

# The Worship of God

GINTER PARK BAPTIST CHURCH

Zoom Meeting ID: 834 854 376 Password: GPBC • 6100 Chamberlayne Road, Richmond VA

Third Sunday of Advent • December 12, 2021 • 10:30 AM

## GATHERING & REFLECTING IN SILENCE (10:20 AM)

*We have lit the first two candles, one for hope and one for peace. Today we light the third candle, the candle of joy. This should be the easy one, because joy is all around us—in the children, the lights, the music, the gathering together. But how often do we let our preparations—or our memories—push joy to the side? Joy is like an underground spring that wells up within us, but joy is also a choice, an attitude. Like a muscle, it needs to be exercised. So today we open ourselves to joy, rejoicing in God's good will for all creation and opening ourselves to God's gentle, transforming love. May God fill us with the kind of joy that cannot be contained but must be shared.*

## COLLECT (10:30 AM)

In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord,  
**make straight in the desert a highway for our God.** (Isaiah 40:3)

## CHIMING THE SEASON

### ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING

Gordon & Dixie Leathers

### SCRIPTURE

Zephaniah 3:14-20

One: The Word of God for the People of God.

**Many: Thanks be to God.**

### HYMN

“O Come, Advent”

VENI EMMANUEL

**O come to us like joy of heaven's dawn,  
From Mary's womb a faithful paragon  
Brought forth into this world by love's power  
Your Spirit through her labors in that hour**

**Rejoice, rejoice!  
Emmanuel shall come to us  
And all things shall be well**

### LITANY OF JOY

One: In this season of Advent, we celebrate God's joy.

**Many: Knowing that Christ is coming, to bring healing and wholeness to the world, is a source of genuine delight!**

One: When we gather for worship it is a celebration, an opportunity to rejoice in all that God is doing among us and beyond us.

**Many: Our lives are marked by laughter and friendship as we love our neighbors with wide smiles and open arms.**

One: Even when we face difficulty and trouble we sing a song of faith, confident that Jesus is able to redeem our suffering world.

**Many: Together, we are a sign of God's joy for the world.**

One: Let us light this third candle of Advent, a candle of Joy.

*(We light the third candle in our Advent wreaths.)*

One: Let this candle of Advent Joy shine in our hearts all week to remind us to pray and praise and place Christ at the center this season.

### HYMN OF ADVENT #148 (STANZAS 1 & 2)

“O Come, All Ye Faithful”

ADESTE FIDELES

### SHARING OF JOYS & CONCERNS

### PRAYER LITANY

Keene Irwin

One: Lord, you have told us that when we feed and welcome and take care of those in need,

**Many: we are ministering to you.**

One: We pray today for the children of Ginter Park Elementary School who participate in the Weekend Backpack Program.

**Many:** We pray for their families and the challenges they face.

**One:** Today we bring these books and pray that they will encourage in these children the joy of reading and the love of learning.

**Many:** Inspire their bright minds to reach ever higher. Enfold them in the warmth of your love.

**One:** We pray today for the men and women who are blessed by the ministries of the Oregon Hill Baptist Center.

**Many:** We pray for them and those who love them and the challenges they face.

**One:** Today we bring these snack bags and pray that they will serve as a reminder to those who receive them that they are surrounded by a community of care.

**Many:** Comfort and strengthen them in their struggles. Enfold them in the warmth of your love.

**One:** Lead us always to find ways to share your love with those around us.

**Many:** From the schoolhouse to the alleyways, may we do as much for these as we would do for you.

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

### THE LORD'S PRAYER (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. Amen.**

### CONGREGATIONAL ANTHEM

“Blessed Be the God of Israel”

MERLE'S TUNE

**Blessed the God of Israel,  
who comes to set us free,  
who visits and redeems us  
and grants us liberty.  
The prophets spoke of mercy,  
of freedom and release;  
God shall fulfill the promise  
to bring our people peace.**

**Now from the house of David  
a child of grace has come,  
a Savior who will lead us  
to our eternal home.  
Before him goes the herald,  
forerunner in the way,  
the prophet of salvation,  
the harbinger of day.**

**On all by death imprisoned  
the sun begins to rise,  
the dawning of forgiveness  
upon the sinner's eyes,  
to guide the feet of pilgrims  
along the paths of peace;  
O bless our God and Savior  
with songs that never cease!**

### SCRIPTURE

John 1:1-18

### SERMON

“And Dwelt Among Us”

Mark Biddle

### TIME OF REFLECTION & RESPONSE

“Joy to the World”

*ar.r Horn*

*The candle of Advent joy shines. In its light, let us turn our worries into prayers for God to be present to us right now, as we prepare for the coming of Christ. You are invited to write down your thoughts to take with you or to place in the offering plate along with your financial gifts to the kingdom building work of this congregation.*

### CLOSING HYMN #121

“Prepare the Way of the Lord”

PREPARE THE WAY

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sheryl Johnson

### BENEDICTION

**One:** Rejoice in God always, and again I say, rejoice. For God has created you with the capacity for joy.

**Many:** We will find what makes us joyful, and make that our gift to the world.

**One:** Trust in God's good will for all of creation and open yourself to God's gentle, transforming love.

**Many:** We will welcome new possibilities in our lives. We will offer ourselves to God's goodness.  
We will go forth in hope, and peace, and joy.

