



“Promises Unfold: Promises of Love” 2nd Sunday in Advent December 6, 2020

WELCOME

Thank you for worshipping with us today!

If you have an email address and want to be on POP’s weekly announcement list, please let the church office know. You can find worship each week at <https://princeofpeace-er.org/podcasts/>.

DVD’s of the previous Sunday’s worship are available by contacting the church office at 715-479-9263.

If you would like to support the mission of Prince of Peace so that we can continue worship, community outreach, and other ministries, you can give any amount by cash, check, online, through the Give+ app by Vanco, or by sending a text to 833-394-7887 (text your dollar amount and follow the prompts). Thank you for your generosity.

ORDER OF SERVICE *The assembly speaks the bold verses*

Preparing for Worship

As you enter this time of worship and sanctuary, you are invited to rest and prepare to receive.

Quiet your mind.

Trust in God. Trust Christ. Trust in the Spirit.

Find a comfortable position and place to just “be.”

Breathe in God’s goodness . . . let go of your “to do” lists.

Breathe in God's grace . . . let go of anxiety and fear.
Breathe in God's abundant love . . . let go of self-doubt.

Be opened to abide in God's loving arms.

Music "We Light a Candle" (vs. 2) – Richard Bruxvoort Colligan

We light a candle for love
And our world that's longing for love
We light a candle for love
And our world that's longing for love Holy One,
Shine with the fire of our lives, oh
We lights a candle for love
And our world that's longing for love.

Advent Candle Lighting

I used to think love was a feeling. That was before I knew that love is a fire—
unquenchable and bright.
That was before I knew that love is a river—forging paths where none have gone before.
That was before I knew that love is a song—etching its melody into my memory.
I used to think that I had to find love for it to find me.
But that was before I knew that love is that which breathes us into beginning.
That was before I knew that love had already found me, never letting me go.

Friends, today we light the candle of love as a reminder
that it is from love that we are made,
it is in love that we are raised,
and it is for love that we are sent.

Light the first and second candles on your Advent wreath or any candle or flashlight you have at home.

You were made from love
to be love,
to give love.
Draw near to God because God, who is love,
has and will always draw near to you. **Amen.**

Music "We Light a Candle" (verse 2) – Richard Bruxvoort Colligan

We light a candle for love
And our world that's longing for love
We light a candle for love
And our world that's longing for love Holy One,
Shine with the fire of our lives, oh
We lights a candle for love
And our world that's longing for love.

Advent Prayer

God of mystery and miracles,
Your Word brings light into the dark places of our lives;
Your presence gives us strength to endure
when we are pushed beyond our own strength.

You find us in our lostness and,
with love beyond our imagining,
you lead us home.

All this you offer in and through Jesus Christ.
Yet, we resist you.
We resist loosening our tight grip on our lives.
We hesitate to trust you
for you may lead us where we do not want to go.

You know the places in our hearts
and in our minds
where we are well-defended
against your intrusions.

In this season of longing,
grant us grace to bring all that we are to you, O Christ
— all the broken places
— all the lost wanderings
— all the weariness from trying to live lives that are pleasing to you.

Hold them all in the fullness of your love.
Then, be born in us, that we may find our home,
our life, our joy
in You, Lord of light and love. **Amen.**

Joel 2:12-13, 28-29

¹²Yet even now, says the Lord,
return to me with all your heart,
with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;

¹³rend your hearts and not your clothing.

Return to the Lord, your God,
for he is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love,
and relents from punishing.

²⁸Then afterward

I will pour out my spirit on all flesh;
your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,
your old men shall dream dreams,
and your young men shall see visions.

²⁹Even on the male and female slaves,
in those days, I will pour out my spirit.

Music *Once in Royal David's City – David Doty*

Once in royal David's city stood a lowly cattle shed,
Where a mother laid her baby in a manger for his bed:
Mary was that mother mild, Jesus Christ, her little child.

He came down to earth from heaven who is God and Lord of all,
And his shelter was a stable, and his cradle was a stall;
With the poor and meek and lowly, lived on earth our Savior holy.

And our eyes at last shall see him, through his own redeeming love;
For that child so dear and gentle is our Lord in heav'n above;
And he leads his children on to the place where he is gone.

Not in that poor lowly stable, with the oxen standing by,
We shall see him; but in heaven, set at God's right hand on high;
When like stars his children crowned all in white shall wait around.

Sermon

Pastor Andrea Fluegel

Advent Poetry Prayers *Draw Near to Love* - adapted from poetry by Sarah Are

I know love's real,
for I have felt it in my bones
the way cold air finds my lungs
and music finds my memories—
certainly and entirely.

And I know winter is real,
for I have worn grief like a blanket—
A blanket of what once was,
covering my bony elbows
and forgotten smile lines.

