

Pilgrim Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
The Second Sunday of Advent - Peace
December 6, 2020

Music streamed in today's service

Nun Kommt, der Heiden Heiland- JS Bach

On Jordan's Bank

Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus - PH 103 v. 2

Santa Lucia Hymn - Mairi Morrison

Bread of the World PH 283

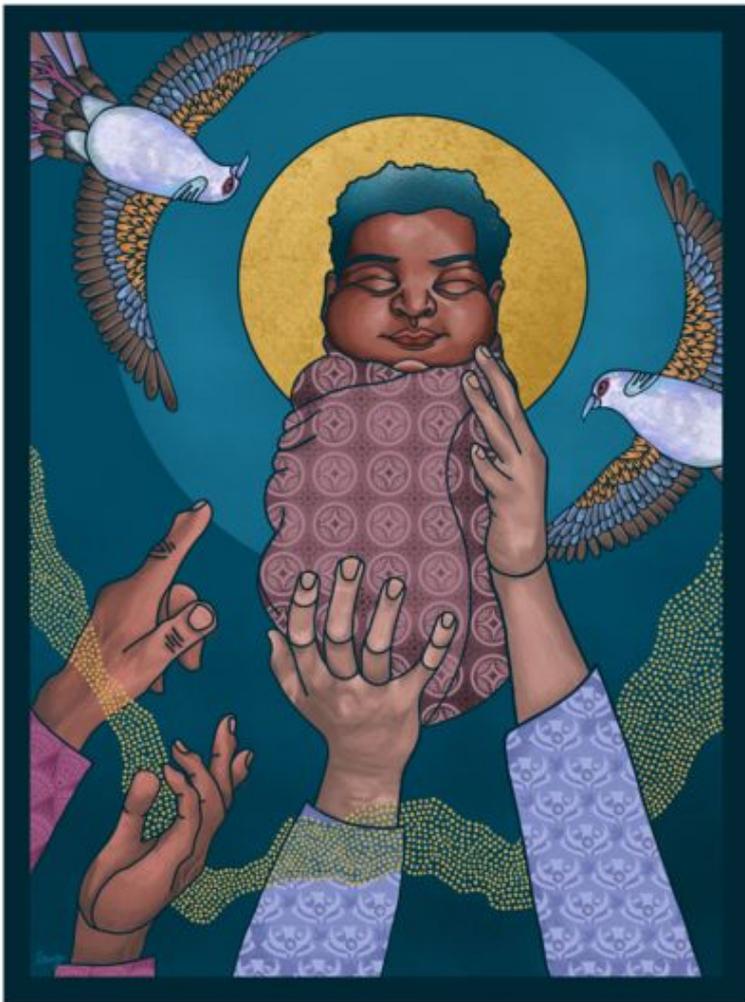
Lift Up Your Heads PH 114

Sing We Now For Christmas - Douglas E. Wagner

Today's service will be recorded.

Image: "Center Christ,"

Lauren Wright Pittman, A Sanctified Art



THOSE
WHO *prepare*
the way
DREAM
2ND sunday in advent

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Prelude	Nun Kommt, der Heiden Heiland	JS Bach
Welcome and Announcements		Rev. Reebee Kavich Girash
Call to Worship		Jeff Boehm

One: John the Baptist said, “Prepare the way.” So family of faith, how do we prepare our minds for worship?

All: We silence the inner critic. We let go of busy thoughts. We make space for God to speak.

One: How do we prepare our hearts for worship?

All: We bless all emotions. We feel what we feel. We open ourselves up to be moved.

One: How do we prepare our bodies for worship?

All: We take in the scent, sight, and feel of this moment. We breathe in God’s mercy. We exhale God’s love.

One: How do we prepare our souls for worship?

**All: We bring our full selves into this moment. We wear our hearts on our sleeves. We trust that even
Now, God is here.**

One: Family of faith, what we practice in worship, we must live out in our daily lives. So prepare the way.
Let us worship our Holy God.

Opening Hymn **On Jordan's Bank**

1 On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry
Announces that the Lord is nigh; Awake and hearken,
for he brings Glad tidings of the King of kings.

2 Then cleansed be every life from sin; make
straight the way for God within, And let each heart
prepare a home Where such a mighty guest may come.

3 For you are our salvation, Lord, Our refuge and
our great reward; Without your grace we waste away
Like flow'rs that wither and decay.

4 To heal the sick stretch out your hand, And bid the fallen
sinner stand; Shine forth and let your light restore
Earth's own true loveliness once more.

5 All praise to you, eternal Son, Whose
advent has our freedom won, Whom with the Father
we adore, And Holy Spirit, evermore.

On Jordan's Bank



1. On Jor - dan's bank the Bap - tist's cry An -
2. Then cleansed be ev - 'ry life from sin; Make
3. For you are our sal - va - tion, Lord, Our
4. To heal the sick stretch out your hand, And
5. All praise to you, e - ter - nal Son, Whose



noun - ces that the Lord is nigh; A - wake and heark - en,
straight the way for God with - in, And let each heart pre -
ref - uge and our great re - ward; With - out your grace we
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ad - vent has our free - dom won, Whom with the Fa - ther



for he brings Glad tid - ings of the King of kings.
pare a home Where such a might - y guest may come.
waste a - way Like flow'rs that with - er and de - cay.
light re - store Earth's own true love - li - ness once more.
we a - dore, And Ho - ly Spir - it, ev - er - more.

Text: *Jordanis oras praevia*; Charles Coffin, 1676–1749; tr. by John Chandler, 1806–1876, alt.
Tune: WINCHESTER NEW, LM; adapt. from *Musikalisches Handbuch*, Hamburg, 1690

Advent Candle Lighting -- Doug Johnston, Susan Fagerstrom, and Julia Johnston

A: I dream of long bike rides on crisp fall days.

B: I dream of preparing meals with my mom, and altering the recipes.

A: I dream of spirited banter on family game nights.

B: I dream of escaping for hours in favorite books.

A: I dream of fresh tracks through tight trees on powder mornings.

B: These are beautiful dreams, but I also have urgent dreams.

A: I dream of conversations across party lines.

B: I dream of more bridges and less walls.

A: I dream of more laughter and less fear.

B: I dream of more listening and less tears.

A: But most of all, I dream of peace like a river.

B: Today we light the candle of peace.

B: May it remind us that there is another way. Amen.

Advent Candle Song Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus - PH 103 v. 2

- 2 Israel's strength and consolation,
Hope of all the earth thou art;
Dear desire of every nation,
Joy of every longing heart.

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

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STUTTGART 8.7.8.7.

Charles Wesley, 1707-1788, alt.

Melody attr. to Christian F. Will, 1660-1716

"Psalmodia Sacra," Gotha, 1715

1 Come, thou long-ex-pect-ed Je-sus, Born to set thy peo-ple free;
2 Is-rael's strength and con-so-la-tion, Hope of all the earth thou art;
3 Born thy peo-ple to de-liv-er, Born a child, and yet a king,
4 By thine own e-ter-nal Spir-it Rule in all our hearts a-lone;

From our fears and sins re-lease us; Let us find our rest in thee.
Dear de-sire of ev-ery na-tion, Joy of ev-ery long-ing heart.
Born to reign in us for-ev-er, Now thy gra-cious king-dom bring.
By thine all-suf-fi-cient mer-it Raise us to thy glo-rious throne. A-men.

ADVENT

Prayer of Illumination

The Ven. Pat Zifcak

God of Peace, We must admit, there are a million things on our minds.
We would like to be as focused as John the Baptist—preparing the way,
gathering the crowd,
spreading the word of your arrival.
Maybe then we'd know peace.
However, more often than not, we are a swirling compilation of grocery lists,
text messages, e-mails, and over-referenced to-do lists.
So today, we ask for your help in preparing the way.
Could you start with our ears, and then maybe move to our hearts?
We'd like to hear you more clearly.
Maybe then we'll know peace.
Gratefully we pray,
Amen.

The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. ²As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,

‘See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way;
³the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:
“Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight” ’,

⁴John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵And 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. ⁶Now John was clothed with camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷He 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. ⁸I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.’

Sermon The Ven. Pat Zifcak

Passing the Peace Sarah Fuller

Prayers of the People Rev. Reebee Girash

Pastoral Prayer

Invitation to the Offering Sarah Fuller

Offertory Max Evrard

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Prayer of Dedication Sarah Fuller

Almighty God, as John the Baptist identified the arrival of the Messiah, this Advent season, that role falls on us. As we bring our tithes and offerings to you, we pray that our giving continues to point to the Christ who comes in love and compassion, with more concern for those who don't have enough and little concern that those who have so much will get more. May our giving in this season reflect our hope for a new kind of reign in our world. We pray this in the name of the Messiah, Jesus our Savior. Amen.



Reginald Heber, 1783-1826

EUCCHARISTIC HYMN 9.8.9.8.

J. S. B. Hodges, 1830-1915

1 Bread of the world in mercy broken,
Wine of the soul, in mercy shed,
By whom the words of life were spoken,
And in whose death our sins are dead.

1 Bread of the world, in mer - cy bro - ken, Wine of the
2 Look on the heart by sor - row bro - ken, Look on the

2 Look on the heart by sorrow broken,
Look on the tears by sinners shed;
And be thy feast to us the token
That by thy grace our souls are fed. Amen.

soul, in mer - cy shed, By whom the words of life were spo - ken,
tears by sin - ners shed, And be thy feast to us the to - ken

And in whose death our sins are dead,
That by thy grace our souls are fed. A - men.

The Sacrament of Communion

The Service of Communion

Our service of communion is open to all who wish to participate. The sacrament is a gift from God; there are no requirements of age or church membership. Today's Communion Liturgy draws upon the Liturgy of the Outdoor Church of Cambridge.

Welcome

Jeff Boehm and Rev. Reebee Girash

Jesus said, "Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me;

for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls for my yoke is easy and my burden light.

Loving God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid. Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and ever praise your holy Name; through Christ our Savior. Amen.

