

Highland Presbyterian Church

November 27th, 2022
10:30 a.m.

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Gates



Highland Presbyterian Church seeks to be a *diverse* and *inclusive* Christian Community as we embody the love and forgiveness of Jesus by serving the Community and the World, drawing people to Christ.

Prelude

O Blessed Emanuel

J S Bach / Thompson

Gathering

Welcome & Announcements

Rev. Matthew Benz-Whittington

Call to Worship (Responsive)

Liturgist

One: The days are surely coming, says the Lord

All: When I will fulfill my promise to my people

One: Justice and righteousness will fill the land

All: Open the gates and let in peace and safety

All: Let us worship God!

Lighting of the Advent Candles

Candle Lighting Hymn

Love Has Come (vs 1)

Hymn 110

*Opening Hymn

Open Now Thy Gates of Beauty

Hymn 403

Call to Confession

Liturgist

Prayer of Confession (**Communal**)

Lord, have mercy on us. We are not ready for your coming. We live in sin, as though there were no justice. We live in fear, as though there were no grace. Forgive us, Lord. Show us your mercy and steadfast love. Lead us in your truth, and teach us your paths, for you are the God of our salvation. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

Time for the Children

Rev. Matthew Benz-Whittington

The Word

Prayer for Illumination

Liturgist

Lord, just as you have opened your divine gates to allow us to enter into your grace and love, open our hearts that we might hear your Word spoken truly today. Amen.

Holy Scripture

Genesis 28:10-22

Jacob left Beer-sheba and went toward Haran. He came to a certain place and stayed there for the night, because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones of the place, he put it under his head and lay down in that place. And he dreamed that there was a stairway set up on the earth, the top of it reaching to heaven, and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. And the Lord stood beside him and said, "I am the Lord, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and to your offspring, and your offspring shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south, and all the families of the earth shall be blessed in you and in your offspring. Know that I am with you and will keep you wherever you go and will bring you back to this land, for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you." Then Jacob woke from his sleep and said, "Surely the Lord is in this place—and I did not know it!" And he was afraid and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven."

So Jacob rose early in the morning, and he took the stone that he had put under his head and set it up for a pillar and poured oil on the top of it. He called that place Bethel, but the name of the city was Luz at the first. Then Jacob made a vow, saying, "If God will be with me and will keep me in this way that I go and will give me bread to eat and clothing to wear, so that I come again to my father's house in peace, then the Lord shall be my God, and this stone, which I have set up for a pillar, shall be God's house, and of all that you give me I will surely give one-tenth to you."

Holy Scripture

Matthew 24:30-35

"Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see 'the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven' with power and great glory. And he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

"From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see all these things, you know that he is near, at the very gates. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

Anthem

Keep Your Lamps

Highland Choir

Sermon

"Open the Gates"

Rev. Matthew Benz-Whittington

Statement of Faith (Communal)

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth,
And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived of the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and was buried.
He descended into hell. The third day He arose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty,
from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Ghost, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.
Amen.

Offering of Our Gifts

Offertory

Meditation

Oberg

*Doxology

Hymn 609

*Prayer of Thanksgiving **(Communal)**

God of righteousness, you have promised to redeem the whole creation when Christ comes again. In faith and hope we offer our gifts and money and self, that we may be part of what you are doing in the world, as we watch for Christ's coming in glory. Amen.

Prayers of the People & 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.

Sending

*Closing Hymn

The Days Are Surely Coming

Hymn 357

*Charge and Benediction

Postlude

Come, Ye Thankful People, Come

Elvey / McDonald

Upcoming Event Page

Advent Book Study

Join us this Advent as we read through the devotional book *Advent in Plain Sight*. In this daily devotional for Advent, Jill J. Duffield draws readers' attention to ten ordinary objects that appear in the biblical narratives of messianic prophesy and incarnation—objects we encounter in our own lives.

We will meet on Tuesdays at 7:00 pm on Zoom and Wednesdays at 10:00 am in the parlor. Books have arrived and can be purchased for \$20. Study starts the week of November 28th.

Happy Highlanders Christmas Party

Happy Highlanders will hold their Christmas Party Lunch on Tuesday, December 6, at the Maryville High School Culinary Building. The cost is \$10 per person.

Menu: appetizer, soup, beef enchiladas, dessert.

Please give your \$ to Marie Erickson or Sandy Miller by December 1. After the lunch out we will come back to Highland fellowship hall for caroling and fun!

