



# THE OLD STONE CHURCH

DECEMBER 17, 2023

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

10AM Sanctuary Worship

## WE GATHER IN THE GRACE OF GOD

PRELUDE	The Yearning	Craig Courtney
WELCOME	Pastor Stephen C. Blonder Adams	
INTROIT	<i>No Wind at the Window</i>	COLUMCILLE

No wind at the window, no knock on the door; no light from the lampstand,  
no foot on the floor; no dream born of tiredness, no ghost raised by fear:  
just an angel and a woman and a voice in her ear.

“O Mary, O Mary, don’t hide from my face. Be glad that you’re favored and filled  
with God’s grace. The time for redeeming the world has begun, and you are requested  
to mother God’s Son.”

\* Those who are able are requested to stand

Please silence all electronic devices.

\* CALL TO WORSHIP

God is in our midst; do not fear.

God rejoices to renew our lives in steadfast love.

**God gathers us for this time of worship.**

**God claims us and promises us a home.**

Trust in God who is our strength and life.

Give thanks to God, the source of our salvation.

**We will sing praises and exalt God's name.**

**With joyous shouts, we will tell of God's glorious deeds.**

Rejoice in God, whatever your circumstances.

Remember the good fortune God has shared with you.

**We will not worry as we seek God's peace.**

**We open our hearts and minds to God's leading.**

\* INVOCATION PRAYER

Loving God,

we rejoice in this season of anticipation

as we remember your promises

and look forward to ways that you reveal yourself to us.

May your presence be real to us in this hour.

Strengthen us for victories over temptation,

for renewal of our love for you and one another,

for leadership and service in your church.

We give thanks that you have called us into community

and commissioned us to make a difference in the world.

Equip us here for the tasks you set before us.

Amen.

ADVENT WREATH CANDLE LIGHTING *(Please be seated)*

Harriet Niles,  
Eric Grattan, Jordan Ware

When God's people were surrounded by hardship, suffering, and grief,  
Isaiah proclaimed,

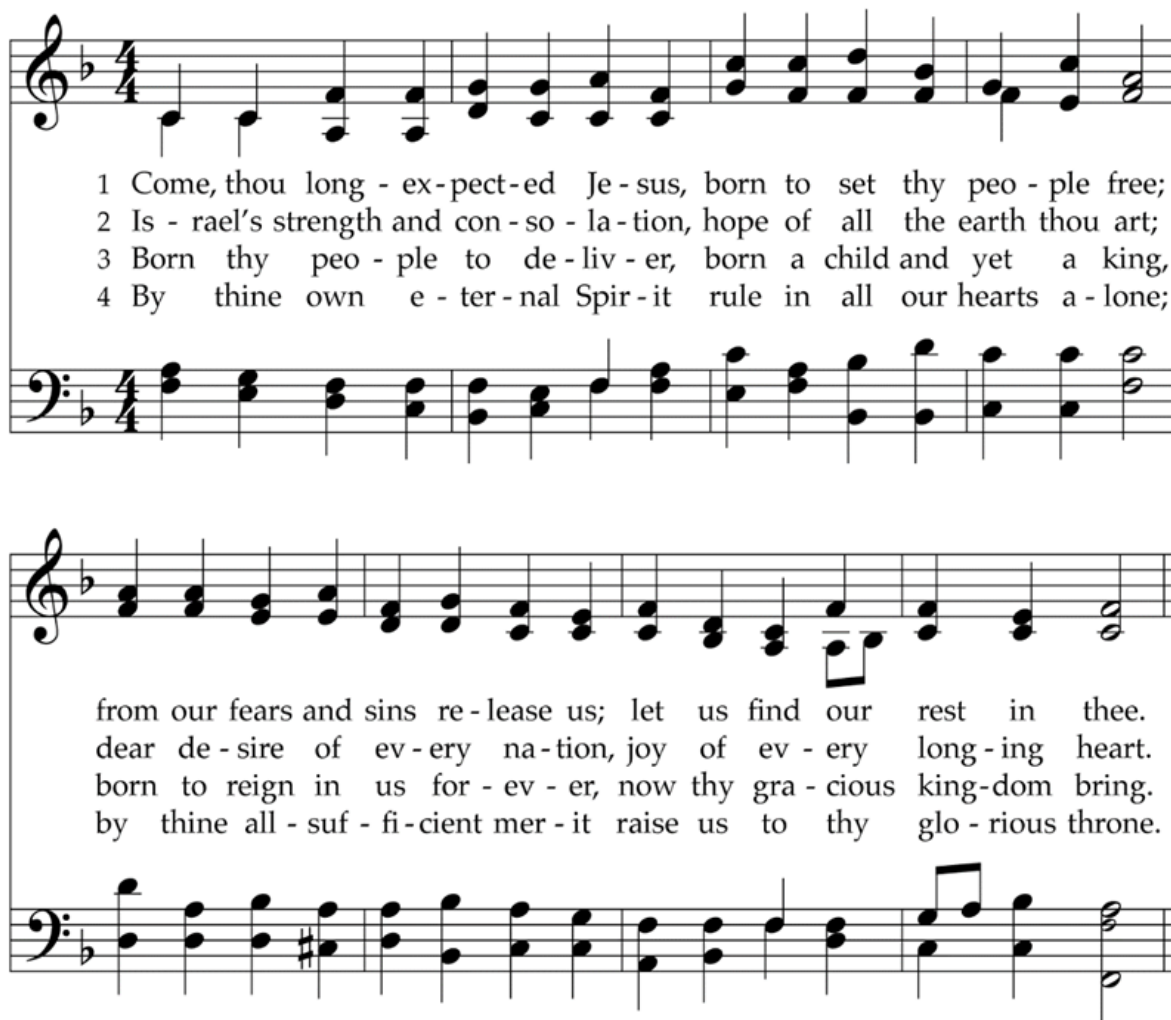
The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to provide for those who mourn in Zion—to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit (Isaiah 64:1-3a).

