



CHRIST
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

23455 Novi Road
Novi MI 48375
Pastor: Dr. James N. McGuire
248-719-7787

Welcome to Worship

DECEMBER 13, 2020
THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

† **Gathering Hymn: Lo! How a Rose E'er Blooming**

† **Call to Worship** (from Psalm 92)

Pastor: It is good to praise the LORD and make music to your name, O Most High,

People: proclaiming your love in the morning and your faithfulness at night.

Pastor: For you make me glad by your deeds, LORD; I sing for joy at what your hands have done.

People: How great are your works, LORD, how profound your thoughts!

Unison: You, LORD, are forever exalted.

† **Hymn: Love Has Come!**

† **Invocation and the Lord's Prayer**

Lighting the Third Advent Candle

The Shepherd's Candle

Linda Johnson

First Scripture Readings

(Reader: Pia Klein)

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11 Responsive

¹ The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me,
because the LORD has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the poor.

**He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim freedom for the captives
and release from darkness for the prisoners,**

**²to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor
and the day of vengeance of our God,**

to comfort all who mourn,
³ and provide for those who grieve in Zion—
to bestow on them a crown of beauty
instead of ashes,
the oil of joy
instead of mourning,
and a garment of praise
instead of a spirit of despair.

**They will be called oaks of righteousness,
a planting of the LORD
for the display of his splendor.**

⁴They will rebuild the ancient ruins
and restore the places long devastated;
they will renew the ruined cities
that have been devastated for generations.

**⁸"For I, the LORD, love justice;
I hate robbery and wrongdoing.
In my faithfulness I will reward my people
and make an everlasting covenant with them.**

⁹Their descendants will be known among the nations
and their offspring among the peoples.
All who see them will acknowledge
that they are a people the LORD has blessed."

**¹⁰I delight greatly in the LORD;
my soul rejoices in my God.**

For he has clothed me with garments of salvation
and arrayed me in a robe of his righteousness,
as a bridegroom adorns his head like a priest,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

**¹¹For as the soil makes the sprout come up
and a garden causes seeds to grow,**

so the Sovereign LORD will make righteousness
and praise spring up before all nations.

Luke 1:46b-55 Responsive

“My soul glorifies the Lord
⁴⁷ and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
⁴⁸ for he has been mindful
of the humble state of his servant.

**From now on all generations will call me blessed,
⁴⁹ for the Mighty One has done great things for me—
holy is his name.**

⁵⁰ His mercy extends to those who fear him,
from generation to generation.

**⁵¹ He has performed mighty deeds with his arm;
he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts.**

**⁵² He has brought down rulers from their thrones
but has lifted up the humble.**

⁵³ He has filled the hungry with good things
but has sent the rich away empty.

**⁵⁴ He has helped his servant Israel,
remembering to be merciful
⁵⁵ to Abraham and his descendants forever,
just as he promised our ancestors.”**

This is the Word of the Lord!

Thanks be to God!

† Gloria Patri

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen, Amen.

† Hymn: Infant Holy, Infant Lowly

Offertory

**Presentation of Tithes and Offerings
Hark, the Herald Angels Sing
Prayer of Thanksgiving**

arr: Mark Hayes

† Doxology

Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
Praise Him all creatures here below.
Praise Him above ye heavenly hosts,
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Second Scripture Readings

(Reader: Pia Klein)

John 1:6-8, 19-28 Responsive

⁶There was a man sent from God whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. ⁸He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light.

¹⁹ **Now this was John's testimony when the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to ask him who he was. ²⁰He did not fail to confess, but confessed freely, "I am not the Messiah."**

²¹They asked him, "Then who are you? Are you Elijah?"

He said, "I am not."

"Are you the Prophet?"

He answered, "No."

²²Finally they said, "Who are you? Give us an answer to take back to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?"

²³ **John replied in the words of Isaiah the prophet, "I am the voice of one calling in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way for the Lord.'"**

²⁴Now the Pharisees who had been sent ²⁵questioned him, "Why then do you baptize if you are not the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?"

²⁶ **"I baptize with water," John replied, "but among you stands one you do not know. ²⁷He is the one who comes after me, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie."**

²⁸This all happened at Bethany on the other side of the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-24 Responsive

¹⁶Rejoice always, ¹⁷pray continually, ¹⁸give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

¹⁹ **Do not quench the Spirit. ²⁰Do not treat prophecies with contempt ²¹but test them all; hold on to what is good, ²²reject every kind of evil.**

²³May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

²⁴ **The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do it.**

This is the Word of the Lord!
Thanks be to God!

Sermon: Testing for the Word of God

Dr. James N. McGuire

Pastoral Prayer

† Hymn: See Amid the Winter's Snow

Hymn of the Month

Responsive Litany (Galatians 4:4-7)

Pastor: But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law,

People: to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship.

