



Laying the Foundation

Second Sunday of Advent



Picture by DPC Artist in Residence Mel Beall

THE DOWNTOWN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
December 5, 2021

Hearing assistance devices are available. *Please ask a greeter for a receiver.*

(*) indicates the congregation will stand if able

Gathering in God's Name

OPENING VOLUNTARY

Chorale Prelude on *Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus*

Jan Bender

(Please meditate silently during the Opening Voluntary.)

WELCOME

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

L: If life was a home, then we would pray—

P: **may love be the foundation.**

May God be the cornerstone.

May the Spirit be the windows—ushering light in.

And may hope be the walls—holding us together.

L: In this hour of worship, let us work toward building that home together.

P: **We may not know the path ahead, but God is here, even now.**

L: Let us give thanks for a foundation of love.

P: **Let us worship Holy God.**

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING

As we reflect on the foundation of our faith in our lives,
we gather together around the candle of peace.

The home we long for is a home that knows peace—

peace that rests between us and our grief,

peace around our anxiety,

peace between us and our self-criticism,

peace amidst our relationships,

peace at the core of our being,

peace hovering through and in our world.

The home we long for is a home that knows peace.

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

Let it be so. Amen.

***OPENING HYMN**

“Zechariah’s Lullaby”

CALL TO CONFESSION

L: In our scripture passage for today, Zechariah, a new father, speaks to his newborn son, John the Baptist, for the very first time. I want you to imagine yourself in his shoes . . .

What would you say to a newborn sleeping in your arms? What would you want them to know on their very first day? What would feel important? I imagine that all of you would speak words of love.

It's impossible not to speak words of love when you're holding a baby, and yet as we grow up, that skill tends to become harder for us to practice. So let us return to our foundation—to words of love, starting with love for ourselves. Let us pray the prayer of confession together.

P: Holy God,

When John was Born, Zechariah leaned down and whispered words of love into his ear. We know that you do the same for us, day in and day out, yet we fail to hear it. We forget that in the beginning we were made good. We doubt that we could possibly be enough. We hustle for our self-worth and wear ourselves out aiming for perfection. We deflect words of praise. We hide behind shiny first impressions. Forgive us. Trusting our worth is the hardest job. Open our ears as you open our hearts, so that we might rest on the foundation of goodness you have laid for us.

Gratefully we pray, amen.

*ASSURANCE OF PARDON

L: Family of faith,

No matter how old we get,

God continues to say to us:

“You are loved; you are forgiven.”

That is the foundation of our lives.

That is the truth upon which we build our home.

So breathe deeply. There is grace and peace here.

Join me in proclaiming this good news:

P: We are loved. We are forgiven. We are claimed. This is our foundation. Thanks be to God. Amen.

PASSING OF THE PEACE

L: In the spirit of hope and home, let us greet one another.
May the peace of Christ be with you.

P: And also with you.

*Please greet one another with words of peace and reconciliation.
Please return to your seats when the music starts.*

***GLORIA PATRI** Glory Be to the Father

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
World without end. Amen, amen.

Encountering the Living Word of God

SCRIPTURE READING Baruch 5:7-9

L: The word of the Lord. **P: Thanks be to God.**

SCRIPTURE READING Luke 1:68-79

L: The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. **P: Glory to you, O Lord.**

PRAYER PRACTICE Sacred Imagination

SERMON “Building a Foundation of Love”

Responding to God’s Word & Call

PRAYER OF INTERCESSION AND PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE (people read bold)

God of days gone by, and God of the here and now—
we understand the story of Zechariah.

We know what it’s like to be speechless.

We know what it’s like to be awestruck.

We know what it’s like to change plans and leave everyone whispering.

What we don’t always know is what the next right step is. We crave your voice
in our ear—guiding our steps, revealing the way.

So today, God, we pause to give you thanks for the things that leave us speechless—
for love at first sight,
for the moments when the doctor says the scan is clear,
for the family that runs to meet us at the airport and welcomes us home,
for every small miracle and concentrated beauty in our life—
we are awestruck.

We are speechless.

We are so deeply grateful.

But in between whispers of deep gratitude,
are people who are speechless for other reasons.

We are speechless because of the suffering and despair, grief and loss,
violence and

injustice in our world.

With every young person killed in the street, we lose our breath.

With every threat of violence, we lose our words.

With every updated report on climate change, we lose our peace.

And the cycle goes on and on and on.

Creator God, who breathed life into us, move between us and our despair.

Give us a voice to speak gratitude in the face of beauty,
and justice in the face of destruction.

Give us words to heal where there is hurt and to invite where there is
isolation.

We pray, too, for,

(the people lift up their prayers aloud)

There are so many things that leave us speechless, O God, but we never lose
your words of love and hope. So today we pray the prayer your son taught us
to pray, saying...