Somewhere in between
those certain realities,
I find myself wishing on shooting stars
and wondering if they were the same ones
that Jesus slept under.
I find myself whistling, "O come, O come, Emmanuel,"
followed shortly by, "All is calm, all is bright."

It's the melodic rotation I live in—
Joy and doubt.
Light and night.
Love and grief.
You alone and you with me.

So I'll never stop waiting for Christmas.
Every day I'll rise with the sun
and pray that today it will be Christmas again,
that today will be a day when you are here,
when you are near me,
when the blanket is ripped away to reveal the light
and my smile lines have reason to bow again.

Then the stars fall,
the sun rises,
and in my heart of hearts,
I know it is.
For ever since that day
so many moons ago,
nothing has been able to separate us from
your love.

And so I say—
I know love's real,
for I have felt it in my bones.
All is calm. All is bright.

Music ***"Silent Night, Holy Night!" - #281***

Silent night, holy night!
All is calm, all is bright
round yon virgin mother and child.
Holy Infant, so tender and mild,
sleep in heavenly peace,
sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight;
glories stream from heaven afar,
heav'nly hosts sing, alleluia!
Christ, the Savior, is born!
Christ, the Savior, is born!

Silent night, holy night!
Son of God, love's pure light
radiant beams from your holy face,
with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

Prayer Conversation

“But what does love look like?” I asked. God said, “I love you when I open the shutters to let the light in. And I love you when I wander through the hallways of your mind, whistling love songs to keep nightmares at bay. And I love you when I kneel in your garden and pull the weeds that try to strangle you so that you can grow nothing but wildflowers for days. And I love you when I brush the dust off your piano keys and stairwells so that you can once again open up your heart to another, and maybe even invite them in to dance.” I whispered to God, “I don’t think I’m very good at that.” Then God said, “It’s ok. Sometimes your heart is full of dust, and your home is full of hatred, and the garden soil is so rocky that not a single bit of new life can grow. But I love you anyhow, and I will never leave you. So when you aren’t sure, listen for my lullaby. Look for the wildflowers. I am there. I am always in the hallways of your heart. That is love. I just can’t leave you alone.”

Prayers of the People

Music *“If in Your Heart” - Ana Hernandez*

**If in your heart you make a manger for his birth,
then God will once again become a child on earth.**

God of power and might, tear open the heavens and come quickly to this weary world. Hear our prayers for everyone in need.

Lord, we have pulled out the Advent wreath,
the Christmas tree, the poinsettias.
We dusted off the hymns, unsung for a year,
and unearthed the words of your prophets.

Yet, in your eyes, these efforts are for nothing without the regular, persistent,
deep pursuit of justice for all people.
Our efforts are hollow without consistent work toward peace,
reconciliation, and participation in your mission for creation.

In our hearts, we do long to be your people,
to carry out your mission, to be lights in the darkness—
proof that no darkness can overcome your truth.

Awaken us to action. Stir us to courage.
Rouse us to prepare a way in the wilderness for your coming,
clearing the brush of oppression, racism, injustice, and hopelessness—
so that all may see your light and perceive your coming.

**If in your heart you make a manger for his birth,
then God will once again become a child on earth.**

Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming strengthen us to serve you with purified lives; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Faithful God, you teach us to wait for you with faithfulness and patience. Sustain and support us in our doubts and questions. Nurture our faith as we discern and enact your mission.

Tender God, you know sorrow and joy alike. We pray for those in our families, congregation and community who are not joyful in this holiday season. Comfort those who grieve, be a companion to all who are lonely, tend those who are sick or struggling with depression, and gather all people in your healing embrace.

**If in your heart you make a manger for his birth,
then God will once again become a child on earth.**

Loving Lord, when we have strayed, you have called us to come home to you. "Return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; rend your hearts and not your clothing." With all our hearts we return to you, and gratefully accept your gentle love, for the sake of the one whose spirit lives in us, Jesus Christ our loving savior.

We now name all the people, places and circumstances on our hearts and minds . . .

We give thanks for the lives and witness of those who died while waiting for justice, peace, or healing, those whose names we know and those whose names are known only to you. Sustain all who still yearn for the completion of your redeeming work.

Draw near to us, O God, and receive our prayers for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

**If in your heart you make a manger for his birth,
then God will once again become a child on earth.**

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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us;
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.**

Music *"It Came upon the Midnight Clear" - #282 (vs. 1, 2 & 4)*

It came upon the midnight clear,
that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth
to touch their harps of gold:
"Peace on the earth, good will to all,

from heav'n's all-gracious king."
The world in solemn stillness lay
to hear the angels sing.
Still through the cloven skies they come
with peaceful wings unfurled,
and still their heav'nly music floats
o'er all the weary world.
Above its sad and lowly plains
they bend on hov'ring wing,
and ever o'er its babel sounds
the blessed angels sing.

