

**MAPLEWOOD
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH**



LIGHTING OF THE FIRST CANDLE OF ADVENT

Congregational Response:

**Loving God, as we remember with longing
the coming of a Savior,
give us patience and trust,
as we put our hope in you alone.
Help us make room in our hearts,
for Jesus is our hope. Amen.**

HYMN *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*

O come, O come, Immanuel,
and ransom captive Israel
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear.

Refrain:

Rejoice! Rejoice! Immanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.

O come, O Wisdom from on high,
who ordered all things mightily;
to us the path of knowledge show
and teach us in its ways to go. **[Refrain]**

O come, O Branch of Jesse's stem,
unto your own and rescue them!
From depths of hell your people save,
and give them victory o'er the grave. **[Refrain]**

O come, O Key of David, come
and open wide our heavenly home.
Make safe for us the heavenward road
and bar the way to death's abode. **[Refrain]**

O come, O King of nations, bind
in one the hearts of all mankind.
Bid all our sad divisions cease
and be yourself our King of Peace. **[Refrain]**

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
AND CONFESSION**

In this Advent season of waiting on the Lord,

**we trust in the Lord's goodness.
We rely on his mercy.
We find shelter in his steadfast love.**

In this Advent season of waiting on the Lord,

**we walk in the Lord's way.
We follow his example of love.
We keep our promises.**

In this Advent season of waiting,

**Lord, forget our sins.
Remember your love.
Remember each one of us.
Remember your people everywhere.**

In this Advent season of waiting,

**Lord, we wait for your salvation.
We wait for your leading.
We wait for your coming.**

(time for silent prayer and reflection)

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!

PRAYERS OF PEACE

Pray the peace of Christ for family and loved ones,
neighbors and acquaintances,
friends and enemies,
people and places around the world.



RESPONSE *Canticle of the Turning*

My soul cries out with a joyful shout
that the God of my heart is great,
and my spirit sings of the wondrous things
that you bring to the ones who wait.
You fixed your sight on your servant's plight,
and my weakness you did not spurn,
so from east to west shall my name be blest.
Could the world be about to turn?
My heart shall sing of the day you bring.
Let the fires of your justice burn.
Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near
and the world is about to turn!

Though I am small, my God, my all,
you work great things in me,
and your mercy will last from the depths
of the past to the end of the age to be.
Your very name puts the proud to shame,
and to those who would for you yearn,
you will show your might,
put the strong to flight,
for the world is about to turn.
My heart shall sing of the day you bring.
Let the fires of your justice burn.
Wipe away all tears,
for the dawn draws near
and the world is about to turn!

From the halls of power to the fortress tower,
not a stone will be left on stone.
Let the king beware for your
justice tears every tyrant from his throne.
The hungry poor shall weep no more,
for the food they can never earn;
there are tables spread,
Every mouth be fed,
for the world is about to turn.
My heart shall sing of the day you bring.
Let the fires of your justice burn.
Wipe away all tears,
for the dawn draws near
And the world is about to turn!

Though the nations rage from age to age
we remember who holds us fast:
God's mercy must deliver us
from the conqueror's crushing grasp.
This saving word that our forebears heard
is the promise which holds us bound.
till the spear and rod can be
crushed by God,
who is turning the world around.
My heart shall sing of the day you bring.
Let the fires of your justice burn.
wipe away all tears
for the dawn draws near
And the world is about to turn!

SCRIPTURE READING:

Isaiah 11:1-6 and
Romans 8:18-25

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



MESSAGE *Hope in a Liminal Season*

HYMN *Now the Heavens Start to Whisper*

Now the heavens start to whisper,
as the veil is growing thin.
Earth from slumber wakes to listen
to the stirring, faint within:
seed of promise, deeply planted,
child to spring from Jesse's stem!
Like the soil beneath the frost-line,
hearts grow soft to welcome him.

Heavy clouds that block the moonlight
now begin to drift away.
Diamond brilliance through the darkness
shines the hope of coming day.
Christ, the morning start of splendor,
gleams within a world grown dim.
Heaven's ember fans to fullness;
hearts grow warm to welcome him.

Christ, eternal Sun of justice,
Christ, the rose of wisdom's seed,
come to bless with fire and fragrance
hours of yearning, hurt, and need.
In the lonely, in the stranger,
in the outcast, hid from view;
child who comes to grace the manger,
teach our hearts to welcome you.

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

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Christ, all people here below;
Praise Holy Spirit ever more;
Praise triune God, whom we adore. Amen.*

PRAYER OF DEDICATION AND THANKSGIVING

**God of hope, you gave your son to free a lost world,
and to bring hope for a future that is filled with
what is good and right.
May our giving be used so that many others will
taste and see your goodness,
that they may also be filled with hope.
Through Christ our Lord, amen.**

HYMN *People, Look East*

People, look east. The time is near
of the crowning of the year.
Make your house fair as you are able,
trim the hearth and set the table.
People, look east and sing today:
Love, the Guest, is on the way.

Furrows, be glad. Though earth is bare,
one more seed is planted there.
Give up your strength the seed to nourish,
that in time the flower may flourish.
People, look east and sing today:
Love, the Rose, is on the way.

Birds, though you long have ceased to build,
guard the nest that must be filled.
Even the hour when wings are frozen
He for fledging time has chosen.
People, look east and sing today:
Love, the Bird, is on the way.

Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim
one more light the bowl shall brim,
shining beyond the frosty weather,
bright as sun and moon together.
People, look east and sing today:
Love, the Star, is on the way.

Angels, announce with shouts of mirth
He, who brings new life to earth.
Set every peak and valley humming
With the word, the Lord is coming.
People, look east and sing today:
Love, the Lord, is on the way.



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

