

BETHEL MURDOCH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

9602 Murdoch-Goshen Road, Loveland, OH 45140

December 4, 2022 10:30 a.m.

**Celebrating 208 years of Faithful Service to Our God
The Second Sunday of Advent**

We Enter Into God's Presence

WELCOME

L: This is the day that the Lord has made

P: Let us rejoice and be glad in it!

THE PEACE

L: Since God has forgiven us in Christ, let us forgive one another.

The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

P: And also with you.

“SURELY THE PRESENCE”

Surely the presence of the LORD is in this place.

I can feel His mighty power and His grace.

I can hear the brush of angel's wings, I see glory on each face.

Surely the presence of the LORD is in this place.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES

We light these candles as a sign of the coming light of Christ. We light this candle for Hope. We light this candle for Peace.

Advent means coming.

We are preparing ourselves for the days when the nations shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them.

Let us walk in the light of the Lord.

CALL TO WORSHIP

L: A voice cries:

P: In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord

L: make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

P: We wait for new heavens and a new earth where righteousness is at home.

OPENING PRAYER

God of our salvation, you straighten the winding ways of our hearts and smooth the paths made rough by sin. Keep our conduct blameless, keep our hearts watchful in holiness, and bring to perfection the good you have begun in us. We ask this through him whose coming is certain, whose day draws near; your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. **Amen.**

HYMN: 106 “Prepare the Way, O Zion”

1. Prepare the way, O Zion, on your Christ is drawing near!
Let every hill and valley a level way appear.
Greet One who comes in glory, fore told in sacred story.
Oh, blest is Christ who came in God's most holy name.

2. He brings God's rule, O Zion; he comes from heaven above.
His rule is peace and freedom, and justice, truth, and love.
Lift high your praise resounding, for grace and joy abounding.
Oh, blest is Christ that came in God's most holy name.

3. Fling wide your gates, O Zion; on your Savior's rule embrace.
and tidings of salvation proclaim in every place.
All lands will bow rejoicing, their voices will adoration voicing.
Oh, blest is Christ that came in God's most holy name.

CALL TO CONFESSION:

Remember that our Lord Jesus can sympathize with us in our weaknesses, since in every respect he was tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with boldness approach the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor as we pray together saying,

PRAYER OF CONFESSION:

God of the future, you are coming in power to bring all nations under your rule. We confess that we have not expected your kingdom, for we live casual lives, ignoring your promised judgment. We accept lies as truth, exploit neighbors, abuse the earth, and refuse your justice and peace. In your mercy, forgive us. Grant us wisdom to welcome your way, and to seek things that will endure when Christ comes to judge the world.

SILENT PRAYER OF CONFESSION

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

L: The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting. I declare to you in the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. May the God of mercy who forgives you all your sins, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life.

P: We know that we are forgiven and we can be at peace. Thanks be to God! Amen.

***RESPONSE:**

“Gloria Patri”

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end.
Amen, Amen.

We Hear God’s Word

SPECIAL MUSIC: W&R 168 “Savior of the Nations, Come”

1 Savior of the nations, come show yourself the Virgin's Son.
Fill with wonder, all the earth, that our God chose such a birth.

2 Not by human power or seed did the woman’s womb conceive,
only by the Spirit’s breath was the Word of God made flesh,

3. Christ laid down his majesty, passed thro’ dark Gethsemane;
Though he left his Father’s home, Christ now sits on God’s own throne,

4. Christ in glory, intercede for your creatures’ suffering need;
Let your resurrecting power soon complete the victory hour

5. Praise to you, O Lord, we sing’ praise to Christ our newborn King!
With the Father, Spirit, one, let your lasting kingdom com.

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON: Isaiah 11:1-10

11 A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse;
from his roots a Branch will bear fruit.

²The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him—
the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding,

the Spirit of counsel and of might,
the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the LORD—
³ and he will delight in the fear of the LORD.
He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes,
or decide by what he hears with his ears;
⁴ but with righteousness he will judge the needy,
with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth.
He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth;
with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked.
⁵ Righteousness will be his belt
and faithfulness the sash around his waist.
⁶ The wolf will live with the lamb,
the leopard will lie down with the goat,
the calf and the lion and the yearling together;
and a little child will lead them.
⁷ The cow will feed with the bear,
their young will lie down together,
and the lion will eat straw like the ox.
⁸ The infant will play near the cobra's den,
and the young child will put its hand into the viper's nest.
⁹ They will neither harm nor destroy
on all my holy mountain,
for the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the LORD
as the waters cover the sea.
¹⁰ In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples; the
nations will rally to him, and his resting place will be glorious.

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON: Romans 15:4-13

⁴ For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that
through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement
they provide we might have hope.

⁵ May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the
same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had, ⁶ so that
with one mind and one voice you may glorify the God and Father of our
Lord Jesus Christ.

