THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

First Presbyterian Church 1573 N. Highland Avenue Jackson, TN 38301 731-422-1591 fpcjacksontn.org

Third Sunday of Advent

December 13, 2020

PRAYER FOR MEDITATION: *O Lord Jesus Christ, the Way, the Truth, and the Life: Do not let us stray from you, the Way, nor to distrust you, the Truth, nor to rest in anything other than you, the Life. Amen.*

RINGING OF THE CHIMES

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE *Sonata No. 1 in D Major* *Joey Moore, trumpet*
Allegro pomposo
Andante maestoso
Allegro ma non troppo

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE *Eden and Amy Smith*

Leader: We light this candle as a sign of the coming light of Christ. Advent means coming.
People: ***We are preparing for the days when the nations shall beat their swords into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.***
(The first purple Advent candle is lighted)
Leader: The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid,
People: ***the calf and the lion and the fatling will lie down together, and a little child shall lead them.***
(The second purple Advent candle is lighted)
Leader: The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom;
People: ***like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice with joy and singing.***
(The third pink Advent candle is lighted)
Leader: Let us walk in the light of the Lord.
People: ***Amen. Let us worship God.***

HYMN **88** *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* (1 Verse) arr. by Alexander

TO PRAISE GOD AND CONFESS OUR SINS

PRAYER OF CONFESSION *Rev. Courtney Bowen*

Leader: Merciful God, we would not be here if you had not chosen to touch our lives with your love. We cannot hide our wonder that you should choose to enter our world and our lives in person - in Jesus. Yet we confess that we sometimes are tempted to not put you first in our lives—when we are faced, often daily, with choices that affect how we live as your faithful people—choices about how we share the gifts you have given us. *(continued)*

ALL: ***Forgive us when the choices we make reflect not your glory but our own selfishness.***

Leader: Forgive us when the choices we make revolve around judging or condemning others without first listening to their stories.

ALL: ***Forgive us when the choices we make contribute to our own prosperity and wellbeing while ignoring the needs of others.***

Leader: Forgive us when the choices we make diminish our awareness of you, O God, in the midst of those who suffer.

All: ***Gracious and loving God, strengthen us where we are weak with the renewing power of your Spirit so that the choices we make clearly reveal our identity as your faithful people, and as sincere and devoted followers of Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord - in whose name we pray. Amen.***

SILENT PRAYERS OF CONFESSION AND REPENTANCE

***ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS** *Rev. Courtney Bowen*

Leader: Out of love for the world, God chose to share our humanity in the person of Jesus Christ, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. *(John 3:16)*

All: **The good news therefore is this: In Jesus Christ we are accepted, we are loved, we are forgiven.**
Thanks be to God!

HYMN 105 *People Look East* (Verses 1, 5) arr. by Bertolozzi

THE WORD

A TIME WITH THE CHILDREN *Rev. John White*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER *Rev. John White*

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION *Rev. Courtney Bowen*

OLD TESTAMENT READING *Isaiah 61:8-11* *Rev. Courtney Bowen*
(page 692 in the pew Bibles)

NEW TESTAMENT READING *John 3:16-17* *Rev. John White*
(page 94 in the pew Bibles)

SERMON *"Agape"* *Rev. John White*

**Congregation standing, if able*

RESPONSE

***AFFIRMATION OF FAITH** (John 3:16-17) *Rev. Courtney Bowen*

For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. "Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

HYMN 110 *Love Has Come* (Verses 1, 3) arr. by Tornquist

OFFERING *Rev. Courtney Bowen*

*Doxology (Tune: 591) OLD HUNDREDTH

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.

*Dedicatory Prayer *Rev. John White*

SENDING

***CHARGE** *Rev. John White*

***BENEDICTION** *Rev. John White*

***POSTLUDE** *Hallelujah Chorus* Handel

Joey Moore, trumpet