



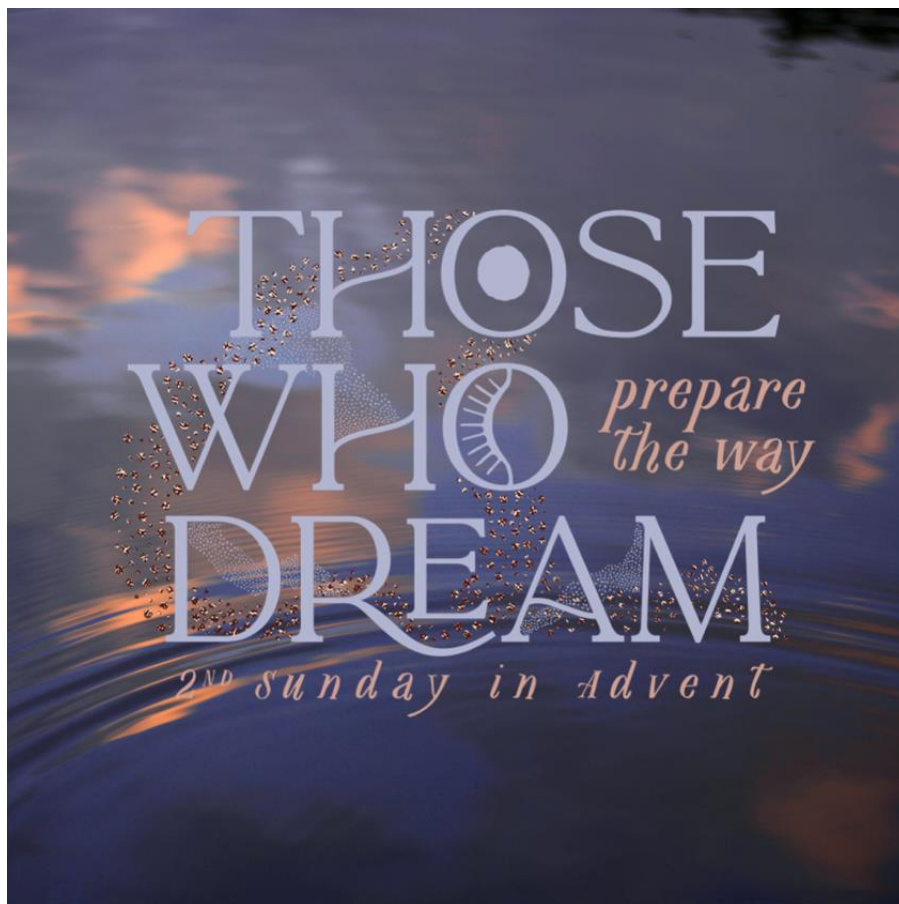
"A Community Of Many Faithing Communities Where All Belong!"

Living Waters Contemplative Life Center | Divine Intervention Ministry to the Homeless  
Tippecanoe just.good.food Garden | Food Justice Site PCUSA  
Arts and Science Literacy Camps for Children

# Welcome To Worship

December 10, 2023

9:30 a.m.



*Welcome to this time of being with God and each other.*

*"Those Who Dream...Prepare the Way for Peace"*

*Rev. Trish Eckert*

✧ **Welcoming music** ~ Tippe Musicians

*Singing bowl/Chimes*

✧ **Introit: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel**

O come, O come, thou Lord of might, /who to thy tribes on Sinai's height/  
in ancient times didst give the law/ in cloud and majesty and awe.

*Rejoice, Rejoice Emmanuel / shall come to you O Israel.*

O come, Desire of nations, bind/ all peoples in one heart and mind; /  
bid envy strife, and discord cease; /fill the whole world with heaven's peace.