### PASSING OF THE PEACE

**One:** The peace of Christ is with you.

**Many:** And also with you.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### ADVENT COMPLINE

Each evening at 8 pm during Advent (through Dec. 23) we will have a brief (~15 min.) [Zoom](#) compline service. The service will include lighting the candles of the Advent Wreath, scripture, silence, and prayer. We hope this will be a refreshing pause each evening in what is often a hectic time of the year. Join any evening as often as you are able.

Zoom Meeting ID: 850 4704 4351 Passcode: advent

### BOOKS FOR BACKPACKS

Today is the last Sunday to honor a loved one with a donation towards the purchase of books for children in our Weekend Backpack Program. Money will be collected through December 15 and the books will be added in the Weekend Backpack food bags that will be delivered December 17. A list of tributes will be included in our Christmas Eve worship guide, and all donors receive a specially designed ornament as an acknowledgement and keepsake. Bright green forms and envelopes are available on the back table. Help support the love of reading in our young people by giving generously!

### END OF YEAR GIVING

*Fulfill – to bring to completion or reality; achieve or realize (something desired, promised, or predicted).*  
-Oxford English Dictionary

We all continue to be called upon, as we can, to fulfill our financial support to the church for 2021. As we approach the end of the year, please remember that donations must be received or post-marked by Friday, December 31 in order to count for your 2021 charitable giving for tax purposes. If you are planning a year-end stock gift, please contact the church office at your earliest convenience to make the transfer arrangements.

Thanks be to God for all the contributions given - our time, talent, and treasure. All together, they add up to support the life, ministry, and well-being of this church allowing us to continue to be the hands and feet of Jesus in this world.

### PASTOR SEARCH COMMITTEE REMINDER

We have questions for you and we need ALL GPBC folks' input! You may respond either online (<https://bit.ly/gpbcpastorsearch>) or in-person by using the sticky notes located near the Pastor Search Team question boards displayed in the Fellowship Hall.

### THURSDAY BIBLE STUDY

The Thursday morning Bible study has met for the last time in 2021. They will resume their weekly gatherings on January 13, 2022.

### SNACK BAGS FOR OREGON HILL BAPTIST CENTER

Oregon Hill Baptist Center distributes at least 50 snack bags a week to the adults who come to the Center for food and services. We have collected and purchased items for the bags, and will assemble bags from 9:00 am to 9:30 am today (followed by our Monthly Church Check-In at 9:30 am).

### MONTHLY CHURCH-WIDE CHECK-IN

Our next check-in takes place today, December 12, beginning at 9:30 am. We will continue our discernment around our 2022 Ministry Plan. Prior to our time of conversation, we will pack snack bags for Oregon Hill Baptist Center's homeless ministry at 9:00 am while enjoying refreshments and Christmas music.

### CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP SERVICE

Join us on December 24 at 5 pm for a Christmas Eve Service of Lessons and Carols. The service will be child welcoming and all ages are warmly invited to attend and participate. Communion will be celebrated and the service will close in candle light.

### SWEET BABY JESUS DIAPER & WIPE DRIVE

For the fifth year in a row, we will be collecting diapers and wipes to offer to families in need. Gifts of diapers and wipes will be collected through Sunday, December 19. Our donations will go to Housing Families First. They have two large community programs that would greatly benefit from donation of diaper **sizes 4, 5 & 6**. Items can be placed on the side tables in the worship space.

### COLLECT THOSE TAB TOPS!

Save your tab tops from drink cans as well as from vegetable and meat cans to support Ronald McDonald House. Ronald McDonald House is able to pay its utility bills by recycling tab tops from several churches for cash! Collection bins can be found in the Fellowship Hall each Sunday morning.

### METRO RICHMOND AT PRAYER

Since March 2006, more than 470 churches in Metropolitan Richmond have joined in covenant to pray together weekly for the 1.2 million people who live in metro Richmond. GPBC has joined in this Covenant of Prayer, which began its fifteenth year on March 1, 2021. You can learn more and read the weekly prayers at [www.metroprayrva.org](http://www.metroprayrva.org).

During December, we pray for persons in financial need in Metropolitan Richmond. For the week of December 12, we pray for the homeless and the hungry; for the provision of safe, affordable housing and low-cost nutritious food; for the personal safety, dignity, and well-being of those who are unable to work.

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**HYMN TEXTS**

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**# 148 “O Come, All Ye Faithful”**

O come, all ye faithful,  
joyful and triumphant,  
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;  
come and behold him,  
born the King of angels:

O come, let us adore him,  
O come, let us adore him,  
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

Sing, choirs of angels,  
sing in exultation,  
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!  
Glory to God, all  
glory in the highest;

O come, let us adore him,  
O come, let us adore him,  
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

**#121 “Prepare the Way of the Lord**

Prepare the way of the Lord.  
Prepare the way of the Lord,  
and all people will see  
the salvation of our God