We come today as people who are also surrounded by suffering and grief. And yet, the Spirit hovers among us, tending and anointing, inspiring freedom where there is captivity, declaring blessing in places the world has cursed, and igniting fierce joy where mourning and heartache prevail.

**We wait as people who experience hardship and pain, yet we are called to witness to the persistent joy that sustains our life as God's people.**

We light these candles as signs of our shocking hope, just peace, and fierce joy. May our lives shine with the fierce, tenacious joy of the Light who lives in our hearts as we wait and work for the coming of God's Kin-dom on earth as it is in heaven. Amen.

*Light the Rose candle and the two Blue candles of the Advent wreath.*



1 Come, thou long - ex - pect - ed Je - sus, born to set thy peo - ple free;  
 2 Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion, hope of all the earth thou art;  
 3 Born thy peo - ple to de - liv - er, born a child and yet a king,  
 4 By thine own e - ter - nal Spir - it rule in all our hearts a - lone;

from our fears and sins re - lease us; let us find our rest in thee.  
 dear de - sire of ev - ery na - tion, joy of ev - ery long - ing heart.  
 born to reign in us for - ev - er, now thy gra - cious king - dom bring.  
 by thine all - suf - fi - cient mer - it raise us to thy glo - rious throne.

With its opening "Come," this hymn sounds the note of entreaty and invitation that characterizes the Advent season (from the Latin *adventus* = "coming"). Its blending of memory and hope helps us to give voice to our present faith as we stand between the past and the future.

TEXT: Charles Wesley, 1744  
 MUSIC: Witt's *Psalmodia Sacra*, 1715, alt.

STUTT GART  
 8.7.8.7  
 (alternate tune: HYFRYDOL, 82)

## \* CALL TO CONFESSION

Lindsay Fritz

God's winnowing fork separates faithful ones from the unfaithful,  
 honest ones from the dishonest,  
 gentle ones from those who vent their anger against the innocent.  
 God seeks to remove the chaff from our lives  
 that we might recognize our own true worth as God's children.  
 Let us seek God's healing.  
 Let us join our voices in the corporate prayer of confession,  
 followed by time for silent personal confession.  
 Thus, we pray:

\* PRAYER OF CONFESSION

All-knowing God,  
we confess our worry and anxiety over unimportant matters.  
We admit the fears that make us defensive instead of loving.  
We acknowledge our resentment over losses we have sustained  
and oppression we have suffered.  
We recognize that we have been far more concerned for our own welfare  
than for the building up of Christ's body, the church.  
In our congregation, we have focused on survival more than service.  
We look for what we can gain more than for what we can give.  
Re-establish your rule among us, we pray, and save us from ourselves.

*(moment of silent confession)*

\* KYRIE ELEISON

SINGAPURA

Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy on us.

\* ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

God has good news of freedom for oppressed and captive people,  
of comfort for the brokenhearted and mourning ones,  
of hope for those who are devastated.  
God offers salvation and welcomes us into a covenant relationship.  
Surely our hearts will know joy, and our voices will ring with laughter.  
God is faithful and will grant us peace.

**Alleluia and Amen!**

\* PASSING OF THE PEACE

May the peace of Christ be with you.

**And also with you.**

Let us offer a sign of peace to one another.

\* GLORIA #583

*Glory to God*

GLORIA (Taizé)

Glory to God, glory to God, glory in the highest!  
Glory to God, glory to God, alleluia, alleluia!

OFFERTORY INVITATION

Please be seated.  
Today God's voice is heard through the ministries we help to provide,  
here in our church, and in outreach to all the world's people.  
We bear witness to the light that is coming into the world  
through personal caring and corporate sharing.  
May all our giving be generous.  
The offering will now be received.