*Rejoice, Rejoice Emmanuel / shall come to you O Israel.*

✧ **Prelude: Prepare the Way**, by Christopher Walker ~ Tippe Musicians

✧ **Welcome and community news**

- Be sure to read through the Tippe Newsletter, which was emailed to everyone this past Thursday, along with documents that detail the latest about our Divine Intervention ministry. We are seeking folks to serve alongside us in our Divine Intervention warming room – there are many ways to participate – check with Pastor Trish for details.
- We are invited to worship with Grace Presbyterian at Grace (2921 S Kinnickinnic Ave, Milwaukee 53207) on December 24<sup>th</sup> at 10 am for their Christmas Eve morning service: signup sheet for rides is available. Then, Tippe invites everyone to join us for our Christmas Eve service that afternoon at 4 pm.
- Sanctuary Time of Belonging is now gathering on Wednesdays at 6:30 pm weekly via Zoom – it's great to have a midweek option for worship – join us! The link is on our website and is sent out on Wednesdays via email.
- Amazing Faiths Dinner Dialogues for the month of December is actually a lunch! Wednesday, December 27<sup>th</sup> at noon at Prince of Peace Lutheran 4419 S Howell. You must register, so check with Pastor Trish or use the flier at the entrance to the sanctuary via this link: <https://tinyurl.com/AFDDinfo>

✧ **Readying Ourselves for Worship**

***Surely God is in this place, Holy Ground!***  
***Surely God is in this place,***  
***Holy Ground!***

## ✧ **A Poetry Prayer as we Center Ourselves in this Moment**

**Prepare** ~ Prayer by Sarah Are | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

My dad built me a changing table.  
For nine months, my mom watched her ankles swell and her belly grow.  
For nine months, my dad would come home from work, kiss her on her forehead—  
Pressing bangs to skin—and tell her she was beautiful.  
Then for nine months, he'd slip into the garage  
To build sawdust sandcastles and a dresser out of dreams.  
I imagine she smiled, perched in that rocking chair.  
He was in his woodshop, preparing the way.

Eighteen years later I left for college.  
As I packed my bags, my mom baked blueberry muffins for the road—the smell of  
home.  
She wrapped them in foil and placed them in a cardboard box,  
Willing similar layers of protection to be wrapped around me, her little girl.  
She was preparing the way.

My aunts and uncles bought sweatshirts in my new school colors.  
My dad taught me how to change a tire.  
My mom gave me the earrings I'd been sneaking from her jewelry box for the last four  
years.  
I hid sticky-note love letters on the kitchen door for them to find when they returned  
home.  
We were quiet in the car.  
My brother cried.  
We were all preparing the way.

And through these moments, I have come to see,  
That preparation and love can be the same thing.  
For there is something about love that makes us want to prepare.  
There is something about love that compels us to  
Throw open the doors,  
Yell it from the rooftop,  
Set the table,  
Decorate the nursery,  
Leave love notes on the back door,  
Build the changing table,  
Trim the tree,  
Bake muffins for the road,  
And when it's time,  
If you must,  
Let go.

Preparation and love can be the same thing.

## ✧ **Becoming Present to God and Each Other - Our Check-in**

### ~ **The Joy of Passing the Peace** ~

One: May the peace that surpasses all understanding be with you

All: **And also with you**

One: Thanks be to God

## ✧ **Gathering as God's People: *Those Who Dream***

This season's Advent theme comes from the opening lines of Psalm 126: "When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who dream." We are invited to consider what it looks like to live as those who dream, as we listen closely to the voices of those who dream: the prophets, the psalmists, the angels, Mary and the Magi, and this week, to John the Baptist, who prepares the way for the Messiah. He calls the crowds into the journey of repentance and transformation. Similarly, we are called to prepare the way for God's message of love and liberation to be shouted, heard, and received.

Throughout Advent, we step into the mystery and awe of God's dreams and pray they shape our reality. This theme is for the dreamers in all of us—those who dream of a deeper connection with God and those who dream of a better world. It's for those who dream of comfort and for those who have given up on their dreams. It's for those whose dreams have been crushed and for those who show us that dreams take time. Let us seek and sow God's dreams for our world.

## ✧ **While We are Waiting, Come**

*While we are waiting, come; while we are waiting, come.*

*Jesus, our Christ, Emmanuel, while we are waiting, come.*



## **Candle-lighting** ~ The Candle of Peace

A: I dream of the first pitch of opening season.

B: I dream of a laundry day, where each sock finds its mate.

A: I dream of family home for the holidays.

B: I dream of good books and homemade meals.

A: I dream of sunset drives with the windows down.

B: These are beautiful dreams, but I also have urgent dreams.

A: I dream of conversations across party lines.

✧ **Gathering Hymn *Dare to Dream***,  
by Betsy Gonwa (song sheets)

### ✧ **Opening Ourselves to God's Grace**

One: John the Baptist said, "Prepare the way." So family of faith, how do we prepare our minds for worship?

