



## GATHERING IN GOD'S NAME

**PRELUDE** "Joseph and Mary" English carol; arr. Kevin McChesney  
*As the prelude begins, you are invited to begin your personal preparation for worship.*

**SILENT MEDITATION**  
God came to us because he wanted to join us on the road, to listen to our story, and to help us realize that we are not walking in circles but moving towards the house of peace and joy. This is the great mystery of Christmas that continues to give us comfort and consolation; we are not alone on our journey...  
Henri J.M. Nouwen, *Gracias! A Latin American Journal*



**LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE OF PEACE**  
9:00 The Boyum Family (Jeff, Angela, and Marlys)  
11:10 The Justice Family (Chad, Emily, Max, and Luke)

**CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE (#83)** Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus **STUTTGART**

Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion, hope of all the earth thou art;  
dear de - sire of ev - ery na - tion, joy of ev - ery long - ing heart.

**ADVENT CALL TO WORSHIP** Philippians 4:6-7  
"Do not be anxious about anything,  
**but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.**  
And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding,  
**will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."**

## PRAISE AND ADORATION

**\*ADVENT HYMN #104** O Lord, How Shall I Meet You **VALET WILL ICH DIR GEBEN**  
(\*Please stand if you are able)

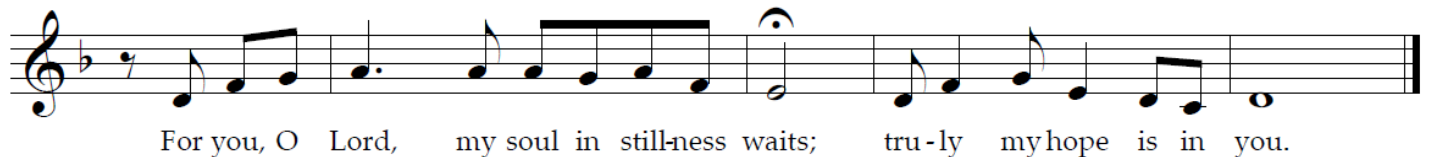
## CALL TO CONFESSION

## PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Eternal God, John the Baptist prepares the way by calling upon us to repent. We have failed to share as we should. We have failed to honor the poor and the oppressed. We have failed to bear fruit worthy of your salvation. Have mercy upon us, God. Heal and forgive us so we can welcome Christ with pure and genuine hearts. Amen.

## SILENT PRAYERS OF CONFESSION AND PETITION

**KYRIE ELEISON (#89)**      “For You, O Lord, My Soul in Stillness Waits”      MY SOUL IN STILLNESS WAITS  
Refrain:



## ASSURANCE OF PARDON

**\*GLORIA PATRI (#583)**      “Glory to God”      GLORIA (Taizé)



**WELCOME**      *During the welcome, children are invited to come forward for a time with Dr. Zieman*

## TIME FOR YOUNG DISCIPLES

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**MOMENT FOR MISSION**      Linda Reimer, Executive Director of the Omaha Street School

**THE OLD TESTAMENT LESSON**      Isaiah 40: 1-11      page 581 of the pew Bible

## FELLOWSHIP OF PRAYER

### JOYS AND CONCERNS

### PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

#### The 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.

**ANTHEM**      “The First Noel”      arr. Sandra Eithun

# PROCLAMATION OF GOD'S WORD

THE GOSPEL LESSON

Mark 1: 1-8

page xxx of the pew Bible

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

"Preparing the Way of the Lord"

Dr. Zieman

## \*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

from A Brief Statement of Faith (1991)

In a broken and fearful world the Spirit gives us courage to pray without ceasing, to witness among all peoples to Christ as Lord and Savior, to unmask idolatries in church and culture, to hear the voices of peoples long silenced, and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace. In gratitude to God, empowered by the Spirit, we strive to serve Christ in our daily tasks and to live holy and joyful lives, even as we watch for God's new heaven and new earth, praying, Come, Lord Jesus!

## \*SANCTUS

"Holy, Holy, God Almighty"

DIVINUM MYSTERIUM

Ho - ly, ho - ly, God al - mighty, — Heav'n and earth Your prais - ses sing!

Shout Ho - san - nas to the Sav - iour, Bless - ing, hon - or to - the King.