## OFFERING

### OFFERTORY ANTHEM

*How Great Our Joy!*

Craig Courtney

While by the sheep we watched at night, Glad tidings brought an angel bright.

How great our joy.

There shall be born, so did he say, In Bethlehem a Child today. How great our joy.

There shall a Child lie in a stall, This Child who shall redeem us all.

This gift of God we'll cherish well, That ever joy our hearts shall fill.

Praise we the Lord in heaven on high!

### \* DOXOLOGY #607

OLD HUNDREDTH

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;

praise Christ, all people here below;

praise Holy Spirit evermore; praise Triune God, whom we adore. Amen.

### \* OFFERTORY PRAYER

Lindsay Fritz

Let us join our voices in prayer:

In our unworthiness, O God,

may we yet bring worthy gifts to honor the Messiah.

May the brokenhearted be led to enriching new celebrations.

May the lowly among us come to know their true worth  
as persons chosen by you to do great things.

By your mercy, may the hungry be fed not only with bread  
but also with opportunities to feed others.

We give ourselves as your servants,

for no gift is complete without personal commitment.

Thank you, God, for expecting great things of us.

Our spirits rejoice in the coming of our Savior.

Amen.

### \* OFFERTORY RESPONSE

*All Things Come of Thee*

Herbert C. Peabody

All things come of Thee, O Lord, and of Thine own have we given Thee. Amen

## PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

## THE READINGS

For I, the LORD, love justice,  
I hate robbery and wrongdoing;  
I will faithfully give them their recompense,  
and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.  
Their descendants shall be known among the nations  
and their offspring among the peoples;  
all who see them shall acknowledge  
that they are a people whom the LORD has blessed.  
I will greatly rejoice in the LORD;  
my whole being shall exult in my God,  
for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation;  
he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,  
as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland  
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.



For as the earth brings forth its shoots  
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up,  
so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise  
to spring up before all the nations.

The Holy Spirit has a word for each of us today.

**With God's help we are listening.**

Gospel

Luke 1:46b-55 (NRSVUE)

And Mary said,  
"My soul magnifies the Lord,  
and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,  
for he has looked with favor on the lowly state of his servant.  
Surely from now on all generations will call me blessed,  
for the Mighty One has done great things for me,  
and holy is his name;  
indeed, his mercy is for those who fear him  
from generation to generation.  
He has shown strength with his arm;  
he has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.  
He has brought down the powerful from their thrones  
and lifted up the lowly;  
he has filled the hungry with good things  
and sent the rich away empty.  
He has come to the aid of his child Israel,  
in remembrance of his mercy,  
according to the promise he made to our ancestors,  
to Abraham and to his descendants forever."

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**



\* 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 by the Holy Ghost,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, dead, and buried;  
he descended into hell;  
the third day he rose again from the dead;  
he ascended into heaven,  
and sitteth on the right hand  
of God the Father Almighty;  
from thence he shall come to judge the quick 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.

LIGHTING OF CANDLES, PASTORAL PRAYER AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

We ask all these things in the name of Jesus who taught us to pray...

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





1 My soul gives glo - ry to my God; my  
 2 My God has done great things for me: yes,  
 3 From age to age to all who fear, such  
 4 Love casts the might - y from their thrones, pro -  
 5 Praise God, whose lov - ing cov - e - nant sup -



heart pours out its praise. God lift - ed up my  
 ho - ly is God's name. All peo - ple will de -  
 mer - cy love im - parts, dis - pens - ing jus - tice  
 motes the in - se - cure, leaves hun - gry spir - its  
 ports those in dis - tress, re - mem - ber - ing past



low - li - ness in man - y mar - vel - ous ways.  
 clare me blessed, and bless - ings they shall claim.  
 far and near, dis - miss - ing self - ish hearts.  
 sat - is - fied; the rich seem sud - den - ly poor.  
 prom - is - es with pres - ent faith - ful - ness.

This 20th-century paraphrase is based on the Song of Mary (Luke 1:46–55), commonly known by its opening Latin word, *Magnificat*. This song of praise offers clear reminders that God's purposes often lead to the reversal of human values, exalting the poor and dethroning the mighty.

TEXT: Miriam Therese Winter, 1979, rev. 1987

MUSIC: Wyeth's *Repository of Sacred Music*, 1813; harm. C. Winfred Douglas, 1940

Text © 1978, 1987 Medical Mission Sisters

Music Harm. © 1943, 1961, 1985 Church Pension Fund

MORNING SONG

CM

\* BENEDICTION AND BLESSING

Rejoice always and pray without ceasing.

Give thanks to God, whatever your circumstances.

**God has done great things for us.**

**We rejoice that we are part of God's family.**

Listen for the word of the prophets.

Be open to the stirrings of the Holy Spirit.