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.

COLLECTION OF OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

Zechariah gave one of the greatest gifts he could give to his son. He gave him a foundation of love—words of purpose, pride, love, and belonging. So, in turn, remembering that joyful day, we try to make a similar impact by giving what we can. And we pray that the gifts we give now—our time, our money, our talents—will be infused by the Spirit to make a more purposeful world of love and belonging that we can be proud of. So let us give now. Let this be the foundation—the very start—of a better world.

To offer your financial support to the ministry and mission of DPC:

- Place your offering in one of our designated offering locations.
- Use our mobile app by texting “dpchurch” to 73256.
- Visit www.dpchurch.com and click "Online and Mobile Giving".

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

“Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus”

Leland B. Sateren

Come, thou long-expected Jesus, born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us; let us find our rest in thee.

Israel’s strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art;
dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart.

Born thy people to deliver, born a child and yet a king,
born to reign in us forever, now thy gracious kingdom bring.

By thine own eternal Spirit rule in all our hearts alone;
by thine all-sufficient merit raise us to thy glorious throne.
Charles Wesley

***DOXOLOGY #606 “Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow”**

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

*PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AND DEDICATION (*unison*)

Holy God,

You are our home.

You and your goodness are the place we return to, the place we long to lay our head. So today as we offer you these gifts, we pray that you would take this offering and turn it into ministry. Use these gifts to transform the world we live in to better reflect the home you have envisioned for us—a home of peace, a home built on the foundation of love. Gratefully we pray, amen.

THE SACRAMENT OF THE HOLY COMMUNION

(Please hold your bread and juice until directed to take it together as community.)

*Closing Hymn

“Building Day by Day”

*CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

L: As you leave this service, your service begins:

Comfort the homesick.

Open your doors to others.

Seek sanctuary.

Be brave enough to go home by another way.

And remember that here in God’s house, all are welcomed—
so come back soon.

In the name of our Foundation— Creator, Christ, and Holy Spirit—
go in peace.

And may all God’s people say.

P: Alleluia, Amen.

CLOSING VOLUNTARY

Chorale Prelude on *Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus* Raymond H. Haan

(Please remain seated during the closing voluntary.)

Liturgy adapted from prayers by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org by Rev. Larissa Romero



The Second Sunday of Advent

Laying the Foundation (Peace)

1

Zechariah's Lullaby

CRADLE SONG 11.11.11

Text: Anna Strickland (2021)

Music: William J. Kirkpatrick (1895)

When old Zech - a - ri - ah held his ba - by
"And you child will be called a pro - phet of
We lay a foun - da - tion for what is to

son Christ He blessed him and dreamed of what
be To Not bring hope to hearts and what
know - ing yet pray - ing for

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he would be - come As ba - by John rocked in the
sha - dows the light For God has sent vis - ions of
what we can't see We trust in God's i - mag - in -

tem - ple that morn This song Zech - a -
what you tion will do build A From dream to pro -
a - tion to and blue - prints and

- ri - ah sang for his new - born -
claim and a world to yet re - new"
hope for a dream yet ful - filled

Building Day by Day

Frances Jane (Fanny) Crosby, 1891

Herbert D. Lothrop

$\text{♩} = 107$

1. We are build-ing in sor-row, and build-ing in joy, A tem-ple the world can-not
 2. Ev-ery deed forms a part in this build-ing of ours, That is done in the name of the
 3. Then be watch-ful and wise, let the tem-ple we rear Be shock For the love that we show and the kind-ness we be-stow, He has
 For the Mas-ter has said, and He taught us in His Word, We must

Refrain

ag-es of e-ter-ni-ty. We are build-ing day by day As the mo-ments glide a-way, Our
 prom-ised us a bright re-ward. build up-on the sol-id rock.

tem-ple which the world may not see; Ev-ery vic-tory won by grace Will be
 which the world may not see;

sure to find its place, In our build-ing for e-ter-ni-ty.
 for e-ter-ni-ty.

Public Domain
 Courtesy of the Cyber Hymnal™



**Note on “Close to Home”
Advent—Epiphany Series by A Sanctified Art**

“When something hits close to home, it affects us deeply. During the Advent and Christmas season, we journey through scriptures and rituals that are tender, heavy with emotion, and vulnerable. We carry the memories and truths of this season close to our hearts. The *Close to Home* theme acknowledges the ‘already but not yet’ tension of our faith: Emmanuel is with us, and yet, God’s promised day—our everlasting home—is not fully realized. It names our deep longing for God to come close to us.

The Advent and Christmas scriptures are rich with home metaphors and imagery. In these scriptures, home is both physical and metaphorical, something we seek and something we are called to build. In many ways, these scriptures are like blueprints—detailing the dreams of a God who makes a home with us. Ultimately, God is our home and resting place. God draws near and makes a home on earth; sacred ground is all around us.



