

# REDEEMER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

An Evangelical Presbyterian Church  
www.rpcerie.org

## Sunday Morning Worship Third Sunday of Advent

December 17, 2017

Worship Theme: *“Advent is a time to prepare. John the Baptist tells us for whom we are preparing.”*

Families with very young children please note that, if you wish to use it, we offer Nursery Care during our Worship Service in the Joyce Parlor.

**Gathering Music:** *Prepare the Royal Highway*.....arr. Manz  
Shirley W. Wilson, Organist

**Welcome and Announcements**..... Robert LeSuer

**Introduction to Today’s Worship**..... Susan Brooks

**Prelude:** *Thou Who Wast Rich*.....arr. Manz

**Call to Worship:** *(responsively)*..... Susan Brooks

Liturgist: We have needed the Light of Christ

**Congregation: As it shines through our darkest moments.**

Liturgist We have seen the Light of God

**Congregation: As it illuminates the joys and blessings of our lives.**

Liturgist We have felt the light of the spirit

**Congregation: As it moves and guides us on our path.**

**\*Hymn No. 15:** *Rejoice! Rejoice, Believers*..... LLANGLOFFAN

**Lighting of the Advent Wreath** .....The Pontzer Family

Liturgist: Today we light the first, second and third candle of Advent. The first blue candle is for HOPE, the second blue candle for PEACE, and the third candle is the rose candle for JOY.

Liturgist: In Philippians 4:4-6 the Apostle Paul tells us:

(...continued over...)

“Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice. Let your forbearance be known to all, for the Lord is near at hand; have no anxiety about anything, but in all things, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be known to God.”

Liturgist: The third Sunday of Advent is known as Gaudate Sunday and deals with rejoicing in the Lord. We light the rose colored candle representing Christian Joy.

Liturgist: Theologian Henri Nouwen described the difference between joy and happiness. While happiness is dependent on external conditions, joy is “the experience of knowing that you are unconditionally loved and that nothing—sickness, failure, emotional distress, oppression, war, or even death—can take that love away.” Thus joy can be present even in the midst of sadness.

Liturgist: In Isaiah 12 we read:

**Congregation: “Surely God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid, for the Lord God is my strength and my might; He has become my salvation. With joy I will draw water from the wells of salvation.”**

**Old Testament Reading:** Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11 .....Marti Ruggiero

**Prayers of Confession**..... Susan Brooks

We will begin by praying silently, confessing our personal sins.  
Then, we will join in a unison prayer of corporate confession.

**Lord, we have not kept watch for You. We have occupied ourselves with our own concerns. We have not waited to find Your will for us. We have not noticed the needs of the people around us. We have not acknowledged the love that has been shown to us.**

**Forgive us for our lack of watchfulness. Help us to wait to know Your will. Help us to look out for the needs of others. Help us to work and watch for Your coming. Amen.**

**Assurance of Pardon** (*unison*)..... Susan Brooks

**Brothers! Listen! In this man Jesus, there is forgiveness for your sins! Everyone who trusts in him is freed from all guilt and declared righteous.** —Acts 13:38-39a TLB

**\*Response Hymn:** *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*..... *VENI EMMANUEL*

O Come, thou Dayspring from on high,  
and cheer us by thy drawing nigh  
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,  
and death's dark shadows put to flight.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

**Psalter Reading:** Psalm 126.....Robert LeSuer

**Moments of Thanksgiving and Praise** ..... Susan Brooks

**Prayers and Petitions of the**

**People, and The Lord's Prayer** (*debts/debtors*).....Susan Brooks

**Epistle Reading:** 1Thessalonians 5:16-24 ..... Sam Ruggiero

**Sermon:** "The One Before THE ONE" ..... Jennifer Pontzer

**Sermon Text:** John 1:6-8, 19-28

**Offering:** *Adagio on a 12th Century Bohemian Carol*.....A. Jordan

**Prayer of Dedication for Our Offering** (*unison*) ..... Susan Brooks

**Almighty God, we praise Your Holy name in our offering. You have blessed us with more than we need so we can help those in need, especially of the Gospel. We wish to honor You with our words, our deeds and our wealth and pray that You will be greatly honored as we have rededicated ourselves in communion in the power of Jesus. Amen.**

**\*Hymn No. 10:** *On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry*..... *WINCHESTER NEW*

**\*Passing of the Peace** (*to one another*)..... Susan Brooks

(...continued over...)

**\*Benediction** (*unison, spoken to each other*) ..... Susan Brooks

**The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you. The Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace. Amen.**

—from Numbers 6:24-26

*At the conclusion of the Benediction, the Congregation is dismissed.*

**Postlude:** *On Jordan's Banks the Baptist's Cry* ..... *arr. Cherwien*

*\* Congregation please stand, if you are able to do so.*

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### After the Worship Service

We invite you to join us for a time of fellowship with coffee and cookies after the worship service in the Joyce Parlor.

If you wish to have a time of personal prayer for any needs in your life, please speak to Bob LeSuer, Jennifer Pontzer, or Dean Wilson and they will arrange for someone to meet with you today and pray with you.



**REDEEMER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**  
*An Evangelical Presbyterian Church*

Meeting at: St. Matthew's Lutheran Church  
950 West 7th Street, Erie, PA

**CHRISTMAS EVE — 5:00 P.M.**  
—Lessons and Carols—

The simplicity of Scripture and Carols  
tells the story of the coming  
of the Lord Jesus Christ to redeem us all!