**All: We silence the inner critic.  
We let go of busy thoughts.  
We make space for God to speak.**

One: How do we prepare our *hearts* for worship?

**All: We bless all emotions.  
We feel what we feel.  
We open ourselves up to be moved.**

One: How do we prepare our bodies for worship?

B: I dream of more bridges and less walls.

A: I dream of more laughter and less fear.

B: I dream of more listening and less tears.

A: But most of all, I dream of peace like a river.

B: Today we light the candle of peace.

*Light candle.*

B: May it remind us that there is another way. Amen.



**All: We take in the scent, sight,  
and feel of this space.  
We breathe in God's mercy.  
We exhale God's love.**

One: How do we prepare our souls for worship?

**All: We bring our full selves into  
this space.  
We wear our hearts on our  
sleeves.  
We trust that even now, God is  
here.**

One: Family of faith, what we practice in worship, we must live out in our daily lives.

So prepare the way. Let us worship God.

✧ **Sharing our Innermost Lives with God**

One: Holy God,

I wish that peace was something I could buy.

I wish that peace could be ordered in a subscription service,  
found on a map,  
downloaded in an app,  
or voted for in a ballot.

I wish that peace was as easy as a one-time choice when I was feeling my best.

However, what I have found is that peace involves everyday decisions over and over,  
whether or not I am feeling my best.

So today I confess, in front of this community of faith,  
that I need your help in this Advent season.

Prepare the way for greater peace, and teach me how to be a part of it.

**All: May God forgive you. May God's guiding hand surround you.  
May you know comfort. May you know peace.**

One: Amen.

**All: Holy God,**

**We wish that peace was something we could buy.**

**We wish that peace could be ordered in a subscription service,  
found on a map,  
downloaded in an app,  
or voted for in a ballot.**

**We wish that peace was as easy as a one-time choice when we are feeling  
our best.**

**However, what we have found is that peace involves everyday decisions  
over and over,  
whether or not we are feeling our best.**

**So today I confess, in front of this community of faith,  
that I need your help in this Advent season.**

**Prepare the way for greater peace, and teach me how to be a part of it.**

One: May God forgive you. May God's guiding hand surround you.

May you know comfort. May you know peace.

**All: Thanks be to God. Amen.**



### ✧ **Prayer for Illumination**

God of Peace,

We must admit, there are a million things on our minds.

We would like to be as focused as John the Baptist—preparing the way,  
gathering the crowd,  
spreading the word of your arrival.

Maybe then we'd know peace.

However, more often than not, we are a swirling compilation of grocery lists,  
text messages, e-mails, and over-referenced to-do lists.

So today, we ask for your help in preparing the way.

Could you start with our ears, and then maybe move to our hearts?

We'd like to hear you more clearly.

Maybe then we'll know peace.

Gratefully we pray, Amen.

### ✧ **Affirmation of Faith**

**We believe that a voice cried out in the wilderness,**

**Saying, "Prepare the way of the Lord."**

**And so, we show up in church pews on cold, blustery days.<sup>3</sup>**

**We march toward justice.**

**We roll up our sleeves.**

**We plant trees for our children.**

**We make art.**

**We choose hope.**

**We gather at the Table.**

**We set an extra plate.**

**We sing loudly, with joy.**

**We share stories and wisdom.**

**We celebrate children.**

**We fall together.**

**We rise together.**

**We love together.**

**We do all these things because we believe that God loves us so much that  
God shows up here.**

**So we prepare and prepare for that next beautiful day.**

**May it be so. Amen.**

### ✧ **Music for Those Who Dream** *Advent Melody*

### ✧ **Prayer of Intention**

*Holy Spirit, may we hear your gracious Word for us today. May we grow in wisdom,  
strength, and love as we open our ears, our minds, and our hearts to the  
transformative message you have in store for each of us. Amen.*

## ✧Bible Wisdom Teachings

### Isaiah 40: 1-11

40 Comfort, O comfort my people,  
says your God.

<sup>2</sup> Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,  
and cry to her

that she has served her term,  
that her penalty is paid,  
that she has received from God's hand  
double for all her sins.

<sup>3</sup> A voice cries out:

“In the wilderness prepare the way of Yahweh;  
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

<sup>4</sup> Every valley shall be lifted up,  
and every mountain and hill be made low;  
the uneven ground shall become level,  
and the rough places a plain.

