



City Church  
PHILADELPHIA

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Sunday December 6, 2020  
The 2nd Sunday of Advent  
“Preparing the Way of the Lord”

## Welcome.

Thanks for joining us today for worship. City Church and Liberti Center City are partnering to offer this worship service and other online points of gathering during this season of physical distancing.

Our worship is “liturgical.” The Greek word “leitourgia” means a public work, the work of the people. Liturgical worship begins with God’s call upon us, his meeting with us, speaking among us, and ministering to us. The flow of our liturgy aims at drawing us further into the life of the Trinity and then moving us outward into our world.

Please visit our websites, [www.citychurchphilly.com](http://www.citychurchphilly.com) and [www.libertichurch.org](http://www.libertichurch.org), for more information about worship, help, and connecting during this season. We are glad you are joining us and look forward to meeting you.

— The Pastoral Staff  
*Tuck Bartholomew, Chris Currie, Scott Jennings*

## Reflection

Christians are people who wait. We live in liminal time, in the already and not yet. Christ has come, and he will come again. We dwell in the meantime. We wait. But in my daily life I've developed habits of impatience - of speeding ahead, of trying to squeeze more into my cluttered day. How can I live as one who watches and waits for the coming kingdom when I can barely wait for water to boil?

- Tish Harrison Warren, *Liturgy of the Ordinary*

## Church Calendar

### **ADVENT**

CHRISTMAS

EPIPHANY

LENT

EASTER

PENTECOST

ORDINARY TIME

Advent is a season of hopeful expectation and preparation, as the Church anticipates the coming of Christ – both at his birth in Bethlehem many years ago, and at his future, final coming to judge the world at the end of time. During Advent, we prepare our hearts for the Lord, so that when he comes, he may find us watching and waiting.

# Lighting of the Advent Wreath

*Reading:* 2 Peter 3:8-10, 13-15a

<sup>8</sup>But do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day.

<sup>9</sup>The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance. <sup>10</sup>But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and everything that is done on it will be disclosed.

<sup>13</sup>But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home. <sup>14</sup>Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish; <sup>15</sup>and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation.

This is the Word of the Lord.

**All Thanks be to God.**

*A period of silence is kept.*

Now is the time to wake out of sleep,  
**All for now our salvation is nearer  
than when we first believed!**

# Opening Song

## *Come, Light Our Hearts*

Sandra McCracken

For you, O Lord, our souls in still-ness wait, for you, O Lord, our  
souls in still-ness wait, tru-ly our hope is in you, tru-ly our hope is in you.  
O Lord of life, our on - ly hope, your rad - iance shines on all who  
O Joy a - bove all o - ther loves, in you we find more than e -  
look to you in the dark; Em - ma - nu - el, come, come light our hearts.  
nough. We come as we are, O heal and re - store, come light our hearts.

The musical score is written in G major (one flat) and 6/8 time. It consists of four staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one flat, and a 6/8 time signature. The melody is simple and melodic, with lyrics underneath. The second staff continues the melody and includes a repeat sign at the end. The third staff begins with a repeat sign and continues the melody. The fourth staff concludes the piece with a final cadence.

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## Opening of Worship

Grace, mercy, and peace  
from God our Father  
and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

**All** And also with you.

Let me hear what God the Lord will speak,  
for he will speak peace to his people,

**All** to his faithful, to those who turn to him in their hearts.

Surely his salvation is at hand for those who fear him,  
**that his glory may dwell in our land.**

Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet;  
**righteousness and peace will kiss each other.**

Faithfulness will spring up from the ground,  
**and righteousness will look down from the sky.**

The Lord will give what is good,  
**and our land will yield its increase.**

Righteousness will go before him,  
**and will make a path for his steps.**

*from Psalm 85*

## Prayer of Adoration and Invocation

### Doxology

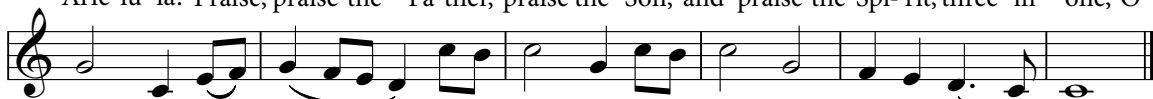
Francis of Assisi, Jonathan Gilley



1. All ye who are of ten der heart, for- giv ing oth- ers take your part. Sing his prais- es,
2. Let all things their cre - a - tor bless, and worship him with hum ble ness! O\_\_ praise him,



Alle-lu ia! Ye, who long pain and sor- row bear, praise God and on him cast your care! O  
Alle-lu ia! Praise, praise the Fa ther, praise the Son, and praise the Spi- rit, three in one, O



praise him! O\_\_ praise\_\_him! Al-le - lu - ia! Al-le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!  
praise him! O\_\_ praise\_\_him! Al-le - lu - ia! Al-le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!

