



THE COMMUNITY OF ST. PHILIP
AT WORSHIP
DECEMBER 6, 2020
SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Opening Voluntary

Chorale Fantasie on *Freu dich sehr, o meine Seele*

Johann Ludwig Krebs
(1713–1780)

Introit

People of Zion, Behold the Lord

Chant

O people of Zion, behold the LORD
is nigh at hand to redeem the nations;
and in the gladness of your heart the LORD
shall cause his glorious voice to be heard.

Hear, O thou Shepherd of Israel,
thou that leadest Joseph like a sheep.

— Isaiah 30:19, 30 | Psalm 80:1

Greeting

Lighting of the Advent Candles

Opening Hymn 87 ([see page 7](#))

Comfort, Comfort Now My People

GENEVAN 42

Prayer of Confession

Cleansing God,
we hear the call to repentance, but we struggle to respond.
A voice tells us to turn around, but we prefer our own ways.
You seek to purify us in love, but we constantly elude your searching hand.
Our sin leads us in other directions,
away from you, away from life.
Look with mercy upon us.
Clear a place within us
so that something new might be born,
something that might return us
to the way you have shown us in Jesus Christ.

silent prayer

Response

Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.

Wait for the Lord; be strong; take heart!

TEXT Ref. Taizé Community, 1984
 MUSIC: Jacques Berthier, 1984
 Text and Music © 1984 Les Presses de Taizé (admin. GIA Publications, Inc.)

WAIT FOR THE LORD
 8.8

Declaration of Forgiveness

Believe the Good News. **In Jesus Christ we are forgiven.**

Response

Pre - pare the way, O Zi - on, your Christ is draw - ing near!

Let ev - ery hill and val - ley a lev - el way ap - pear.

Greet One who comes in glo - ry, fore - told in sa - cred sto - ry.

O blest is Christ who came in God's most ho - ly name.

TEXT: Frans Mikael Franzen, 1812, rev. 1819; translated by Augustus Nelson, 1958;
 adapted by Charles P. Price, 1980, alt. © 1982 Hope Publishing Company
 MUSIC: *Then Svenska Psalmboken*, 1697; arr. *American Lutheran Hymnal*, 1930

BEREDEN VÄG FÖR HERRAN
 7.6.7.6.7.7.6.6

The Peace

Peace be with you. **Peace be with all.**

Prayer for Illumination

First Reading

Isaiah 40:1-11

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God!**

Solo

Ev'ry Valley Shall Be Exalted
(from *Messiah* • HWV 56)

George Frideric Handel
(1685–1759)

Ev'ry valley shall be exalted,
and ev'ry moutain and hill made low;
the crooked straight and the rough places plain.
— Isaiah 40:4

Gospel Reading

Mark 1:1-8

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God!**

Sermon

Making a Start

John W. Wurster

Anthem

There's a Voice in the Wilderness Crying

H. Hugh Bancroft (1904–1988)
arranged by Craig Phillips (b. 1961)

There's a voice in the wilderness crying,
a call from the ways untrod:
Prepare in the desert a highway,
a highway for our God!
The valleys shall be exalted,
the lofty hills brought low;
make straight all the crooked places,
where the Lord our God may go!

O Zion, that bringest good tidings,
get thee up to the heights and sing!
Proclaim to a desolate people
the coming of their King.
Like the flowers of the field they perish,
like grass our works decay,
the power and pomp of nations
shall pass like a dream away.

But the word of our God endureth,
the arm of the Lord is strong;
he stands in the midst of nations,
and he will right the wrong.
He shall feed His flock like a shepherd,
the lambs he'll gently hold;
to pastures of peace he'll lead them,
and bring them safe to his fold.

