



Second Sunday of Advent  
December 10, 2023  
Worship begins at 11 a.m.



*Watercourses* by Hannah Garrity

# Gathering Around the Word

Prelude

*Savior of the Nations, Come*  
Geneva Bell Choir

arr. Cathy Moglebust

Welcome and Announcements

Rev. Shannon J. Kershner

Ringling of the Bell

*As the tower bell rings, may it call out to the city and the world that Central Presbyterian Church is worshipping God.*

Lighting of the Advent Candles

Ximena Leroux & Courtney Anne Henry

How does a weary world practice peace?

**By listening before we speak and saying sorry when we need to.**

By advocating for justice and caring for our neighbor. By practicing Sabbath and forgiving seventy times seven.

**By choosing grace over hate and opening the door for each other.**

There are a million ways to practice peace.

So today we light the candle of peace as a reminder and a charge.

**With God's help, may we bring peace into a weary world. Amen.**

Hymn Response

*Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah*

TIF IN VELDELE

Light two can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.

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He shall feed the flock like a Shep-herd, gent - ly lead them home - ward.

✠ Call to Worship

Rev. Kate Culver

RESPONSIVE CALL TO WORSHIP: (BASED ON ISAIAH 40:1-11)

The voice of the Lord declares, "Comfort, O comfort my people."

**A voice cries out, "Prepare the way of the Lord!"**

The earth will be transformed, God's glory will be revealed.

**We expect your arrival, we follow a star on a cold night.**

You meet us in this place, as we remember your curious way.

**Speak tenderly to us. As we wait, mold us.**

Our ears and eyes perceive no other god besides You, and so we worship this day.

**We are all your people and we will wait for You.**

✠ Hymn 106

*Prepare the Way, O Zion*

BEREDEN VÄG FÖR HERRAN

✠ Call to Confession

✠ Prayer of Confession

**Forgive us, God, for the times we refuse to listen to those who announce your presence. Forgive us when we ignore the cries that come from the wilderness. Allow us to understand that, like John the Baptist, we too are unworthy before the Lord of All. Help us live into our baptisms. Remind us of the beginning of the Good News of Jesus Christ, and empower us to be the continuation of that Good News.**

*(Silent Confession)* **Amen.**

✠ Assurance of Pardon

Friends, believe the good news of the gospel.  
**In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!**

✠ Passing of the Peace

✠ Hymn 88 (Stanza 2)

*O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*

VENI EMMANUEL

**O come, thou Wisdom from on high,  
who orderest all things mightily:  
to us the path of knowledge show;  
and teach us in her ways to go.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
shall come to thee, O Israel.**

*During the hymn response, the children are invited to come forward for A Time with Children.*

## Proclaiming the Word

A Time with Children

Courtney Anne Henry and Susan Landrum

Prayer for Illumination

Charlie Richards

First Lesson

Isaiah 40:1-11

Second Lesson

Mark 1:1-8

Rev. Shannon J. Kershner

Sermon

## Responding to the Word

✠ Hymn 87

*Comfort, Comfort Now My People*

GENEVAN

✠ Affirmation of Faith

Courtney Anne Henry

EXCERPTS FROM THE BRIEF STATEMENT OF FAITH

**Through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, we trust in the one triune God, the Holy One of Israel, whom alone we worship and serve. We trust in Jesus Christ, fully human, fully God. We trust in God, whom Jesus called Abba, Father. We trust in God the Holy Spirit, everywhere the giver and renewer of life. 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!" With believers in every time and place, we rejoice that nothing in life or in death can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

Offertory Sentence

Chancel Choir; Thomas Chafin, conductor; Mason Copeland, organ

Veiled in darkness Judah lay, waiting for the promised day,  
While across the shadowy night streamed a flood of glorious light,  
Heav'nly voices chanting call, "Peace on earth, good will to all."

Still the earth in darkness lies, up from death's dark vale arise  
Voices of a world in grief, prayers of all who seek relief;  
Let your light upon us all, "Peace on earth, goodwill to all."

Light of light, we humbly pray, shine upon Thy world today;  
Break the gloom of our dark night, fill our souls with love and light,  
Let the blessed word recall, "Peace on earth, good will to all."