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# The Word of God

*Old Testament reading: Isaiah 40:1-11*

<sup>1</sup>Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. <sup>2</sup>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.

<sup>3</sup>A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. <sup>4</sup>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. <sup>5</sup>Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken." <sup>6</sup>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. <sup>7</sup>The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the Lord blows upon it; surely the people are grass. <sup>8</sup>The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand forever.

<sup>9</sup>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!" <sup>10</sup>See, the Lord God comes with might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. <sup>11</sup>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.

This is the Word of the Lord.

**All Thanks be to God.**

GOD SPEAKS TO US  
IN HIS WORD

*In the public reading of the word of God and its exposition in the sermon, God shares the story of his saving mission in Jesus, encouraging us to join in that mission and orienting us again to his priorities.*

*Gospel reading:* Mark 1:1-8

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark.

**All Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>1</sup>The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

<sup>2</sup>As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,

“See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,  
who will prepare your way;

<sup>3</sup>the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord,  
make his paths straight,’”

<sup>4</sup>John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. <sup>5</sup>And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. <sup>6</sup>Now John was clothed with camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. <sup>7</sup>He proclaimed, “The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. <sup>8</sup>I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**All Praise to you, O Christ.**

## Reflection

*“Preparing the Way of the Lord”* – Rev. Tuck Bartholomew

## Offering and Presentation of Gifts

If you’d like to contribute to the work of either of our churches, you can do so at the addresses below or text any amount to the number 84321.

[citychurchphilly.com/give](http://citychurchphilly.com/give) or [libertichurch.org/give](http://libertichurch.org/give)



# Offertory Song

## How Can I Keep My Path

Psalm 119:9-16, Stephen Gordon



1. Oh Lord, how can I keep my path free from the stain of sin? I
2. With my whole heart I long for you; oh, let me ne-ver stray from
3. Your laws, on them I fix my mind, my eyes up-on your ways, de-
4. Your ways are ful-ly my de-light, more than sil-ver and gold. I



guard it as\_ your Word com-mands and store your truth with-in.  
per-fect laws of right-eous-ness, but let me see your face.  
ligh-ting in\_ your per-fect will, such grace for\_ all my days.  
think up-on\_ them in the night: what rich-es\_ yet un-told.



Oh, bles-sed be the God of grace that gives his Ho-ly Word! Oh,  
I fix my mind up-on your laws, my eyes up-on your ways, de-



may our hearts sing of and tell the truth we've heard.\_  
ligh-ting in\_ your will, such grace for all\_ my days.\_

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*Having offered  
ourselves up in faith  
through the creed,  
affirming the power  
of God's redemption,  
we lift up the  
church, our world,  
and other needs to  
God in prayer for  
his provision and  
healing.*

## Creed

**All** I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.

## Prayers

Lord of light, who created the heavens and earth,  
prepare our hearts this Advent season to receive you anew,  
and grant that we may rest in the comfort you offer.  
For this, O Lord, we pray:

**All** Lord, hear our prayer.

God of mercy, faithful to the faithless,  
grant peace and hope  
to the downtrodden and oppressed,  
and use us to bring justice to our broken world.  
For this, O Lord, we pray:

**All** Lord, hear our prayer.

Great Physician, comforter of the nations,  
provide healing and tender care  
to the lonely and afflicted,  
and help us better care for those in need.  
For this, O Lord, we pray:

**All** Lord, hear our prayer.

Holy Spirit, sustainer of the church,  
move in the hearts and minds  
of our brothers and sisters,  
and inspire us to be messengers of your truth and love.  
For this, O Lord, we pray:

**All** Lord, hear our prayer.

Now gathering our prayers into one, let us pray boldly as our  
Savior has taught us:

**All** 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 and ever.  
Amen.

## Confession of Sin

**All** Almighty God,  
We have been quick to despise our fellow-creatures  
and slow to extoll your goodness.  
Look upon us in mercy, not in judgement.  
Draw us from hatred to love,  
and make the frailty of our praise  
a dwelling place for your glory.

### GOD SANCTIFIES US TO HIMSELF

*Throughout Scripture, when people find themselves in God's presence, they sense how far short they fall and become aware of their own shame and brokenness. In the same way, we make a confession of sin, both as a community and also silently as individuals. In this, we remember that God is always ready, by his mercy and grace, to forgive us.*

GOD STRENGTHENS US  
AT HIS TABLE

*Communion, also called the Lord's Supper, is the family meal of Christians. We invite all baptized followers of Jesus Christ to participate. If you are not a follower of Jesus or are not prepared to share in the meal, we encourage you to spend this time in prayer. We hope this time is helpful to you as you consider your relationship with Jesus Christ and with his people, the church.*

## Words of Comfort and Assurance of Pardon

In his tender mercy, may God  
shine his light upon you who dwell in darkness  
and in the shadow of death,  
forgive you your sins,  
and guide your feet into the way of peace.