— words by James Lewis Milligan (1876–1961)

Prayers of the People

The Sacrament of Holy Communion

Invitation to the Lord's Table

The Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

How can we thank you, O God? . . . we join the ancient and eternal hymn:

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of
pow - er and might, heav - en and earth are
full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the
Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

TEXT: Trad. liturgical text
MUSIC: Thomas Pavlechko, 2006
Music © 2006 Augsburg Fortress

SANCTUS (Pavlechko)

We give you thanks, Holy God, for Jesus . . . remembering Christ's dying and rising, and praying: Come, Lord Jesus!:

Christ has died; Christ is ris - en; Christ will come a - gain.

TEXT: Trad. liturgical text
MUSIC: Thomas Pavlechko, 2006
Music © 2006 Augsburg Fortress

MEMORIAL ACCLAMATION (Pavlechko)

Pour out your Holy Spirit, . . . all glory and honor are yours, almighty God, now and forever.

A - men, a - men, a - men.

TEXT: Trad. liturgical text
MUSIC: Thomas Pavlechko, 2006
Music © 2006 Augsburg Fortress

AMEN (Pavlechko)

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name.
 Thy Kingdom come, thy 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 Thine is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever.
 Amen.

Breaking of Bread and the Sharing of God's Gifts

Communion Motet

Fuit homo missus a Deo

Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina
 (c. 1525–1594)

SUNG IN LATIN	TRANSLATION
<i>Fuit homo missus a Deo, cui nomen erat Joannes.</i>	There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.
<i>Hic venit in testimonium, ut testimonium perhiberet de lumine, et pararet Domino plebem perfectam.</i>	This man came as a witness, to give testimony about the Light, and to prepare for the Lord a perfect people.

Closing Hymn 96 ([see page 8](#))

On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry

WINCHESTER NEW

Charge and Blessing

Closing Voluntary

Chorale Verset on *Freu dich sehr*

Georg Böhm
 (1661–1733)

SERVING TODAY

Liturgists

Keatan King, Kallie Pitcock, and Omar Rouchon

Musicians

Julia Fox, Cecilia Duarte, Thomas Lewis O'Neill*, and Nicholas Rathgeb — vocalists
 Matthew Dirst, organist | Randall Swanson, conductor **soloist*

WORSHIP NOTES

An additional mission offering is received on Sundays when communion is celebrated. Our December communion offering will go the PCUSA's Christmas Joy Offering. This special offering has been a cherished Presbyterian tradition since the 1930s. The Christmas Joy Offering supports past, present, and future leaders of our denomination through the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions and through Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. The Assistance Program provides critical financial support to church workers and their families. Presbyterian-related schools and colleges provide education and leadership development while nurturing racial and ethnic heritage, a Presbyterian commitment for nearly 140 years. Share the Christmas Joy as we turn our eyes to Bethlehem and celebrate the wondrous gift of Christ. Gifts for this offering can be made on the St. Philip [website](#) or by mailing a check, with Christmas Joy Offering in the memo line, to the church office.

Today's flowers are given by Kathryn Clark to the glory of God and in memory of her sister Jeanne West.

Lectionary Readings

- Isaiah 40:1–11—*Comfort my people; a voice cries: prepare the way of the Lord!*
- Psalm 85:1–2, 8–13—*God will speak peace; faithfulness and righteousness will meet.*
- 2 Peter 3:8–15a—*God is patient with us, but the day of the Lord is coming.*
- Mark 1:1–8—*In the wilderness, John baptizes and proclaims the one to come.*

Organ music — Today’s organ voluntaries are settings of the German chorale melody *Freu dich sehr, o meine Seele* (“Rejoice, O My Soul”), a tune that also appears in the Calvinist tradition as GENEVAN 42, to which we sing the words of today’s opening hymn “Comfort, comfort now my people.” Bach’s student Johann Ludwig Krebs made a name for himself as an organ virtuoso in the mid 18th century, with chorale fantasies and free works that give free reign to galant-style counterpoint. His fantasy on *Freu dich sehr* frames its highly decorated melody with an elaborate ritornello. The chorale-based works of Georg Böhm, by contrast, represent an older style of organ composition, one less concerned with elegant turns of phrase and more devoted to motivically-based counterpoint.

