will meet one week earlier in December, on December 16th at 5:30 via Zoom.

The **Hand Bell Choir** is currently practicing via Zoom on Mondays at 6 p.m.

If your **group or committee** would like or need to meet, contact Pastor Jessica and we can help you set up a virtual Zoom meeting that can be conducted by phone & internet.

For **tithes and offerings** to be counted toward 2020 giving, items must be received or postmarked on or before December 31. Our mailing address is: 608 1st Ave, Vinton, IA 52349.