Most loving and gracious God, forgive us our sins; those we commit knowingly, and those we do without knowing how we have hurt others. Open our hearts to hear your truth, to understand our mistakes, to receive your love, that in all we do and all we say, we may bring praise to your name and love, justice, and compassion to our neighbors. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

The Prayer of Reconciliation

Rev. Reebee Girash

God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference. Amen.

God's grace, mercy, and forgiveness be within us. God's love fill our hearts and strengthen us that we may fulfill the work we have been given to do: to love one another and to do justice and be merciful in the world. Amen.

Christ is with us.

Let us open our hearts to God and to one another.

Let us give thanks to God with joy.

Most generous, self giving God, we celebrate your gift of creation, and we thank you for your constant love for all you have made. Your breath gives us life; you call us into new life. You did not reject us when we rejected you, but you delivered us from separation and death to a joyful life in communion with you and all your creatures.

On the night before he died, Jesus was at table with his friends. He took bread, and when he had given thanks to You, he broke it, gave it to them and said, "Take, eat: this is my Body which is broken for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, "this cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

Remembering Christ's life and death, proclaiming Christ's resurrection, awaiting Christ's coming in glory, we offer you ourselves in praise and thanksgiving. Celebrating your boundless love for us in Jesus Christ, we offer you these gifts. Bless them by your Holy Spirit that they may be for us the holy food and drink of new and unending life in Christ. Pour your Spirit on us, that we may know Christ in the breaking of bread, and that in word and deed we may be bearers of your love, peace, and justice in the world.

At the end of this life, unite us with all your saints, past, present and yet to come, in life everlasting, that we may praise your Name forever.

All praise to you Eternal God, in Jesus Christ, who lives among us, and the Holy Spirit who binds us together in love. Everyone say, AMEN!

The Lord's Prayer (in unison)

Our Father (Creator), 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.

The Sharing of the Bread and Cup

The gifts of God for the people of God!

You are invited to participate in Communion at home.

Post-Communion Prayer

Rev. Reebee Girash

Let us pray. Holy, gracious and loving God, you have drawn us to your heart, and nourished us at your table with holy food and drink, the body and Blood of Christ. Now send us forth to be your people in the world, and to proclaim your truth, this day and evermore. Amen.

Closing Hymn Lift Up Your Heads PH 114

- 1 Lift up your heads, ye mighty gates;
Behold, the King of glory waits!
The King of kings is drawing near;
The Savior of the world is here.
- 2 Fling wide the portals of your heart;
Make it a temple, set apart
From earthly use for heaven's employ,
Adorned with prayer and love and joy.
- 3 Redeemer, come! I open wide
My heart to thee; here, Lord, abide!
Let me thy inner presence feel;
Thy grace and love in me reveal.
- 4 So come, my Sovereign; enter in!
Let new and nobler life begin;
Thy Holy Spirit guide us on,
Until the glorious crown be won. Amen.

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Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates

Based on Psalm 24
Georg Weissel, 1500-1635
Tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827-1878

TRURO L.M.
Thomas Williams', "Psalmodia Evangelica," 1780

1 Lift up your heads, ye might - y gates; Be - hold the
2 Fling wide the por - tals of your heart; Make it a
3 Re - deem - er, come! I o - pen wide My heart to
4 So come, my Sov - ereign; en - ter in! Let new and

King of glo - ry waits! The King of kings is
tem - ple, set a - part From earth - ly use for
thee; here, Lord, a - bid! Let me thy in - ner
no - bler life be - gin; Thy Ho - ly Spir - it

draw - ing near; The Sav - ior of the world is here.
heaven's em - ploy, A - dorned with prayer and love and joy.
pres - ence feel; Thy grace and love in me re - veal.
guide us on, Un - til the glo - rious crown be won. A - men.

Sending Forth

The Ven. Pat Zifcak

Benediction

Rev. Reebee Girash

Postlude

Sing We Now of Christmas

Douglas E. Wagner

Source Notes: The prayer of Dedication is from the Discipleship Ministries of the United Methodist Church. All the other prayers today are by Sarah Are | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org and are part of Sanctified Art's Advent and Christmas 2020 materials. The artwork used in the bulletin is from the same package.

Welcome to Our Guest Preacher Today!

The Ven. Pat Zifcak is Archdeacon for Formation in the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts and is one of the ministers who serves the Outdoor Church in Cambridge. Today she will be preaching from her experience with the Outdoor Church.

Pat joined the staff of St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Brookline in September of 2017 as deacon of the congregation. As a deacon, her focus in ministry is the connection of church and world as the gifts of one and the needs of the other become known through intentional relationships.

Pat has been a teacher all her life and spent thirty-two years teaching physical education at The Park School in Brookline. In those years, she developed a program of “growth education”, counseled children and their parents as they prepared to leave Park for secondary school, coached a variety of sports, and directed the Summer at Park swim programs. Teaching with her daughter, Dana, for many years in the same department was a unique and wonderful experience.

Pat has an M.Ed in Health Education and her M.Div. from Andover Newton. She is Archdeacon for Formation in the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts and coordinates the program of formation for deacons.

She and her partner, Bruce, live in Pawtucket, R.I.