Pastor: Because you are his sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "*Abba, Father.*"

Unison: So you are no longer a slave, but God's child; and since you are his child, God has made you also an heir.

† Benediction

Welcome, Announcements and Prayers

Dr. James N. McGuire, Pastor

Dr. Eric Roth, Director of Music

To our visitors: We hope our worship enables you to draw near to God through Christ Jesus, and that you feel welcome here among us. Please sign the guest book in the narthex and allow us to greet you. Our normal fellowship time after the service has been postponed due to the Covid-19 restrictions.

In Need of Prayer

April Barrett
Pat Grad
Priscilla Smith, Pat's sister
Dennis & Ellen Dorman
Cindy Bemis
Kent's sister Lori
George Donoian and family
Gail Nastwold
Jen Freese, tests, Maya's health, and new service dog
Sally Freese, shingles pain
Lyndsay, daughter of the Sharpes
Don Rende's brother, Bob
David, friend of Cindy Taaffee
Jim, Gary, Marion, friends of Szczepaneks
Linda Szczepanek and other family members
Cody, grandson of Carolyn Krueger
Colleen, friend of Kelly Rende
Nancy, friend of Doaks
Yvonne Ray, assisted living
Mark, cousin of Elaine Clay
Tina, Pastor McGuire's niece, with Covid

CeCe, friend of Elaine Clay, lupus and cancer
Brenda's sister, healing from eye surgery
Janet Young
Marie Johnson, Linda & Ray Johnson's daughter
Nicki, Donna's neighbor, new cancer
Keely & Josh, daughter/son-in-law of Linda Johnson
Julie, dear friend of Chernenkoffs
Alberta Weaver, at home
Reginia Higgs
Avery, niece of Teresa Lisowki
Carol, Bev Thompson's cousin
Tracy, friend of Bunny Rector
Randy, friend of Bodnars
Tim, cancer, nephew of Janet Young
Lauren, niece of Ron Lisowski
Kelly Rende's co-worker, new cancer
Jim, Kelly Rende's good friend. Loss of mother
Kelly Rende, Linda Szczepanek, Sam Hutson, grief
Extended family of the Boone's with Covid
Kristen, Clay family friend, for successful pregnancy
Alanna, daughter of Bruce Terras's manager

Healthcare Workers: Ray Johnson, Angie O'Dell, Karen Isles, Krystal Murphy—for protection from Covid, strength for the long hours, and opportunities for sharing Christ.

Please also pray for people who are struggling over mental health issues, particularly brought on by the stresses of Covid-19, unemployment, etc.

Audio Sermons can be heard on the church website: <http://christ-presbyterianchurch.org>

Monthly need: \$17,083.0

Giving to general fund last week: \$3,094.18

Giving to mortgage in December: \$5,200

Our Military: Justin has returned stateside; Metzners' grandson Bryan; and relative of Teresa Lisowski, deployed to Iraq.

Pray for God's protection of girls/women and intervention to stop the human sex trafficking in our state.

Heidelberg Catechism: Q 120. Why did Christ command us to call God "Our Father"? **A.** At the very beginning of our prayer Christ wants to kindle in us what is basic in our prayer—the child-like awe and trust that God through Christ has become our Father. Our fathers do not refuse us the things of this life; God our Father will even less refuse to give us what we ask in faith.

Remember to pray for all our church members, some of whom are reluctant to come to our worship service. We miss them and pray that they will remain well.



Note: There has been a concern expressed during this Covid-19 surge that some people are not using their masks correctly. For the sake of your brothers and sisters, please cover your mouth and nose. It is another way to love one another.

Please, pick up your **offering envelopes for 2021**, if you have not done so already. They are located in the narthex. You may have been assigned a different number for the new year.

Good News! All of the Angel Tree children have been selected and their caregivers will shop for the gift from the incarcerated parents. Thank you so much for your contribution to this ministry of Prison Fellowship. It means so much to the children, to know their parent cares about them.

Today is the Third Sunday of Advent. Traditionally Advent is a time to prepare our hearts for the coming of Jesus, our Savior. It is a good time to find some daily advent readings or begin to sing the carols of the first coming of Christ as a way to focus on the real meaning of Christmas. Here is a suggested resource for daily readings:

<https://www.bible.com/reading-plans/751-good-news-of-great-joy> which you can read using Facebook, Google, or Apple. Requires sign-up, but it is free.

It is not too early to plan your year-end giving, if that is your custom. Please indicate if you want it to be posted to the general fund or toward the mortgage. In early January we will send your annual giving statement.

The Ladies' Bible Study will meet again, practicing social distancing, on Tuesdays at 10:00 a.m. All are welcome. A new study of *2 Peter and Jude* will begin January 5, 2021. Contact Judy Dellinger for details. In addition, if you are unable to attend the in-person study, Elaine Clay is leading the same study, via Zoom, Wednesday afternoons. If you want to join the group, contact Elaine.

