

God of laughter, God of open front doors and family reunions, we confess that we often doubt good news. We move through this world waiting for the other shoe to drop, waiting for life to fall apart, waiting for our humanity to get the best of us. Instead of leaning into joy, we lean into scarcity. We lean into fear. We lean into isolation. Forgive us for forgetting that joy is amplified when shared. Heal the wounds we have from past hurts, and teach us how to throw open our doors like Elizabeth. Show us how to find joy in connection. Amen.

Declaration of Forgiveness

Leader: Faith family, I imagine that when we come before God with the truth of our lives, God meets us like Elizabeth meets Mary in our scripture today. The door is thrown open. There is laughter. There is joy. There is embracing — and it is holy. So trust this; believe this: We are claimed. We are loved. We are forgiven. And we are sent to serve. Find joy in that.

People: **Thanks be to God. Amen!**

*Congregational Response “Glory to God in the Highest” back cover hymnal

*Passing of the Peace

Prayer for Illumination

First Reading Isaiah 40:1-11

Anthem “In the Heavens Shone a Star” (Kalinga Melody)

Second Reading Luke 1:24-45

Message “The Joy of Connection” Rev. Wil Reinowski

*Hymn “I Can Celebrate You” Strickland, Holtz

*Affirmation of Faith (Unison):

We believe that joy is a sacred gift, existing on a plane deeper than happiness, stemming from the truth that we belong to God. We believe that joy is not meant for isolation. Joy is meant to be shared, weaving us together in laughter and in hope. And when joy feels impossibly out of reach, we believe that part of being a sacred community is leaning on one another. So together we say: I will share my joy when yours runs out. You will share your joy when mine runs out. And in doing so, we will both see God. Amen.

*Congregational Response “Gloria Patri” (back cover Hymnal)

Prayers of the People

The Lord’s Prayer

Invitation to Offering

The offering basket is located at the back of the west aisle of the sanctuary. Feel free to leave your offering at any time.

Offertory “Carol of the Bells” (P. Fey)

*Doxology 606

*Prayer of Dedication (Unison):

God of all righteousness, receive these gifts of gratitude, the offerings of our lives. Purify them with your refining fire so that they may serve your purposes and shine with your glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*Hymn “My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout” 100

*Benediction

Postlude “Fanfare on Joy to the World” (P. Fey)

** Please stand as you are able.*



Advent at Central

December 15, 10:15 a.m.

A Journey to Joy

The Choirs and Bell Choirs of Central and First Christian Church

December 22, 10:00 a.m.

Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 24, 7:00 p.m.

Christmas Eve

Candlelight Service of Lessons and Carols

In Our Prayers ✨

We pray for Lou Camilotto for health concerns. We pray for our Special Care Friends Norma Doyle and George & Loretta Evans.

Central Happenings

SUNDAY – December 8

10:00 a.m. Worship (Sanctuary/Online)
11:00 a.m. Congregational Meeting (Sanctuary)
3:00 p.m. Youth Group (Youth Room)

TUESDAY – December 10

6:00 p.m. Advent Art Class (Fitch Parlor)

WEDNESDAY – December 11

10:00 a.m. WOW (Fitch Parlor)
12:00pm Charity Knitters (Discipleship)
5:30pm Bell Choir Rehearsal (Sanctuary)

THURSDAY – December 12

10:00am Library Team (Fitch Parlor)

SATURDAY – December 14

9:00 a.m. Jubilee Christmas

Cover image: “Two Mothers”, by Rev. Nicolette Peñaranda. Inspired by Luke 1:46-55. Acrylic, ink, and mixed media on wood panel.

Liturgy adapted from the Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org.

Pastor: Wil Reinowski
Adult Handbells: Janice Spitalniak
Director of Contemporary Music: Paul Foster
Organist: Doug Fletcher
Custodian: Bob Hill
Administrator & Christian Educator: Jennifer Shook

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Central Presbyterian Church

Second Sunday of Advent

How does a weary world rejoice?

Sunday, December 8, 2024



Welcome

Prelude

“Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus”

(P. Manz)

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Response

“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” (v. 2)

88

*Hymn

“The First Nowell”

147

Call to Confession

Chip Goldsberry

Prayer of Confession (Unison)

Central Happenings

A congregational meeting is called immediately following worship today. The purpose is to elect officers and to approve the terms of call for Pastor Wil. Please plan to stay for this short but vital meeting.

Learn more about the artwork featured in our Advent Series, *How does a weary world rejoice?* this Tuesday in Fitch Parlor – 6:00 p.m. for fellowship and seasonal refreshments; class begins at 6:30 p.m.

The choirs and bell choirs of Central and First Christian Churches will offer music of the Season, entitled *A Journey to Joy* on December 15 at 10:15 a.m. We look forward to sharing the season of Advent with our siblings in Christ.

The Shepherds' Run is back! December 22 at 11:00 a.m. we will assemble baskets of goodies to take to fire, police and emergency rooms to thank them for watching over us on Christmas Eve. Donations of *individually wrapped* treats (jerky, crackers, cookies) or money to purchase snacks can be placed at the back of the sanctuary by December 17. Questions: contact Becky Stoupe at 620-899-0750. Let's let our local first responders know we are grateful for their vigilance.

Our friends at A Sanctified Art have provided a special e-reader version of this year's Advent devotional, which you can access on your computer and mobile devices: <https://online.flippingbook.com/view/136123036/> To protect their work, please refrain from sharing this link or posting it on social media.

Jubilee Christmas is this Saturday, December 14 at 9:00 a.m. Thank you to all you volunteers and shoppers!

The Christmas Joy offering [one of four annual special offerings by PC(USA)] aids current and retired pastors in need and develops future leaders at Presbyterian related schools and colleges. Please mark your checks "Christmas Joy" on the memo line. Donations are being accepted through 12/31.

Church Officer Nominations

Class of 2027

Elder

J.P. Clauson

Deacons

Frank Donaldson

Shirley Bosler

Deb Hester

Nominating Committee (1 year term)

Betty Stoddart

Sue Graham