 At the Presentation

*Doxology*

GREENSLEEVES

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow.  
Praise God, all creatures here below.  
Praise God above, ye heavenly host.  
Creator, Son, and Holy Ghost.**

The Lord's Prayer

TRADITIONAL: INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE

**Beloved parent who is in heaven, hallowed be your name.**

**Your kingdom come, your 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 yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.**

## Bearing and Following the Word into the World

Hymn 93

*Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates*

TRURO

 Charge and Benediction

Rev. Shannon J. Kershner

 Postlude

*Fugue from Praeludium in E Minor*

Nicolas Bruhns

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### Participating in Worship Today

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Lector: Charlie Richards  
Tower Bell Ringer: Chantal Tusher  
Choir Guild: Anita Carwile  
Geneva Bell Choir

#### Worship Staff

The Rev. Shannon Johnson Kershner,  
Senior Pastor and Head of Staff  
The Rev. Kate Culver, Associate Pastor  
Susan Landrum, Director of Family Ministries  
Dr. Jennifer Sengin, Director of Musical Arts  
Mason Copeland, Organist/Music Associate

Courtney Anne Henry, Children  
& Youth Fellow  
Thomas Chafin, Interim Choir Director  
Elizabeth Daly, Music Intern

#### Worship Production Staff

Mark Wallace Maguire,  
Director of Communications  
Dean Hammond, Volunteer  
Technology Director  
Josh Smith, Audio Engineer

#### Hospitality Team

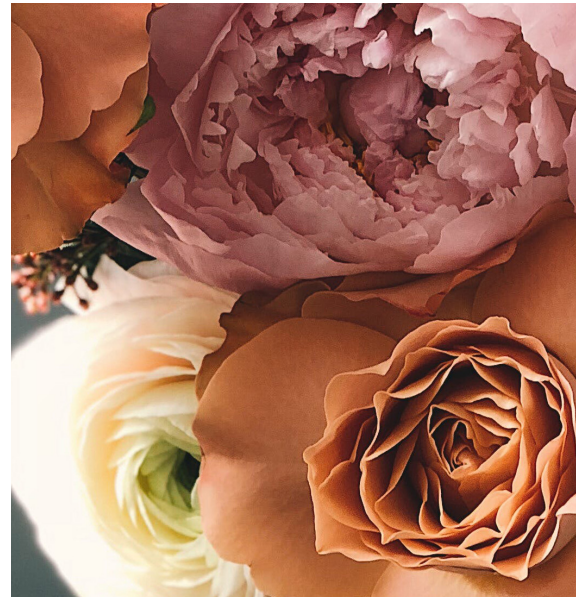
Beth Grashof  
Martha Haythorn  
Kathy Kohn  
Norm Kohn  
Kathy McCloud  
Charles Rooks

*The flowers in the sanctuary today have been provided in loving memory of the Rev. George Porter by his family. A Service of Witness to the Resurrection will be held in the sanctuary today at 2 p.m. with a reception to follow.*

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## Contribute to the Sanctuary Flower Fund

Each week during the Advent and Christmas season, we will enjoy beautiful flower arrangements in the sanctuary. You can choose to make your gift in honor or in memory of someone, and your name will be listed in the Christmas Eve bulletin so the Central family can thank you. Please see the Weekly Update this Wednesday for a link to contribute.



## CENTRAL UPCOMING EVENTS

### **Wednesday, December 13**

Central's Night at the Shelter  
Volunteers are needed to provide sack lunches, serve dinner and volunteer overnight.  
Please contact Chris Sciarrone at [sciarrone.chris@gmail.com](mailto:sciarrone.chris@gmail.com) with any questions

### **Friday, December 15**

Central OAC Guest Holiday Party  
10 a.m. to 12 p.m.

### **Sunday, December 17**

AMIS Holiday Party  
Tull Hall following worship





# CENTRAL

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### **Sunday, December 24**

Christmas Eve

8:30 to 9:30 - Sunday Breakfast Ministry in Tull Hall

11 a.m. - Morning Worship with Children's Pageant

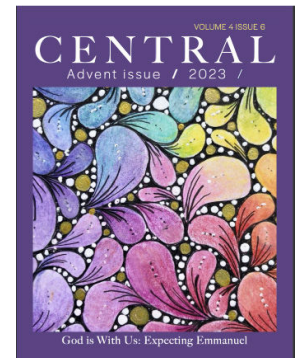
5 p.m. - Christmas Eve Service

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## Central's Advent Issue is Available

If you have not yet picked up a copy of Central's Advent Issue, please be sure to take one home with you today! This edition features articles by our staff, members, a calendar for upcoming events and much more.

You can pick up a copy in the Narthex or read it on our website at [cpcatlanta.org](http://cpcatlanta.org)



# ADVENT

## Celebration &

### ALTERNATIVE GIFT MARKET

Don't forget there is still time to give to the Advent Gift Market!

Order forms, gift cards, and QR codes are available in the Narthex.

## Gifts to the Joy Offering will be received on Sundays, December 17 and 24

The Christmas Joy Offering supports church workers and their families in the PC(USA) who need critical financial assistance. Your congregation has the opportunity to make an impact. You can be the difference between financial hardship and a blessed breath of relief.

In addition, the Christmas Joy Offering is committed to helping promote educational opportunities and leadership development in Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. Your congregation can enable these institutions to provide students with a transformative education.

Give the gift of education and the gift of relief of financial burden this giving season by supporting the Christmas Joy Offering.



201 Washington St. Atlanta, Ga. 30303  
[www.cpcatlanta.org](http://www.cpcatlanta.org)

