Grace Presbyterian Church

November 29, 2026 **9:30 am**

WELCOME AND VISION STATEMENT

We are an open and affirming congregation.
**We genuinely welcome people of all ages,
races, ethnicities, genders, sexual orientations, beliefs,
and those who are cognitively
and or physically challenged.**
Our vision is to be a community of love and purpose,
**each one engaged in ministry,
seeking to know Christ, growing in discipleship,
and embodying God's love for the world.**



We Gather

WELCOME and ANNOUNCEMENTS

Introit
Light the candles,
Christ is coming,
Christ the light of the world;
Light the candles,
Christ is coming!
Christ is coming soon! Amen.

Lighting the Advent Candles
Sharing of a family tradition Nancy Varga

Today we light the candle of hope.

As the flame begins to burn on this first candle of Advent, we are reminded how far we've come. From our ancestors of the faith who journey through the wilderness, to the years of challenges we have experienced. Hope does not come from instant gratification. Instead, it comes from a longing inside of us that knows things can be different. In such times we learn how to wait and hope.

As we light the candle of hope, we acknowledge a longing inside of us. We acknowledge the tension between waiting and hoping. We acknowledge the stubborn hope that draws us together as we begin our journey through Advent.

Holy God, we thank you for the gift of hope that we find in Christ Jesus. Remind us of your presence as we live in this time of hoping and longing. Amen.

Hymn#94 "Now the Heavens Start to Whisper"

Call to Confession
Let us pray trusting in God's love and mercy.

Prayer of Confession (responsive prayer)
Holy God of Advent, you come near to us,
yet we continue to seal our hearts
with indifference to a suffering world.
Tear open our hearts,
and make us more compassionate.

You approach us with bundles of mercy
to kindle our hope, but we continue to build
our lives with the bricks of bitterness.
Tear open our anger, so we might become more forgiving.

You draw near, longing to embrace us,
but we fold our arms, closing ourselves off
from those all around us.
Tear open our souls, so we might become children of Advent.

God, shaper-of-our-lives: have mercy;
Jesus, Word-which-does-not-pass-away:
fill us with your grace;
Holy Spirit, Giver-of-the-Light-of-peace:

Shine through our lives. Amen

Words of Assurance

Even now, God approaches us, mercy transcending anger, hope overcoming despair, life triumphing over death. This is good news, my friends; this is news of great joy for each of us.

Enriched in every grace, blessed with joy and hope, transformed by love, we will live as people of Advent. Thanks be to God. Amen.

— written by Thom Shuman, and posted on his excellent Lectionary Liturgies

Sung response #95 "Prepare the Way of the Lord"
(please remain seated and sing 3X)

We Reflect

Prayer for Understanding

Holy One, healer of the world,
shed your light upon this world.
Holy One, healer of brokenness,
make us bold to share your light with others. Amen.

A Reading from the Prophet Isaiah 64:1-9

Time with Young Disciples

A Reading from the Gospel of Mark 13:24-37

Sermon

*Hymn #89 "For You, O Lord, My Soul In Stillness Waits"
(Verse 1-3)

We Respond

MISSION STATEMENT

Our Mission is **to Know, Love, and Serve God**

Offertory Invitation

Prayer of Dedication

Holy God of new beginnings, as we share our tithes and offerings with you, we are filled with hope. We enter this season of Advent with expectation, looking toward the coming of Christ. May our gifts bring healing, justice, and light into a broken world. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

(Many thanks to all who contribute to the mission and ministry of our church in offering plates during worship and by electronic giving throughout the month).

Prayers of God's People (sharing of Joys and Concerns)

Lord, in your mercy/with thanksgiving,
Hear our prayer.

The Lord's Prayer

We Are Sent

Hymn# 82 "Come Thou Long Expected Jesus"

*Charge and Benediction

Guide us through this season
with quiet, glad anticipation.
Help us to pay attention
To what you are doing among us.
Give us a spirit of reflection,
patience and expectation.

*Sharing the Peace of Christ

Peace be with you!

And also with you.

(We invite you to offer a sign of peace to those around you and as you gather for fellowship. We remind you to ask what folks feel comfortable with…a verbal greeting, a handshake or fist bump, etc. Do not assume.)

Indicates, please stand in body or spirit.

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