Vocal & choral music — This morning’s **solo** is the first aria in Handel’s monumental oratorio *Messiah*. *Ev’ry valley shall be exalted* takes its text from Isaiah 40, and features a variety of instances of word painting. Listen especially at the word “exalted” as the voice is carried higher and, the words “crooked” with two notes per syllable, and the word “straight” sung to a single long note.

Today’s **anthem** is an arrangement by Craig Phillips of the hymn tune ASCENSION by H. Hugh Bancroft. Craig Phillips is director of music and organist at All Saints Episcopal Church in Beverly Hills, CA, and is a prolific and highly regarded composer, primarily of church music.

This morning’s communion **motet** is by Italian Renaissance composer Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina who developed a highly influential style of sacred music composition which served as the model for many composers after him. The text of his *Fuit homo missus a Deo* is adapted from the first chapter of the Gospel of John, and the motet was intended for the Feast of the Nativity of John the Baptist, traditionally celebrated in Catholic and Anglican churches on June 24. It is also highly appropriate for the second and third Sundays of Advent, which in most years feature John the Baptist as a central figure in the lectionary readings. The music of the motet is quintessential four-part Palestrina — fluent, largely conjunct lines in an imitative texture. The only hints of homorhythm — where more than one part shares the same rhythms for a phrase or two — occur in the setting of the words *Hic venit in testimonium* (“He came to testify”), as though Palestrina wished to emphasize the declarative nature of this passage by bringing groups of voices together.*

— Matthew Dirst, Randall Swanson and *Martin Ennis ©



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS


Art by Micah Meyers.

Prayer of Confession Response *Wait for the Lord* text and music © 1984 Les Presses de Taizé, administered by GIA Publications, Inc. All rights reserved. Declaration of Forgiveness Response *Prepare the way, O Zion* text © 1982 Hope Publishing Company. All rights reserved. Communion Prayer responses © 2006 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. All reprinted with permission under OneLicense.net account A-720890.


Opening Hymn 87

Comfort, Comfort Now My People


GENEVAN 42




1 "Com - fort, com - fort now my peo - ple; tell of peace!" So says our God.
 2 For the her - ald's voice is cry - ing in the des - ert far and near,
 3 Straight shall be what long was crook - ed, and the rough - er plac - es plain.



"Com - fort those who sit in dark - ness mourn - ing un - der sor - row's load.
 call - ing us to true re - pen - tance, since the reign of God is here.
 Let your hearts be true and hum - ble, as be - fits God's ho - ly reign.



To my peo - ple now pro - claim that my par - don waits for them!
 O, that warn - ing cry o - bey! Now pre - pare for God a way.
 For the glo - ry of the Lord now on earth is shed a - broad,



Tell them that their sins I cov - er, and their war - fare now is o - ver."
 Let the val - leys rise in meet - ing and the hills bow down in greet - ing.
 and all flesh shall see the to - ken that God's word is nev - er bro - ken.

This 17th-century German paraphrase of Isaiah 40:1-5 was one of the texts translated as part of the 19th-century British interest in German religious poetry. It is set here to one of the most popular Genevan Psalter tunes, probably derived from an earlier French folksong.

TEXT: Johannes Olearius, 1671; trans. Catherine Winkworth, 1863, alt.
 MUSIC: Genevan Psalter, 1551

GENEVAN 42
 8.7.8.7.7.8.8

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Closing Hymn 96

On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry

WINCHESTER NEW

1 On Jor - dan's bank the Bap - tist's cry an -
 2 Then cleansed be ev - ery life from sin; make
 3 We hail you as our Sav - ior, Lord, our
 4 Stretch forth your hand; our health re - store, and

nounc - es that the Lord is nigh; a - wake and heark - en,
 straight the way for God with - in, and let us all our
 ref - uge and our great re - ward; with - out your grace we
 make us rise to fall no more. O let your face up -

for he brings glad ti - dings of the King of kings!
 hearts pre - pare for Christ to come and en - ter there.
 waste a - way like flowers that with - er and de - cay.
 on us shine and fill the world with love di - vine.