⁷ Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring
praise to God. ⁸ For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the

Jews on behalf of God's truth, so that the promises made to the patriarchs might be confirmed ⁹ and, moreover, that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written:

“Therefore I will praise you among the Gentiles;
I will sing the praises of your name.”

¹⁰ Again, it says,

“Rejoice, you Gentiles, with his people.”

¹¹ And again,

“Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles;
let all the peoples extol him.”

¹² And again, Isaiah says,

“The Root of Jesse will spring up,
one who will arise to rule over the nations;
in him the Gentiles will hope.”

¹³ May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

GOSPEL LESSON: Matthew 3:1-12

In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea ² and saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.” ³ This is he who was spoken of through the prophet Isaiah:

“A voice of one calling in the wilderness,
‘Prepare the way for the Lord,
make straight paths for him.’”

⁴ John's clothes were made of camel's hair, and he had a leather belt around his waist. His food was locusts and wild honey. ⁵ People went out to him from Jerusalem and all Judea and the whole region of the Jordan. ⁶ Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River.

⁷ But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to where he was baptizing, he said to them: “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? ⁸ Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. ⁹ And do not think you can say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up

children for Abraham. ¹⁰ The ax is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.

¹¹ “I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me comes one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹² His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor, gathering his wheat into the barn and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire.”

MESSAGE: *Live Into Hope* **Rev. Dr. Deborah Uchtman**

What a world we live in! If we wanted to, we could let the seemingly perpetual darkness of this time of year overcome our sense of well-being. We could focus on the gloom of the things that other people and we ourselves engage in: the disturbing actions, the discouraging words we hear or speak, and the overall sense of negativity. By doing so, we would be falling into the pit of our own murky thoughts where we would wallow in the feelings of obscurity and hopelessness that are so hard to overcome once they have taken root.

This is the way of evil in the world and it is manifested in the secular society we live in that separates itself from the sacred - the evil that strips away hope, love, joy and peace leaving a dark and dingy place devoid of light. We are left with feelings of frustration and anxiety knowing that somehow the world could be a very different place.

During this season of Advent, we recognize that the world can be a place of darkness; a place of war and hatred; a place of sorrow and desperation. And yet, once more, we hear the prophecy of the coming light when we will be taught God's ways and walk the trail that God has led us to walk. There will be a time when people will preach the good news of God's love to the lonely and pain-filled world. There will be a time when the machinery of war will be transformed into equipment to feed the people. A time when peace will reign and no nation will teach their young how to fight in battle. But because the current worldview of darkness is so encompassing, it is easy to become complacent and just go with the flow of the negativity around us.

Nevertheless Paul challenges us telling us to shake ourselves awake and wipe away the darkness that clouds our vision. As believers, we are to set aside the dark things that we have done: wild ways and drunkenness, depravity and recklessness, fighting and resentment all of which mire us in the darkness. We are called to repent asking for God's forgiveness and unburdening ourselves from carrying the guilt of those actions. Then with joy, we are to receive God's mercy and live with hope.

As Christians, we are to see how the coming light cuts a path in the darkness. We are to surround ourselves in the protective covering of the light so that we, as believers, can be proof of the amazing love of God to the world. We know that it is the same God who will send Jesus to be the light which takes away the darkness and sin of each one of us and the world.

I invite you to join me during this Advent season to Come - let us live into hope and walk in the light of the Lord.

We Respond with Thanksgiving
HYMN: 87 "Comfort, Comfort Now My People"

1. "Comfort, comfort now my people, tell of peace!" So says our God.
"Comfort those who sit in darkness mourning under sorrow's load.
To my people now proclaim that my pardon waits for them!
Tell them that their sins I cover, and their warfare now is over."

2 For the herald's voice is crying in the desert far and near,
calling us to true repentance since the reign of God is here.
O, that warning cry obey! Now prepare for God a way!
Let the valleys rise in meeting, and the hills bow down in greeting.

3 Straight shall be what long was crooked, and the rougher places plain!
Let your hearts be true and humble, as befits God's holy reign.
For the glory of the Lord now on earth is shed abroad,
and all flesh shall see the token that God's word is never broken.

**OFFERING (Please remember to mail your offering to Bethel
Murdoch Presbyterian Church, 9602 Murdoch Goshen Road,
Loveland, Ohio 45140)**

DOXOLOGY

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

I believe in God the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come again to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit; the holy catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen. (*The Apostles' Creed-Ecumenical*)

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE – (Please send your joys and concerns to the church email and we will publish them in the weekly ENews)

Let us pray,

Almighty God our creator, you made all things in your wisdom, and in your love you save us. We pray for the whole creation, especially in this time of crisis. Overthrow evil powers, right what is wrong, feed and satisfy those who thirst for justice, so that all your children may freely enjoy the earth you have made, and joyfully sing your praises.