In the name of the Lord, the bear - er of light tri - umphs o'er the dark of night

ev - er - more and ev - er - more. — A - men.

# RECEPTION OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS

OFFERTORY

"O Come, All Ye Faithful"

arr. Ron Mallory

## \*DOXOLOGY (#607)

"Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow"

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.

## \*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Gracious God, accept these gifts in grateful response for your generosity. May these gifts bring joy to those most in need of Christ's mission and ministry. Amen.

**\*ADVENT HYMN #106**

Prepare the Way, O Zion

BEREDEN VAG FOR HERRAN

**\*CHARGE AND BENEDICTION**

**POSTLUDE**

“Bring a Torch, Jeannette Isabella”

David Cherwin

### SERVING IN MINISTRY TODAY

**Liturgist**

Staci Voss, member of the Membership Committee

**Music**

Carillon Choir, Larry Frederickson, director; Zach Metzger, Roger Utman, Steve Niles, Anne Laws, Shanna Mathia, Kristin Jacobi, Cindy Garner, Linda Matson, Ann Pearson, Kathy Jerry, Charlotte Hubbard, Marietta Morhardt, Sue Freyer, Ginger Peterson, Jane Hawkins, Myrna Vasta, Mary Lynn Bennett, and Jayne Frederickson

Mark Kanitz, organ

**Childcare Ministry**

Kari Bernet, Chelsea Spielman, Brandon Fisher

**Ushers**

9:00 Jim Miller, Captain, Linda Miller, Gary and Marsha Marron, Frank McMullen  
11:10 Tim Goodman, Captain, Kris Goodman, Judy Sundberg, Barb and Dan Scanlan

**Greeters**

9:00 North Door: John Bennett Welcome Center Anne Wattles  
11:10 North Door: Bob and Judy Thomas Welcome Center: Nancy Anderson

**Information Center**

9:00 Mary Ann Pederson 11:10 Sue Meusey

**Coffee Host**

John Sparks

### STAFF

Rev. Marshall Zieman, D. Min.	Pastor, Head of Staff	marshall@pcoc.us
Kristi Treu, M.A. Music	Director of Music, Executive Director Vesper Concerts	kristi@pcoc.us
Heather Berry	Christian Education Director	heather@pcoc.us
Rock Sumner	Business Administrator	rock@pcoc.us
Christian Fritz, Gayle Kerr-McFadden	Communications Team	communications@pcoc.us
Julie Hansen	Office Administrator	churchofthecross@pcoc.us
Mark Kanitz	Organist	
Rev. Kirk Ryckman, D. Min.	Pastor Emeritus	

Please note: If you would like to have an item included in the Bulletin Announcements, the deadline for submissions is Wednesday night each week. Once an item has been submitted, it will be included automatically until the event has passed. Send your information to [communications@pcoc.us](mailto:communications@pcoc.us). Thank you!



# Announcements

For the week of December 10, 2023

## The Week Briefly

### Sunday, December 10

- 9:00 Worship
- 10:00 Children's/Youth Sunday School, Coffee Fellowship
- 11:00 Caring & Sharing at Don and Millie's
- 11:10 Worship
- 12:00 Session Meeting
- 4:00 Quiet Christmas with Communion
- 4:15 Serve dinner at Siena Francis House
- 4:45 SHF/JHF Youth Fellowship

### Monday, December 11

- 9 & 11 Music and Movement
- 10:00 Tai Chi
- 5:00 APNC Meeting
- 6:30 Christian Education Committee

### Tuesday, December 12

- 7:00 Men's Bible Study
- 9:30 Staff Meeting
- 11:30 49er's at Wheatfields
- 1:00 Tuesday Bible Study
- 1:00 Active Minds
- 5:30 Membership Committee
- 6:00 Vesper Board Meeting
- 6:30 Mission Committee

### Wednesday, December 13

- 5:30 Chamber Singers
- 6:30 Alleluia Singers

### Thursday, December 14

- 9 & 11 Music and Movement
- 10:00 Tai Chi
- 11:30 Educator's Lunch
- 12:00 Serve lunch at OSS

### Friday, December 15 **Cross Currents Deadline**

- 10:00 Worship & Music Meeting and Poinsettia set up

### Saturday, December 16

- 10:00 Choir and Orchestra Rehearsal
- 10-4 Presbyterian Men Ring Bells

### Sunday, December 17 - Pantry Sunday

- 9:00 Worship
- 10:00 Coffee Fellowship
- 11:10 Worship
- 4:30 SHF/JHF Movie Night
- 5:00 Fellowship Club

**Joys and Concerns.** James Ussery passed away on December 1. His Memorial Service was held on December 7 at Roeder's Mortuary.