This hymn shows how once-unconnected parts can work together. The text about John the Baptist was written in Latin in the 18th century and translated into English in the 19th century. Similarly, the 17th-century melody was adapted to its present form in the 19th century.

TEXT: Charles Coffin, 1736; trans. John Chandler, 1837, alt.
 MUSIC: *Musikalisches Handbuch*, 1690; harm. William Henry Monk, 1847, alt.

WINCHESTER NEW
LM

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You have through the rest of **today** to support the Alternative Market online. View the curated group of our mission partners, representing each of Mission Committee's focal areas of Caring, Feeding, and Teaching that are participating in the Market online at saintphilip.net. The Market allows you to make a single payment to St. Philip, and your donation will be distributed to the organizations in the market as you designate. You may donate in any amount to one or more of these organizations, using either the secure giving portal on the website, in MyStPhilip, or by printing out this Alternative Marker list and sending it, with your check, to the church office by **December 14**.



Mission Partner	Contribution
The Beacon	\$
Christian Community Service Center	\$
Interfaith Ministries for Greater Houston	\$
Kids Against Hunger	\$
Living Waters for the World	\$
Mo Ranch	\$
NewSpring	\$
Presbyterian Pan American School	\$
Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services	\$
Seafarers	
Gift Total \$	
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CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS

It is the time to adorn our chancel with poinsettias. Beginning right away you have the opportunity to make a donation to assist with this. You can go to the website, saintphilip.net and click on "Make A Contribution". Choose *Flowers/Holiday*. Include in the optional memo "Point". Email your honor/memorial designations to Lorrie Castle at lorrie@saintphilip.net. Otherwise, you will receive an email, within a few days asking for names of people you want to recognize. Questions? Call Church Office at 713-622-4807.

Christmas Poinsettias

Donations of any amount accepted

(circle one) **I / we** would like to make a donation to purchase poinsettias to adorn our chancel during this Christmas season

(circle one) **in honor of / memory of** _____

Donor - Your Name(s) (Please print legibly) _____

*Please return it with your payment to the church office by **Tuesday, December 16**. Payments can be made online—please note 'Point'. Use additional space below if needed.*

IN OUR PRAYERS

The family of Jeanne West upon her death on November 25.

Missie Lanham and family upon the death of her husband Rev. Sam Lanham on November 29.

With gratitude to God, Keatan King, Nate Carlin, and Cohen Carlin are expecting a new baby in early June of 2021.

St. Philippians and their families—Doris Cantrell; Casey Lambright; Sondra Sullivan; Mary Benson; Ellen MacDonald; Arlette Keene; CJ Miller; Jan Ostendorf; Laney Miller; Susan Huffman; Joyce Fugit; Vicki McKay; Mary Sinderson; Marion Takehara; Emily Estill; Travis Calhoun; Lonnie Fugit; Mezgebe Gebray; Philip and Becky Karper—parents of Kallie Pitcock; Meredith and Louis Pitcock—parents of Justin Pitcock; Ricardo and Mary Adame—brother and sister-in-law (and Mary's mother Yvonne Dominguez) of staff singer Ofelia Adame Williams; Douglas Everhart—brother of Nancy Everhart Johnson; Carol Paine Kendrick—sister of Stephen Paine; Betty Grant—sister of Eleanor Grant; John Anderson—brother of Tom Anderson; Janet Fisher—sister-in-law of Dan Cleveland; Bessie Johnson—mother of Pat Lindsay; Mac & Beverly Wilson—parents of Butch Wilson; Vera Moore—mother of Chuck Johnson; Kelsey Higgs Gallegos & family—daughter of Nancy Higgs; Dottie Laas and family—cousin of Sam Fisher; Alice Barron—sister-in-law to Beth Atkinson; Nikolaus Malczewskyj—father-in-law of Jane Malczewskyj; John Beck—brother of Nancy Young; Margie Foster—mother of Mark Young; Miriam Kalmbach—aunt of Nancy Higgs; Shirley Boggus—grandmother of Omi Ford; Jimmy Reagan—father of Sarah O'Dell; Dona Rowe—mother of William Rowe; Elizabeth Carlton Lithio—granddaughter of Jeanie Flowers; and Ann Morgan—sister of Dorothy Blackwell.