Eternal God, you sent us a Savior, Christ Jesus, to break down the walls of hostility that divide us. Send peace on earth and put down greed, pride, and anger, which turn nation against nation and race against race. Speed the day when wars will end and the whole world accepts your rule.

O God, whom we cannot love unless we love our neighbors, remove hate and prejudice from us and from all people, so that your children may be reconciled with those we fear, or resent, and live together in your peace.

We ask healing for those who are sick, in pain or experiencing dis-ease in their lives.

We mourn with those who mourn, even while You welcome those who have taken their next step to be in heaven with you.

We share with joy the exciting things that have been happening.

We ask travel mercies on those who are traveling.

We take just a moment to pray for ourselves.

Almighty God, in Jesus Christ you taught us to pray and to offer our petitions to you in his name. Guide us by your Holy Spirit, that our prayers for others may serve your will and show your steadfast love. It is in the name of the same Jesus Christ our Lord that we pray. Amen.

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Invitation to the Lord's Table

Friends, this is the joyful feast of the people of God! They will come from north and south, from east and west, and sit at table in the kingdom of God. According to Luke, when our risen Lord was at table with his disciples, he took the bread, and blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him.

This is the Lord's Table. This is not just a Presbyterian table. This is the Lord's table. Our Savior invites those who trust him to share the feast which he has prepared.

Great Thanksgiving

L: The Lord be with you.

P: And also with you.

L: Lift up your hearts.

P: We lift them to the Lord.

L: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

P: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is truly right and our greatest joy to give you thanks and praise, O Lord our God, creator and ruler of the universe. You formed us in your image and breathed into us the breath of life. You set us in this world to love and serve you, and to live in peace with all that you have made. When we turned from you, you did not turn from us. When we were captives in slavery, you delivered us to freedom, and made covenant to be our sovereign God. When we were stubborn and stiff-necked, you spoke to us through prophets who looked for that day when justice shall triumph and peace shall reign over all the earth.

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with the celestial choirs and with all the faithful of every time and place, who forever sing to the glory of your name:

P: “Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.”

You are holy, O God of majesty, and blessed is Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord. You sent him into this world to satisfy the longings of your people for a Savior, to bring freedom to the captives of sin, and to establish justice for the oppressed. He came among us as one of us, taking the lot of the poor, sharing human suffering. We rejoice that in his death and rising again, you set before us the sure promise of new life, the certain hope of a heavenly home where we will sit at table with Christ our host.

Remembering your gracious acts in Jesus Christ, we take from your creation this bread and this wine, and joyfully celebrate his dying and rising, as we await the day of his coming. With thanksgiving we offer our very selves to you to be a living and holy sacrifice, dedicated to your service.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus:

Dying you destroyed our death, rising you restored our life. Lord Jesus, come in glory.

Gracious God, pour out your Holy Spirit upon us and upon these your gifts of bread and wine, that the bread we break and the cup we bless may be the communion of the body and blood of Christ. By your Spirit make us one with Christ, that we may be one with all who share this feast, united in ministry in every place. As this bread is Christ’s body for us, send us out to be the body of Christ in the world.

Strengthen us, O God, in the power of your Spirit to bring good news to the poor and lift blind eyes to sight, to lose the chains that bind and claim your blessing for all people. Keep us faithful in your service until Christ comes in final victory, and we shall feast with all your saints in the joy of your eternal realm.

Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor are yours, almighty God, now and forever. Amen.

Breaking of the Bread

The Lord Jesus, on the night of his arrest, took bread, and after giving thanks to God, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take, eat. This is my body, given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.

In the same way he took the cup, saying: This cup is the new covenant sealed in my blood, shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this in remembrance of me.

Every time you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the saving death of the risen Lord, until he comes.

Communion of the People - Invitation

The gifts of God for the people of God.

Prayer after Communion

Gracious God, you have graciously accepted us as living members of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, and you have fed us with spiritual food in the Sacrament of his body and blood. Send us now into the world in peace, and grant us strength and courage to love and serve you with gladness and singleness of heart; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

And now, with the confidence of the children of God, let us pray as we sing: 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.

Charge and Benediction

Be watchful, stand firm in your faith, be courageous and strong. Let all that you do be done in love. And as you go out, know that you take with you the love of God, the grace of Our Lord, Jesus Christ and the awesome power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Choral Amen
Postlude

We believe that our mission is to:

Bring people to Jesus

Equipping them for ministry

Teach them to love God and others

Heal the brokenhearted in loving family community

Enjoy God and each other

Live worshipful lives

Bethel Murdoch Presbyterian Church Contact Information

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Loveland, Ohio 45140

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POINSETTIA ORDER FORM



If you would like to make a purchase for a Poinsettia in honor or memory of someone, please attach \$10.00 for *each* poinsettia to this order form and return this form to the church office **by Monday, December 12th.**

Poinsettias can be picked up after the Christmas Eve Service.

Given by: _____

Phone # in case we have any questions: _____

(Circle one) Honor/Memory of: _____