**All Amen.**

## Passing of the Peace

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**All And also with you.**

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

## Communion

The Lord be with you.

**All And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**All We lift them to the Lord.**

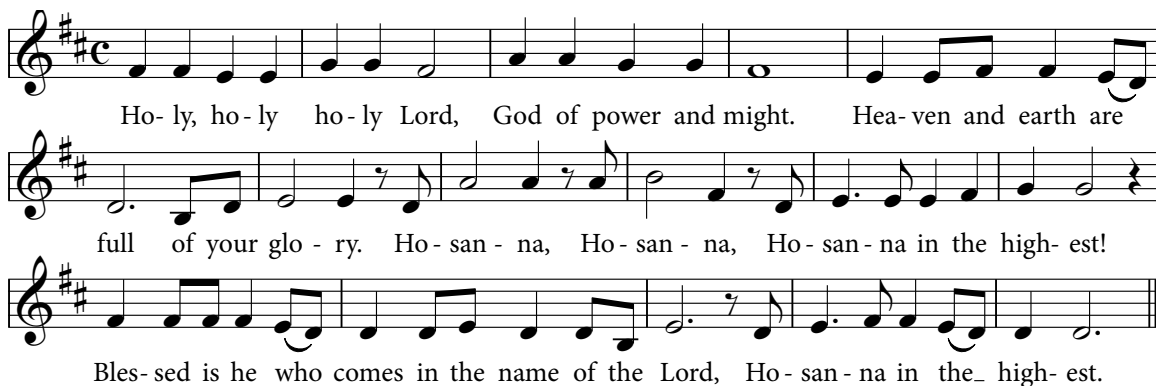
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**All It is right to give thanks and praise.**

## The Eucharistic Prayer

And now we give you thanks,  
for when your Son humbled himself to come among us in human  
flesh,  
he fulfilled the plan you formed before the foundation of the world  
to open for us the way of salvation.  
Confident that your promise will be fulfilled,  
we now watch for the day  
when Christ our Lord will come again in glory.  
And so we gladly thank you,  
with saints and angels praising you, and singing:

## Sanctus



Ho- ly, ho- ly ho- ly Lord, God of power and might. Hea- ven and earth are  
full of your glo- ry. Ho- san- na, Ho- san- na, Ho- san- na in the high- est!  
Bles- sed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, Ho- san- na in the\_ high- est.

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*The minister concludes the Eucharistic Prayer.*

Through Jesus Christ our Lord,  
with whom and in whom,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
all honor and glory are yours, O loving Father,  
for ever and ever.

**All Amen.**

*The minister speaks the Words of Institution.*

## Memorial Acclamation

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

**All Christ has died:**

**Christ is risen:**

**Christ will come again.**

Christ our Passover has been sacrificed for us.

**All Therefore, let us keep the feast.**

# Prayer after Communion

All God our savior,  
awaken us by this meal  
to the knowledge that we shall soon  
see you face to face.  
Let us remember your ways and your works  
that we may walk in the light of your coming.  
Amen.

# Blessing and Sending

*Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates*

Psalm 24, Weissel, Winkworth, Psalmodia Evangelica



1. Lift up your heads, ye might - y gates, be - hold the King\_ of\_\_  
2. The Lord is just, a help - er tried, mer - cy is ev - er\_\_  
3. Fling wide the por - tals of your heart, make it a tem - ple\_\_  
4. Re - deem - er, come! I op - en wide my heart to thee, here,



glo - ry waits, the King of kings is draw - ing\_\_  
at his side, his king - ly crown is hol - i -  
set a - part from earth - ly use for heav'n's em -  
Lord, a - bide! Let me thy in - ner pre - sence\_\_



near, the sav - ior of\_\_ the\_\_ world is here.  
ness, his scep - ter, pi - ty\_\_ in dis - tress.  
ploy, a - dorned with pray'r\_ and\_\_ love and joy.  
feel, thy grace and love\_\_ in\_\_ me re - veal!

## Benediction

May God the Father,  
who loved the world so much that he sent his only Son,  
give you grace to prepare for life eternal;  
and the blessing of God almighty,  
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,  
be among you, and remain with you always.

**All** Amen.

## Dismissal

Let us go forth to serve the world as those who love our  
Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

**All** Thanks be to God.

## Announcements

- **Join us this week in Rhythms of Renewal** as we cultivate the virtue of humility through the practice of listening. Read more at [citychurchphilly.com/rhythms](http://citychurchphilly.com/rhythms) or [libertichurch.org/rhythms](http://libertichurch.org/rhythms)
- **Advent Prayerbooks** are available at [citychurchphilly.com/advent2020](http://citychurchphilly.com/advent2020)

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Christopher McDonald: piano, voice

Jon Covert: guitar, voice

LIBERTI



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