The Worship of God
1st Sunday of Advent – December 3, 2023 – 9:00 Morning Worship
Welcome to First Presbyterian Church via Zoom!

PRELUDE
“Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence”

Alex Rowley

WELCOME

GATHERING AROUND GOD’S WORD

CALL TO WORSHIP
In God’s house, we can be joyful.
We can be grateful.
We can be hopeful.
In God’s house, we can be weary.
We can be anxious.
We can be grieving.
In God’s house, we can be honest—
inspired or tired,
delighted or doubtful,
connected or curious,
and everything in between.
This is God’s house.
You are welcome exactly as you are.
Let us worship our loving God.

SING
“People, Look East”
#105

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING
Jan: How does a weary world hope?
Margie: By telling stories of hope, by lighting candles in the night,
and planting seeds in the winter that will bloom in the spring.
By praying for children as they grow, and picking up trash on the sidewalk.
By insisting that small acts can make a difference.
Jan: There are a million ways to practice hope.
So today we light the candle of hope as a reminder and a charge.
(Light the candle of hope)
Margie: With God’s help, may we bring hope into a weary world.
Amen.

SING
“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”
#88 VS 1 & 5

PRAYER OF CONFESSION
Gracious God, we are weary.
For weary bodies that ache and cry out, we pray:
   forgive us for pushing ourselves too hard.
Remind us that we deserve Sabbath rest.
For weary minds that feel overwhelmed and saturated with news, we pray:
   forgive us for creating so many distractions.
Remind us that in the quiet, we can hear you.

For weary hearts that long to feel the joy of this season, we pray:
   forgive us for being impatient with ourselves.
Remind us that healing takes time, and that joy and grief can coexist.

For the weary edges of our faith that struggle to hold onto hope, forgive us.
Remind us that your good news knows no bounds. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON
Family of faith,
   no matter how many times we wear ourselves thin,
   no matter how many times we lose ourselves to distractions,
   no matter how many times we ask ourselves, “How can this be?”
God’s love keeps showing up for us.
So, say this with me:
We are loved. We are claimed. We are forgiven.
Thanks be to God.

SHARING GOD’S PEACE
I invite you to turn to one another and share a sign of peace:
You’re invited to unmute yourselves and exchange peace with one another.

LISTENING TO GOD’S WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

FIRST LESSON
Isaiah 64:1-9

SECOND LESSON
Luke 1:1-25
...The Word of God for the people of God. Thanks be to God.

REFLECTION
Chaplain Tim Haworth

RESPONDING TO GOD’S WORD

SING
“Soon and Very Soon” #384

GIVING OUR GIFTS

DOXOLOGY
“Gloria in Excelsis Deo! Gloria in Excelsis Deo!”

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING
Generous Creator, giver of every good gift:
   may our offerings keep the life of those gifts circulating.
Accept, we pray, these tokens of our gratitude for all we have received.
May they be of use in extending the work of our community
to the world beyond our walls.
PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE FROM THE CHAT WINDOW

THE LORD’S PRAYER (debts & debtors)

SENDING INTO GOD’S WORLD

SING

“Let all Mortal Flesh Keep Silence”

SENDING

Family of faith, as you leave this place,
you go into a weary world—so speak tenderly.
Do the good that is yours to do.
Choose connection.
Hold onto hope.
And remember that Christ took on flesh for you.
You are God’s beloved.
So go rejoicing.
The world needs it.

Amen.

POSTLUDE

“Sleepers, Wake! A Voice is Calling”

Johann Sebastian Bach