For lo! The days are hast'ning on,
by prophets seen of old,
when with the ever-circling years
shall come the time foretold,
when peace shall over all the earth
its ancient splendors fling,
and all the world give back the song
which now the angels sing.

Blessing and Sending

God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,
God of the wilderness wanderings,
God of the prophets and messengers,
God of the exiled and weary,
God of grace and love,
Bless you now and forever.
☩ In the name of the Son, waiting to be born
To bring hope into the darkness,
Jesus Christ our Lord
through the gift of the Holy Spirit,
One God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Why are we waiting?

For the coming of Jesus.

How are we waiting?

With patience and hope.

Go in peace. Soon and very soon we are going to see the King.

Thanks be to God.

Blessing and Sending

God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,
God of the wilderness wanderings,
God of the prophets and messengers,
God of the exiled and weary,
God of grace and love,

Bless you now and forever.
✘ In the name of the Son, waiting to be born,
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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Advent Sunday Worship

We continue our Advent worship experience. You are encouraged to participate by lighting your own Advent wreath, candles, or even flashlights (if no candles available). We will continue looking at how God's promises unfold in our lives through the words of the prophets like Isaiah, Joel, and the story of Daniel. We will conclude Advent with Mary's song and her visit to her cousin Elizabeth.

Love Lights

Prince of Peace has the Advent tradition of lighting a Love Lights Tree. The Love Lights Tree provides an opportunity for individuals to honor their loved ones by making a donation to the Prince of Peace Endowment Fund. Donors may sponsor an ornament on the Love Lights Tree as a memorial or tribute to an individual who has touched their life. Traditionally, the Love Light Tree has been placed in the sanctuary and lit at the end of worship during Advent. This year the ornaments will be hung in the windows of the Fellowship Hall and will be lit up at night. We encourage you to drop by to view the Love Light ornaments from the parking lot. You can donate to Love Lights by contacting the church office at 715-479-9263.

Christmas Worship Experiences

Mark your calendars. There will be three different Christmas worship experiences for you to participate in this season. Prince of Peace will have an **outdoor Christmas Eve service with candlelight at 4:30 p.m.** on the front lawn of the church. Due to rising numbers of COVID-19, we will keep socially distant and masked. This will be a 30-minute worship experience. You are welcome to bring your own chair or participate in your car. In addition, there will be a **Northern Great Lakes Synod Christmas Worship Service** on the Synod YouTube channel. We will provide a link closer to Christmas. DVDs will be available. This worship service will also be broadcasted on Marquette Channel 6 television station. Prince of Peace has worked in conjunction with Channel 6 and the Synod office to produce this worship experience for the Upper Peninsula and Northern Wisconsin. The third option is an audio-only, **Christmas radio play**. This will be available on the church website and on the Gathered and Sent podcast on Apple Podcast, iTunes, Google Play, Spotify, Alexa, Amazon Music, and other podcast platforms.

Volunteer for Snow Shoveling

As the seasons change, we are in need of individuals to volunteer to help clear snow from entryways, walkways, and emergency exits at Prince of Peace. Sign Up for a week on the church website or by contacting the church office. If you have questions you can contact the church office or a member of the Property Team.

Volunteer for the Weekend Backpack Program

Please sign up to help with the Weekend Backpack Program. Volunteers are needed weekly to continue this ministry. Contact the church office or visit the website to sign up. We are feeding 133 children each week through this program plus are feeding an additional 100 children through in-school pantries!

Worship DVDs

DVD's of the previous Sunday's worship are now available at POP! They can be mailed or scheduled for pick up by contacting the church office via telephone (715-479-9263).

Return to Phase 1

The Prince of Peace Council has decided to return back to Phase 1 due to the rising number of positive COVID-19 cases and deaths in Vilas and Oneida Counties as well as the number of students being quarantined due to close contact with a positive case in the Northland Pines School District. This means that we are suspending the limited communion worship for the meantime and reducing the number of volunteers for the Backpack Program and for other essential functions of the church. The Church Council continues to reassess what is happening in our local community on a frequent basis. The Oneida and Vilas Health Departments are strongly encouraging people to limit contact with people outside their immediate household, wear face masks/coverings, wash hands, and keep at least 6 feet (or more) distance from others if you need to go outside of your household unit.

CURRENT PHASE: 1

- Fully digital worship and fellowship
- Critical staff and volunteers by invitation-only access to building
- All in-person activities suspended and moved to digital format where possible
- Visitors must wear a facemask and may not enter the building



MISSION STATEMENT

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church is a community who believes in God's love, knows Jesus as Savior, and is blessed by the presence of the Holy Spirit.

Thankful for these gifts, we gather to pray and praise, explore God's Word and its meaning for our lives, strengthen each other in our witness, and serve each other and our neighbors in the world.

VISION STATEMENT

Gathered by Grace ~ Sent to serve.
*Core Values: Spirituality, Community,
Grace, Helping Others, Creativity.*

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