

**First Presbyterian Church
Chippewa Falls, WI
Worship Service
December 6, 2020 – 10:15 AM
2nd Week of Advent**

***Regulars and visitors alike, thank you for being here and bringing your worship to share with us. To enhance everyone's worship experience, please silence your cell phones. Thanks for helping.

PRELUDE:

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:

TIME OF CENTERING:

(We share a communal time of silence as we center our hearts and minds for worship. Worship Leader will end the silence with an Amen.)

CANDLE LIGHTING:

One: Today we re-light the candle of peace and light the Second Advent candle as we focus on the way God broke into human history to provide us with a Savior. We light the candle for hope, and remember that God lights our path.

All: We wait in hope.

One: Through the prophets, God tells us about a child who will lead the way into peace.

All: We wait in hope.

One: We remember John the baptizer as a voice crying out in the wilderness to "prepare the way of the Lord!" And so we prepare our hearts and minds as we wait for the blessed gift of Christ's birth.

All: We wait in hope. May we offer praise and thanksgiving to God for love that provides for all our needs - even our need for forgiveness?

CALL TO WORSHIP:

One: Let me hear what you will speak, O God, for you will speak peace to your people.

All: Surely your salvation is at hand for those who fear you, that glory may dwell in our land.

One: Yea, God will give what is good, and our land will yield us increase.

All: In God's righteousness let us worship, that we may walk in the Lord's way.

INVITATION TO CONFESSION:

O God of peace, your way is sure and leads to salvation. You send your Son, the promise of life eternal; your Holy Spirit guides us to truth. We hear your heralds proclaim the path of obedience, and receive your abounding grace, making firm our footsteps; we know that all is made ready to follow you faithfully. We praise you in thought, word and deed. By your mercy, affirm your unending love for us, and in our worship make us alive in your promise.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION AND ASSURANCE OF PARDON:

All: O God of forgiveness, with our tongues we speak evil against our sisters and brothers. By our actions, we disobey your commandments. Hostility is bred through our suspicion and envy; anger continues in spite of Christ's peace. You open our eyes to his righteousness, yet we remain blind to the truth of his reconciling presence. Forgive our deliberate misuse of your mercy and in Christ hear our prayer.

One: Isaiah speaks of God's comfort, of God's pardoning of iniquity, and of the coming One who shall level uneven ground and make a plain of the rough places. All the earth shall know that God's judgment is tempered by Christ's presence and peace on our behalf. In him we have assurance of pardon.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE:

THE 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 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

FIRST SCRIPTURE READING:

Isaiah 40: 1-11

Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. 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. A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. 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. Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken." 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. The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the LORD blows upon it; surely the people are grass. The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand forever. 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!" See, the Lord GOD comes with might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. 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.

GOSPEL:

Mark 1: 1-8

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

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

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

SERMON: “Forerunners and Trailblazers” Rev. Ken Ribe

INVITATION TO COMMUNION:

DISTRIBUTION OF THE ELEMENTS:

CLOSING PRAYER AND BENEDICTION:

POSTLUDE:

