

**The Downtown Presbyterian Church
Order of Worship for December 6, 2020
Second Sunday in Advent**

Opening Voluntary Chorale Prelude on *Genevan* Georg Boehm
Melody for hymn "Comfort, Comfort Now My People"

Welcome

Advent Song "Come Now, O Prince of Peace" (vss. 1, 2)
Ryan Norris, cantor

*Come now, hope of unity;
make us one body.
Come, Lord Jesus;
reconcile all people.*

*Come now, O Prince of Peace
make us one body.
Come, Lord Jesus;
reconcile all people.*

Advent Candle Lighting led by Stephanie Coleman

Hymn "Comfort, Comfort, Now My People"
Ryan Norris, cantor

Prayer of Confession (unison) based on Isaiah 40:1-11; Mark 1:1-8

*It is easy to receive God's words of comfort;
to hear that our debts – our penalties – have been paid in full.
It is harder to admit that we were ever indebted.
It is difficult to confess our sins
or even concede that things we have done or said
– or left undone or unsaid –
rise to the level of sin.*

*But if we are honest with you and with ourselves,
we know that the waters of baptism still have work to do.*

*So we come before you today heeding the call of the Baptist,
opening our hearts and minds
and surrendering to you everything that we wish
we could forget, undo or take back.*

*And we remember the words of the prophet
who reminds us that our lives are like flowers that inevitably wither
and are all the more precious because of it.*

*So we not only offer our confession but welcome your Spirit
who will join us in transforming our hearts and lives
to make way for the Stronger One whose advent is near.*

(Silent prayer)

Assurance of God's Grace

*May the peace of Christ be with you.
And also with you.*

Announcements

Children's Message

Suzie Lane

Prayer for Illumination

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 40:1-11

read by Vickie Coffin

*Comfort, comfort my people! says your God.
Speak compassionately to Jerusalem,
and proclaim to her that her compulsory service has ended,
that her penalty has been paid,
that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins!*

*A voice is crying out: "Clear the Lord's way in the desert!
Make a level highway in the wilderness for our God!
Every valley will be raised up,
and every mountain and hill will be flattened.
Uneven ground will become level and rough terrain a valley plain.
The LORD's glory will appear, and all humanity will see it together;
the LORD's mouth has commanded it."*

*A voice was saying:
"Call out!"
And another said,
"What should I call out?"
All flesh is grass;
all its loyalty is like the flowers of the field.
The grass dries up and the flower withers
when the Lord's breath blows on it.
Surely the people are grass.
The grass dries up; the flower withers,
but our God's word will exist forever.*

*Go up on a high mountain, messenger Zion!
Raise your voice and shout, messenger Jerusalem!
Raise it; don't be afraid;
say to the cities of Judah, "Here is your God!"
Here is the LORD God,
coming with strength, with a triumphant arm,
bringing God's reward and God's payment.
Like a shepherd, God will tend the flock;
God will gather lambs in his arms and lift them onto his lap.
God will gently guide the nursing ewes.*

New Testament Reading

Mark 1:1-8

The beginning of the good news about Jesus Christ, God's Son, happened just as it was written about in the prophecy of Isaiah:

Look, I am sending my messenger before you.

He will prepare your way,

a voice shouting in the wilderness:

"Prepare the way for the Lord;

make God's paths straight."

John the Baptist was in the wilderness calling for people to be baptized to show that they were changing their hearts and lives and wanted God to forgive their sins. Everyone in Judea and all the people of Jerusalem went out to the Jordan River and were being baptized by John as they confessed their sins. John wore clothes made of camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist. He ate locusts and wild honey. He announced, "One stronger than I am is coming after me. I'm not even worthy to bend over and loosen the strap of his sandals. I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

Sermon

Rev. Mike Wilson

Hymn*"On Jordan's Banks, the Baptist's Cry"*

Ryan Norris, cantor

Pastoral Prayer & The Lord's Prayer**Sacrament of the Lord's Supper****Hymn***"Wild and Lone, the Prophet's Voice"*

Ryan Norris, cantor

Charge and Benediction**Closing Voluntary**Chorale Prelude on *Winchester New*

Hans Arnold Metzger

Melody for hymn *"On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry"*

Today's bulletin illustration/opening image is a painting by artist-in-residence Carri Jobe titled *Immersed* (oil on canvas, 50"x46"). About it she writes: "This painting was influenced by the movement, change and force of strong winds. I think of the changing times around us, and also the coming of the kingdom of God. It is magnificent and startling."

Today's Advent Candle liturgy is from Brian Wren, *Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany: Liturgies and Prayers for Public Worship* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008) and are reproduced by permission. Copyright © 2007 by Brian Wren

Come Now, O Prince of Peace

1 Come, hope of u - ni - ty; make us one bod - y.
 2 Come now, O Prince of Peace; make us one bod - y.
 3 Come now and set us free, O God, our Sav - ior.
 4 Come now, O God of love; make us one bod - y.


Come, O Lord Je - sus; rec - on - cile all peo - ple.

Originally created for a 1988 world conference for the peace and reunification of the Korean peninsula, these four stanzas centering on peace, love, freedom, and unity demonstrate how texts for particular situations can become hymns that speak deeply to shared human longings.


TEXT: Geonyong Lee, 1988; English trans. Marion Pope, c. 1990
 MUSIC: Geonyong Lee, 1988
 Text and Music © 1988 Geonyong Lee

O-SO-SO
 6.5.5.6


Comfort, Comfort Now My People




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.

On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry

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

(alternate tune: PUER NOBIS NASCITUR)

Wild and Lone the Prophet's Voice

1 Wild and lone the proph-et's voice ech-oes through the des - ert still,
2 "Bear the fruit re - pen-tance sows: lives of jus - tice, truth, and love.
3 With such preach-ing, stark and bold, John pro-claimed sal - va - tion near,

call - ing us to make a choice, bid - ding us to do God's will:
Trust no oth - er claim than those; set your heart on things a - bove.
and his time-less warn-ings hold words of hope to all who hear.

"Turn from sin and be bap-tized; cleanse your heart and mind and soul.
Soon the Lord will come in power, burn-ing clean the thresh-ing floor:
So we dare to jour - ney on, led by faith through ways un - trod,

Quit-ting all the sins you prized, yield your life to God's con - trol.
then will flames the chaff de - vour; wheat a - lone shall fill God's store."
till we come at last like John to be - hold the Lamb of God.

The musical score is written for voice and piano. It features a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a 4/4 time signature. The melody is primarily in the treble clef, while the piano accompaniment is in the bass clef. The score is divided into four systems, each corresponding to a line of lyrics. The first system includes three numbered verses. The second system continues the lyrics. The third system includes a quote. The fourth system concludes the lyrics. The piano part provides harmonic support with chords and moving lines in the left hand.

While all four gospels identify John the Baptist with the prophecy of Isaiah 40:3, this text (well set to a vigorous Welsh tune) draws on the report of his preaching in Matthew 3:1-12. The final lines recall that he was the first to name Jesus "the Lamb of God" (John 1:29, 36).