This Advent, may we be comforted by the One who dwells intimately with us. May we expand safety and sanctuary for everyone wandering far from home. May we come home—wherever home is found—to live fully with joy, hope, and courage.”



MERRY CHRISTMAS

To our church family:

*Scan here to view DPC's online calendar
& learn more about what we've got planned!*



Copies of the December
Calendar are available in
the narthex.



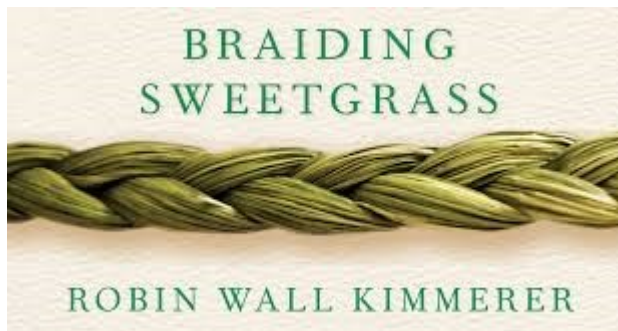
Welcome Class of 2025 Session Members!

Last Sunday, we held a congregational meeting for the purpose of electing the incoming class of ruling elders. We want to welcome Betty McConnell & Denny Harris to session as members of the class of 2025. Please take a moment to thank these new elders for their time of service & commitment to DPC. We also thank our previous elders for their dedication to DPC through service on session.

December Outreach Spotlight: Year-End Giving

As we look forward to December and the transition from one year to the next, we tend to consider making various year-end donations to local charities and non-profit organizations. As you are planning your year-end giving, please consider donating to DPC's outreach partner organizations. The Downtown Presbyterian Church is proud to support these local non-profits and the work they do in and for our community. If you have questions about outreach at DPC, please contact Samera Zavaro.

For the full list of DPC's outreach partner organizations, information about their mission or focus of work in the community, and links to their websites, please visit www.dpchurch.com/outreach.



DPC Book Club: *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer

DPC's book club will meet on **Thursday, January 6th** at 6:30 p.m. via zoom. We will be discussing *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer.



DPC Committee Corner

Come be a part of the conversations that create DPC's future! All meetings are open to DPC members and friends. If interested in getting involved, please email the committee chairperson for the meeting information.

- **Fish & Loaves** - Thursday, December 9th at 6:30p.m. via Zoom;
Tom Wills, chair
- **Building/History and Finance** - Monday December 13th at 7:00 p.m.
via Zoom; Jake Byl & Stephanie Coleman (Finance), and Jim Hoobler
(Building/History) committee chairs.
- **Communications** - Tuesday, December 14th at 5:00p.m. via Zoom;
Erin Bell, chair
- **Session** - Monday, December 20th at 6:30pm via Zoom

Nursery Care Available for Sunday Worship

We are thankful to have nursery care available for Sunday mornings. Nursery care will be provided during the worship service for children through age 5. The nursery is located on the 2nd floor and is ready to welcome the youngest of DPC attendees.

Current Worship Procedures

For our full set of procedures please visit www.dpchurch.com under Events/ Covid Safety.

- To help encourage everyone to make full use of our wonderful sanctuary, we have roped off rows where we ask you not to sit. We hope this will help encourage more social distancing.
- When sitting in a socially distanced pew, you can remove your mask.
- If you are singing or moving about the sanctuary, we request that you wear a mask.
- If you are not yet vaccinated, we request that you wear a mask any time you are inside the church.
- Nursery workers will wear masks to help protect our youngest church attendees.

OUR MISSION

Gathering in the heart of Nashville, we are a community of disciples of Jesus Christ. We seek the welfare of the city as we seek the kingdom of God.

We are an historic church working to be a welcoming and inclusive congregation. Together we actively share God's grace and love through worship, education and service, and through being an active voice in promoting justice and peace in our community and the world.

OUR VALUES AND ETHOS

- Belief in God's love and in Christ's ministry
- The desire to welcome and embrace everyone. No exceptions.
- Service to God, service to our neighbors
- God's gift of creativity

SESSION 2021

Class of 2021

Jim Hoobler
David Maddox

Class of 2022

Erin Bell
Tom Byl
Jake Byl

Class of 2023

Tom Wills
Samera Zavaro
Leslee Hughes

THE CHURCH STAFF

Rev. Larissa Romero, Pastor
Dena Swoner, Office Manager
Paulino Jarquin, Maintenance Manager
Dr. William Taylor, Director of Music

Parking

Parking for Sunday worship is in the SP+ garage at **147 4th Ave. N.**

You must come down 4th from Church Street. Parking in this garage is complimentary from 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Parking vouchers are necessary to exit the garage without having to pay. To get one, just ask one of our greeters.