

**MAPLEWOOD
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH**



Today's poinsettia arrangement is provided by Barbara Schoener in honor of her late husband's birthday.

LIGHTING OF THE SECOND CANDLE OF ADVENT

Congregational Response:

Gracious God, Grant that we may find peace as we prepare for our Lord's coming. May our personal divisions be peacefully resolved. May there be peace in our cities and in the countries of our world. Jesus, you are the Prince of Peace; help us to see the paths of peace in our lives, and then give us courage to follow them. Amen.

HYMN *Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus*

Come, thou long expected Jesus,
born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us,
let us find our rest in thee.
Israel's strength and consolation,
hope of all the earth thou art;
dear desire of every nation,
joy of every longing heart.

Born thy people to deliver,
born a child and yet a King,
born to reign in us forever,
now thy gracious kingdom bring.
By thine own eternal spirit
rule in all our hearts alone;
by thine all sufficient merit,
raise us to thy glorious throne.

Invitation to Reflection
Prepare the way of the Lord!
Let every heart prepare him room!
Let us open our lives to the coming of the Lord

ADVENT PRAYER OF PREPARATION

—based on Psalm 85:7-13

**Show us your unfailing love, O God, our Savior,
and grant us your salvation.**

Listen to what the Lord our God says:
he promises peace to his people,
to his beloved saints.

**The Lord will indeed give what is good.
Righteousness goes before him,
and justice prepares the way for his steps.
May the Lord make his face to shine upon us
in this time of Advent preparation.
May we see God's face and thus know peace.**

WORDS OF ASSURANCE—from Isaiah 40:1

*Comfort, comfort now my people, says your God.
Beloved, know this:
Your sins are forgiven.
The Lord, Emmanuel, abides with you.
The peace announced by the angels is at hand.*

Thanks be to God!



RESPONSE *On Jordan's Bank, the Baptist's Cry*

On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry
announces that the Lord is nigh.
Awake and harken, for he brings
glad tidings of the King of kings!

Then cleansed be every life from sin:
make straight the way for God within,
and let us all our hearts prepare
for Christ to come and enter there.

We hail you as our Savior, Lord,
our refuge and our great reward.
Without your grace we waste away
like flowers that wither and decay.

Lay on the sick your healing hand
and make the fallen strong to stand;
show us the glory of your face
till beauty springs in every place.

All praise, eternal Son, to Thee
whose advent sets thy people free,
whom with the Father we adore,
and Holy Spirit, evermore.

SCRIPTURE READING: Isaiah 9:2-6 and
Luke 1:67-79

This is the Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God!

MESSAGE Pathways of Peace



HYMN *It Came Upon the Midnight Clear*

It came upon the midnight clear,
that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth
to touch their harps of gold:
"Peace on the earth, good will to all,
from heaven's all-gracious King."
The world in solemn stillness lay,
to hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come
with peaceful wings unfurled,
and still their heavenly music floats
o'er all the weary world;
above its sad and lowly plains,
they bend on hovering wing,
and ever o'er its Babel sounds
the blessed angels sing.

And ye, beneath life's crushing load,
whose forms are bending low,
who toil along the climbing way
with painful steps and slow,
look now! for glad and golden hours
come swiftly on the wing.
O rest beside the weary road,
and hear the angels sing!

For lo! the days are hastening on,
by prophet seen of old,
when with the ever-circling years
shall come the time foretold
when peace shall over all the earth
its ancient splendors fling,
and the whole world send back the song
which now the angels sing.

**PRAYERS OF GOD'S PEOPLE
AND THE LORD'S PRAYER**

Let us pray for all in need this day, and for our world,
especially at this time of coronavirus pandemic...



OFFERING

DOXOLOGY

*This, this is Christ the King,
whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
haste, haste to bring him laud,
the babe, the son of Mary.*

PRAYER OF DEDICATION AND THANKSGIVING

Gracious God, we give because you first gave to us, and to the world, the gift of your Son Jesus. May our offerings, and the offering of our lives, promote the peace of Christ that endures and sustains each of us, and the world. Through Christ the Lord, Amen.



HYMN *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*

Hark! the herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn King:
peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled!"
Joyful, all ye nations, rise,
join the triumph of the skies;
with th'angelic hosts proclaim,
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

Refrain:

Hark! the herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn King"

Christ, by highest heaven adored,
Christ, the everlasting Lord,
late in time behold him come,
offspring of the Virgin's womb:
veiled in flesh the Godhead see;
hail th'incarnate Deity,
pleased with us in flesh to dwell,
Jesus, our Immanuel. **[Refrain]**

Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace!
Hail the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
risen with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by,
born that we no more may die,
born to raise us from the earth,
born to give us second birth. **[Refrain]**

BENEDICTION

May the grace of Christ attend you,
The love of God surround you,
And the Holy Spirit keep you,
That you may live in faith,
Abound in hope,
And grow in love,
Now and forevermore.
And all of God's people said, Amen!

"As the Father has sent me, so I send you."
- John 20:21