**TODAY is a Caring & Sharing Day!** Stop by Don & Millie's at 108th & Center to grab lunch from 11 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Tell them you're with PCOC, and 20% of your bill comes back to us to support next year's JHF Mission Trip.

**Quiet Christmas TODAY at 4:00 p.m.** This late afternoon service is a perfect way to pause the hectic pace of the season and recenter. Advent is a time to watch, wait, and prepare for the coming of the Messiah. The service will feature scripture and softer seasonal music to create a time for God to find us this season.

**Tables for Eight – Register TODAY!** It's the last day to sign up for the Winter Session (January, February, March, April) of Tables for Eight. New participants (couples or singles) are always welcome to join this fellowship opportunity. You can choose to be a "regular" or a "substitute." Details are on the Tables for Eight on the registration form, which is available at the Information Desk in the Welcome Center and online. For the upcoming Winter Session, current "regular" members are automatically assigned to a new group and "substitutes" will remain on the list unless you notify Pam Otto. If you dropped out last session and want to return as a regular or substitute, please contact Pam.

**Serve at Siena Francis House TODAY.** If you'd like to be a last minute volunteer from 4:15 to 6:15 p.m., contact Keith Allen.

**Nominate an Officer Today!** In the Presbyterian Church, we have the privilege and responsibility of nominating and electing our own congregational leaders. Now is the time to nominate a new class of Elders and Deacons. Your input is both appreciated and necessary! Forms are available online, in the Church Office, and at the Information Desk. The deadline is December 17. Questions? Contact a member of the church nominating committee: John Bennett, John Fettig, Susan Geschwender, Pam Swenson, Mimi Bauer, and Lowell Wilhite.

**Active Minds on Tuesdays.** Active Minds fellowship will be playing mah-jongg for November and December until we break for the Christmas holidays. Want to learn or just curious? We play from 1:00-4:00 p.m. in the lower-level Great Room. A table or two will also be starting after Bible Study, starting at 2:00 p.m. We will also have Sequence and Dominoes available for these weeks. Please let Earlene Uhrig know if you plan to join us, so we have adequate game sets and cards.

**Presbyterian Men Bell Ringing on December 16.** Help ring bells for the Salvation Army's Christmas campaign on Saturday, December 16 at Hy-Vee on 132nd and Dodge. Each volunteer rings during a 1-hour shift from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. We will have two ringers at each door (east and west) per shift. This is an easy, enjoyable opportunity to assist the Salvation Army's efforts in helping those in need this Christmas. Please sign up at the Information Desk by Sunday, December 10. Thanks to Jim Chapin for coordinating this activity.

**December 17 is Pantry Sunday!** Bring your food and hygiene items to Sunday worship next week, or drop them inside the Circle Drive doors at church anytime. Donations go to the Heartland Hope Mission pantry. The most needed food and hygiene items can be found on the church website.

**Advent Alleluias & Coffee Fellowship on December 17.** Alleluia and Chamber Singers and Resound Ensemble will be joined by a professional chamber orchestra and guest soloists on Sunday morning, December 17 at both worship services at 9:00 a.m. and 11:10 a.m. The choir will present choral works for Advent and Christmas. The congregation will join in singing beloved hymns and carols.

The Congregational Life Committee invites you to bring treats to share at Coffee Fellowship that day. Please have items already cut and ready to serve. Thank You!



**Fellowship Club Christmas Party on December 17.** After a several year hiatus, the Fellowship Club is back! Join us for a Christmas Party and gift exchange on Sunday, December 17 at 5:00 p.m. in the Welcome Center. Couples and singles are welcome to attend. Each person attending is asked to bring a gift not to exceed \$25. White elephant gifts are welcome. Each couple or single is asked to bring an appetizer or dessert. Non-alcoholic seasonal beverages will be provided.