PW Bible Study December Meeting

Highland's Presbyterian Women's Circle will gather on **Thursday, December 1, 2022 at 1:30 pm** in the church parlor to discuss Lesson 4 of the 2022-2023 PW Bible study "*Celebrating Sabbath*". **Lesson 4** is titled "**Sabbath and Surrender**" and discusses Exodus 16 and how the "manna" story calls us to trust God to provide for our needs.

Weekly Schedule for November 27th – December 4th

Sunday, November 27 – Sunday Worship **10:30 a.m.**

Monday -

Tuesday –

Wednesday – **Parlor OA- 1 p.m.**

Thursday – **PW 1:30 p.m.** Girl Scouts **7:00 pm**

Friday -

Saturday -

Sunday, December 4 – Sunday Worship **10:30 a.m.**

Love Has Come

110

Capo 3: (D) (Bm7) (Em7) (A)
 F Dm7 Gm7 C

1 Love has come: a light in the dark - ness!
 2 Love is born! Come, share in the won - der.
 3 Love has come and nev - er will leave us!

(D) (Bm7) (Em) (A7) (D)
 F Dm7 Gm C7 F

Love shines forth in the Beth - le - hem skies. See, all
 Love is God now a - sleep in the hay. See the
 Love is life ev - er - last - ing and free. Love is

(A) (D) (Bm) (D) (A) (G) (D)
 C F Dm F C B^b F

heav - en has come to pro - claim it; hear how their song of
 glow in the eyes of his moth - er; what is the name her
 Je - sus with - in and a - mong us. Love is the peace our

(Em7) (F#7) (G) (A) (Bm) (A7)
 Gm7 A7 B^b C Dm C7

joy a - ris - es: Love! Love! Born un - to you, a
 heart is say - ing? Love! Love! Love is the name she
 hearts are seek - ing. Love! Love! Love is the gift of

(D) (A) (G) (A) (D) (A) (A7) (Dsus) (D)
 F C B^b C F C C7 Fsus F

Sav - ior! Love! Love! Glo - ry to God on high.
 whis - pers. Love! Love! Je - sus, Em - man - u - el.
 Christ - mas. Love! Love! Praise to you, God on high!

Here is a chance to sing a familiar French carol tune with new words, the most important clearly being "Love." The senses "seen and heard" (as in Acts 4:20 and elsewhere) organize the first two stanzas, while the third holds the summary statement: "Love is the gift of Christmas."

Open Now Thy Gates of Beauty 403

1 O - pen now thy gates of beau - ty, Zi - on, let me
 2 Gra - cious God, I come be - fore thee; come thou al - so
 3 Speak, O Lord, and I will hear thee; let thy will be

en - ter there, where my soul in joy - ful du - ty
 un - to me; where we find thee and a - dore thee,
 done in - deed; may I un - dis - turbed draw near thee,

waits for God who an - swers prayer; O how bless - ed
 there a heaven on earth must be; to my heart O
 while thou dost thy peo - ple feed. Here of life the

is this place, filled with so - lace, light, and grace.
 en - ter thou; let it be thy tem - ple now.
 foun - tain flows; here is balm for all our woes.

In the first stanza "Zion" is not a general synonym for Jerusalem but a reference to the part of the city where the Temple stood. It prepares the way for the interior temple of the heart in stanza two. The pre-existing tune is by a prominent German Reformed hymnwriter.

The Days Are Surely Coming 357

1 The days are sure - ly com - ing, says God to all the earth,
 2 The days are sure - ly com - ing, says Christ, the prom - ised one,
 3 The days are sure - ly com - ing when we will know at last

when you will see my prom - ise: sal - va - tion come to birth.
 when you will read my warn - ing in moon and stars and sun.
 the full - ness of God's pres - ence, God's prom - ise, come to pass.

My right - teous - ness and jus - tice will spread through - out the land
 Though earth and heav - en trem - ble, stand up and do not fear,
 Then right - teous - ness and jus - tice will spread through - out the land

and you will be de - liv - ered by my al - might - y hand.
 for I am your re - deem - er, and I am draw - ing near.
 and we will be de - liv - ered by God's al - might - y hand.

This text uses imagery from Jeremiah 33:14–16 and Matthew 24:29–36/Mark 13:24–32/Luke 21:25–36. These passages are especially associated with the beginning of Advent, a season that looks forward to Christ's second coming while also preparing us to remember his first coming.