**The Spirit of God has come to us.**

**We have a mission to accomplish for God.**

God is faithful and will stand by you.

You are valued in God's covenant community.

**We are filled with joy as we go out to serve.**

**We are thankful for the good news we carry.**

\* CHORAL RESPONSE

*Amen*

John Rutter

POSTLUDE

*Come O Long-Expected Jesus*

Mark Sedio

*"My flesh and my heart may fail,  
but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever."  
Psalm 73:26*



**We continue to keep in our prayers:**

Andrew Buchanan, Joyce Sabe, Caroline Poirier, Nova and Tony Kordalski,  
Marlene Henne, Laurie Thomson, Frank Macuga, Susan Ball, Shirley Daly,  
Karen Nestor, JoAnn Hood, Louis Handler, Jenni Plants, Faith Battan, David,  
Herbert Glover and family, the family of Jean Cooke

We pray for those struggling with illness, convalescing, homebound or in need.

*Names are generally removed after four weeks unless there is a continuing need.*

### **Blue Christmas Service**

A special service this season  
for those for whom holidays present a particular challenge.  
Please join us in this time of prayer and reflection, and to light a candle  
for grief, addiction, illness, family dynamics, personal struggles,  
or whatever you may be carrying in your heart.

**Thursday, December 21, 2023 at 6:00pm in the Chapel**



**Celebrate the arrival of the newborn Messiah at**

### **OLD STONE CHURCH**

**December 24, 2023 Christmas Eve**

**Worship at 5PM and 7PM**

**December 25, 2023 Christmas Day**

**Worship with Communion 10AM**

**December 31, 2023 Epiphany**

**Worship 10AM**

**December 31, 2023 New Year's Eve**

**Worship 6PM**



### **@ Old Stone Church**

**Sunday December 17 Advent III**

**9:00AM Bible Study/Gallery**

**10:00AM Worship/Sanctuary**

**Tuesday December 19**

**6:30PM Stated Session Meeting/ZOOM**

**Thursday December 21**

**6:00PM Blue Christmas Service/Chapel**

**7:00PM FPS Directors Meeting/Conference Room**

**Sunday December 24 Advent IV**

**9:00AM Bible Study/Gallery**

**10:00AM Worship/Sanctuary**

**Last Sunday Attendance In-Person:75 Online:176**

There are many ways to support The Old Stone Church

Online Giving: <a href="http://oldstonechurch.org/giving/">oldstonechurch.org/giving/</a>	Mobile Giving: Text the keyword <b>"oldstonecle"</b> to 73256
Mail to: Old Stone Church Attn: Financial Office 91 Public Square Cleveland, OH 44113	Checks should be made payable to "Old Stone Church." If you would like to designate your contribution to one of Old Stone's mission projects, please make a note on the memo line.

All contributions are tax-deductible and will be appropriately acknowledged at year-end.

## THE OLD STONE CHURCH

*LOVING CHRIST, SERVING CITY—SPIRITUALLY, SOCIALLY, CULTURALLY—SINCE 1820*

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Website: [www.OldStoneChurch.org](http://www.OldStoneChurch.org) E-Mail: [info@OldStoneChurch.org](mailto:info@OldStoneChurch.org)

Music copied under ccli#1638695

**Senior Pastor:** Rev. Stephen C. Blonder Adams

**Parish Associate:** Rev. Denise Clark-Jones

**Minister of Music:** David L. Dettloff

## The Old Stone Singers

Leah Jennings Brown, *soprano*

Cicely Schonberg, *soprano*

Val Sibila, *soprano*

Ian Atwood, *tenor*

Stephen Brown, *tenor*

Frederick Peterbark, *tenor*

Rayna Brooks, *alto*

Margaret Raupp, *alto*

Elizabeth Rickel, *alto*

R. Dominic Aragon, *bass*

Christopher Clark, *bass*

Albert Donze, *bass*

## Church Elders:

Clerk of Session: Beth Buchanan

### Class of 2023

Beth Buchanan  
Robert Hubert Jr.  
Judy Macuga  
Harriet Niles  
Marty Vassel  
John Young

### Class of 2024

Michelle Baron  
Janie Chambers  
Fred Heider  
Bernard Medie  
Bob Reid

### Class of 2025

Willie Brown  
Dave Finley

## Church Deacons:

### Class of 2023

Melissa Maffia  
Pete Maffia  
Alyssa Niepokny  
Michael Rolan  
Penni Rolan

### Class of 2024

Scott Bailey  
Bernie Bischel  
Carol Hoagland  
Amy Wheeler  
John Wheeler

### Class of 2025

Elie Medie  
Mark Pichler

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Your entry constitutes your consent to such photography, filming, livestreaming, and/or recording and to any use, in any media for The Old Stone Church/First Presbyterian Church, Cleveland, Ohio. Thank you.