**College & Young Adult Christmas Party on December 22.** The College and Young Adult Christmas Party will be hosted at the home of Chris and Staci Voss on Friday, December 22 at 5:30 p.m. Parents, look for an invitation in your mailboxes and encourage your college-age kids to attend. Please spread the word and don't forget to RSVP to Staci Voss. We hope to see you there!

**Book Group on December 20.** PCOC Book Group will meet Wednesday, December 20 from 5:15 to 6:30 p.m. to review *Women Who Built Omaha* by Eileen Wirth. All readers are welcome! Questions? Contact Charlotte Hubbard.

**Breast Cancer Support Group.** For anyone currently diagnosed with Breast Cancer. Contact Karen Morey or Heather Berry for more information.

**The deadline for the January 2024 issue** of the Cross Currents is this Friday, December 15. Send your submissions to [communications@pcoc.us](mailto:communications@pcoc.us).

## Christmas Projects and Mission Giving

**Presbyterian Women's Gifting Gals Project.** For a special project to benefit Heartland Hope Mission's lady clients, the Presbyterian Women's circle is collecting scarves and gloves in December. If you would like to help this effort, you can find their donation bin next to HHM's blue bin inside the Circle Drive doors. Thank you! Questions? Contact Cindy Nisley.

**Presbyterian Women Christmas Project.** The Presbyterian Women have a Christmas Project for the kids through Heartland Hope Mission. They are collecting crayons, pencils, erasers, and candy to stuff Christmas Stockings. Find the poster and donation bin in the Lobby by the office.

**Angel Giving Tree for HHM Families.** Our JHF group decorated the Angel Tree in the Narthex. Please take an angel, buy a gift for a child in need, and return it to the church. Instructions and due dates are printed on each angel. The gifts will be delivered to Heartland Hope Mission where families in need can pick out presents for their children in December.

**Wooden Mission Giving Tree.** You'll find our wooden mission giving tree in the Narthex outside the Library. Use the donation envelopes to give to one of the PCOC missions listed on the tree.

# What child is this?

**Christmas Joy Offering.** In December, we participate in the PCUSA Christmas Joy offering. The funds from this offering are divided. One half of the collection goes to support our pastor retirement fund, and the other half is divided to support children in need in our community through three of our local charities: Completely Kids, CASA Douglas County, and CASA Sarpy County. Use the special envelopes in the pews or write "Christmas Joy" on a blue envelope.



THE PERFECT GIFT.



### Holiday Church Services & Closings

**Sunday, December 24**

Regular worship at 11:10 a.m. only  
Christmas eve services at 5 & 7:00 p.m.

**Monday, December 25**

Closed

**Tuesday, December 26**

Closed

**Sunday, December 31**

Single worship service at 11:10 a.m.

**Monday, January 1**

Closed

## Coming in 2024...

**Sunday, January 7, 2023.** We return to our regular schedule of worshipping at 9:00 and 11:10, with the Coffee Fellowship Hour and Sunday School at 10:00.

**Bach's St. Matthew Passion Class Sundays, January 7 – February 11 at 10:00 a.m.** Bach considered his St. Matthew Passion his "Great" Passion, his greatest work. To many musicians and music scholars, it is his greatest work. In this class led by Cindy Sloan, we will listen to and study five sections of the Passion focusing on the compositional process, the theological issues presented through the music, and discuss what we all hear and feel in the music. Sign up online by December 25!

**Cornerstone Resumes January 10.** Looking for something to do on Wednesday nights? Want to grow closer to God and build community with people at church? Then, join us at Cornerstone! Gathering mid-week to study, sing, and sup with your church family is just what you need. Look for more details soon, and register online by January 1.

**New Member Discussion on January 14, 2024.** Do you know someone who is looking for a church home? Invite them to visit this month — Advent at Church of the Cross is a wonderful time of year to show off what our church has to offer! Our next New Member Discussion will be on Sunday, January 14, 2024 after the worship service. The discussion will last about an hour, and a light lunch will be provided. Sign up online or call the church office to register!

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### Presbyterian Church of the Cross

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Email: [churchofthecross@pcoc.us](mailto:churchofthecross@pcoc.us) | Website: [churchofthecrossomaha.org](http://churchofthecrossomaha.org)  
Office Hours: Monday-Friday 9:00-4:30

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Scan to Go to Our  
Online Signup Page