<sup>5</sup> Then the glory of the Sovereign shall be revealed,  
and all flesh shall see it together,  
for God has spoken.”

<sup>6</sup> A voice says, “Cry out!”

And I said, “What shall I cry?”  
All flesh is grass;  
their constancy is like the flower of the field.

<sup>7</sup> The grass withers; the flower fades,  
[when the breath of Yahweh blows upon it;  
surely the people are grass.

<sup>8</sup> The grass withers; the flower fades,]  
but the word of our Sovereign will stand forever.

<sup>9</sup> Get you up to a high mountain,  
O Zion, herald of good news;  
lift up your voice with strength,  
O Jerusalem, herald of good news;  
lift it up, do not fear;  
say to the cities of Judah,  
“Here is your God!”

<sup>10</sup> See, the Sovereign comes with might,  
whose arm rules;  
the reward is with God  
and God's recompense is before God.

<sup>11</sup> God will feed God's flock like a shepherd;  
God will gather in the lambs  
and carry them in God's bosom  
and gently lead the mother sheep.



## **Mark 1: 1-8**

**1** The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ.

**2** As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,

“See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,  
who will prepare your way,

**3** the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Sovereign;  
make the paths straight,’ ”

**4** so John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. **5** And the whole Judean region and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him and were baptized by him in the River Jordan, confessing their sins. **6** Now John was clothed with camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. **7** He proclaimed, “The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the the one’s sandals. **8** I have baptized you with water, but the one will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

One: May we hear anew the origin stories of our faith and draw from the roots of our tradition.

All: **Thanks be to our God.**

✧**Message** “Those Who Dream...Prepare the Way for Peace” Rev. Trish Eckert



## ✧**Reflection Questions**

Imagine yourself as one moving with the crowds, retreating to the margins of the wilderness to seek repentance and change.

- What risks are involved in your decision to respond to John the Baptist’s cries?
- What are you leaving behind?
- What are you sacrificing?

Consider:

- What are real-life examples of preparing the way?
- When has a dream interrupted or re-routed your life?

✧ **Short period of silent reflection**

✧ **Sharing Our Wisdom**

✧ **Hymn *Come Now O Prince of Peace* 103**

✧ **Our gifts of support**

As we prepare the way, how do we share our time, talents, and treasure? May we share in the abundance as we work for a world of peace and justice.

✧ **Community Prayers**

✧ **Pastoral Prayer**



## **The Lord's Prayer ~ Prayer in Time of War**

Our Father and Mother, who art in heaven,  
slow to anger, and of great mercy, lover of all the peoples of earth.  
Hallowed be thy Name.

Remind us that "all the nations are as nothing before thee,"  
their governments but a shadow of passing age.

Thy Kingdom come on earth.  
Grant to thy children throughout all the world,  
and especially to the leaders of the nations,  
the gift of prayerful thought and thoughtful prayer;  
that following the example of our God,  
we may discern what is right, and do it.

Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.  
Help us to protect and to provide for all who are hungry and homeless,  
especially those deprived of food and shelter, family and friends, by the tragedy of war;

Give us this day our daily bread.  
Forgive us for neglecting to "seek peace and pursue it,"  
and finding ourselves in each new crisis,  
more ready to make war than to make peace.

Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.  
Let us not seek revenge, but reconciliation,  
Let us not delight in victory, but in justice,  
Let us not give ourselves up to pride, but to prayer.

Lead us not into temptation.  
Be present to all your children ravaged by war;  
Be present to those who are killing  
    and to those who are being killed;  
Be present to the loved ones of those who are killing  
    and to the loved ones of those who are being killed;

Deliver us from evil.  
Subdue our selfish desires to possess and to dominate,  
and forbid us arrogance in victory.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory, forever and ever, Amen.  
This prayer is from Women's Uncommon Prayers, Morehouse Publishing, 2000.

✧ **Benediction**

May God our shepherd gather you in loving arms,  
May Christ Jesus reconcile justice and peace within you,  
And may the Holy Spirit baptize you into the life of God. Amen

*Now that the worship has ended, may the service truly begin.*

✧ **Our Response:**

***Holy One, now we your servants go in peace. Your Word lives on in us.***

✧ **Postlude** *Dona Nobis Pacem* ~ Tippe Musicians