Homebound—Sue Baier; Walter Baker; Joe Anne Berwick; John Bobbitt; Paulie Carlson; Kitty Curry; George Helland; Alice Pennington; Joyce Randolph; Van Rathgeber; Jean Nelson; Jody Tomforde; and Penny Vieau.

Friends of St. Philippians—Susan Doyle—friend of Stephen Paine Paul Ratliff—friend of Jo Helland; Ruth Duncan and Melerie Langford—friends of Curt and Sharon Webb; Cecil Trent—friend of Jane Cooper; Craig Slein—friend of Denise Ferrell and Steve Carmichael; Melinda Penny—friend of Denise Ferrell; David Shebay—friend of Greg Han; Clayton Amacker—friends of Peg Palisin and Gary Gardner; Shirley Stubblefield—friend of Barbara Runge; and Walter "Buddy" Hamman III friend of Robin and Gary Willis.

We also pray for health care workers, first responders, and caregivers; for those who are sick; and for those watch and wait.

If you have a pastoral care need or a prayer request you would like to share, please email deacons@saintphilip.net.

Pledge payments, communion gifts and other gifts to support the Church can be made anytime through our website (<http://saintphilip.net/>) or sent to the Church Office at 4807 San Felipe, Houston, TX 77056.



UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

We continue to invite you to attend our daily prayer services at 11:00 a.m. (Monday-Saturday). Currently, we have a limit of five persons per day. Advance registration is required. For more information on conditions and to register click [here](#). We hope that the opportunity to again worship in the sacred space of our Sanctuary will be a source of comfort and hope. If you have trouble with the registration or are not online, please call Lorrie Castle (832-262-1244—cell).

[Our website](#) has information a current list of **opportunities on Zoom** for fellowship and spiritual formation.

CHURCH & SOCIETY - 10:00 a.m. - 10:50 a.m.—December 13 - *The Belhar Confession* - A protest against a heretical theological stance by the Dutch Reformed Church that used the Bible and the Confessions to justify the harsh and unjust system of Apartheid in South Africa. Presented by Rev. Greg Han - Director of Interfaith Relations and Education at Interfaith Ministries for Greater Houston. Email Mickey Meyers if you would like to join any of the classes—mmcgm63@gmail.com.

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING—The Session has called a congregational meeting for **December 20**, immediately following the 11:00 worship service. The meeting will be conducted via Zoom video conference. The purpose of the meeting is to act on a recommendation from the Trustees regarding the sale of property owned by the church in Montgomery County and to act on a slate of nominees presented by the Congregational Nominating Committee.

PW THANK OFFERING—The Presbyterian Women invite you to make a contribution to the 2020 Thank Offering beginning **December 7** on the St. Philip [website](#) (choose fund—PW Thank Offering) or by mailing a check to the church office denoting PW Thank Offering in the memo. The Thank Offering provides and continues to provide much-needed financial assistance to numerous worthwhile programs not included in ongoing General Assembly mission support. Each year, domestic and international projects are carefully and prayerfully selected by the Creative Ministries Offering Committee to help meet a crucial need. Forty percent (40%) of this offering is used to support hospitals and community health programs that place priority in helping the most needy members of God's community. The remaining sixty percent (60%) is used for new creative ideas for mission, undesignated in advance. The generosity of Presbyterian women and their families and congregations as demonstrated through their Thank Offering gifts help chosen recipients find real solutions for projects related to health, education, economic development, and needs of women and children.