

Sebastopol United Methodist Church
Sunday, December 6, 2020 – Second Sunday of Advent
Order of Worship, including Communion and Scripture

If you would like to participate in Communion, please have your bread and juice (or their substitutes) ready before beginning worship.

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“And so John came, baptizing in the desert region and preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.” -- Mark 1:4

*Today we light the candle of **PEACE**.*

We seek the comfort of your Peace, both mighty and tender. Come, O God, prepare our hearts to be transformed by you. We light the candle as a symbol of Christ’s peace in His own way. May the Word sent from God through His prophets lead us to the way of salvation.

Let us pray:

We come with hope that your peace will comfort us in the darkness of our circumstances. Rescue us to enjoy the new life that shines beyond the peace of Christ brings to our hearts with anticipation. We ask this in the name of the expected baby Jesus, Amen.

Seasonal Theme:

Advent is a time of expectation, anticipation, and preparation for the coming again of Jesus in Bethlehem and in our hearts.

Theme for the day:

The patience of God; and the preparation for the coming again of Jesus into our hearts.

Call to Worship:

*(please read the **BOLD** text, aloud or silently as you prefer)*

Pastor: A voice cries in the wilderness.

People: **“Prepare the way of the Lord; make God’s way clear.**

Pastor: Lift up every valley; lower every mountain.

Unison: **For the glory of the Lord shall be revealed. Amen.**

Centering & Prayer of Illumination:

(please read with Pastor, aloud or silently as you prefer)

Eternal God, in your providence you made all ages a preparation for the kingdom of your Son. Make ready our hearts for the brightness of your glory. Give us grace to heed their warnings and forsake our sins, that we may greet your peace with intended coming of Jesus Christ who reigns with you and the Holy Spirit. Instill your grace which surpasses all understanding in us, so that we continue to rely on your words forever more. We pray in Jesus’s name and way. Amen.

Readings from Scripture: **Isaiah 40:1-11** **Mark 1:1-8**

[texts of Scripture follow the service, beginning on page 6]

Message: **A CALLING FOR CHANGE!**

Affirmation of Faith – The Apostles’ Creed, Ecumenical Version (UMH 882)

(please read with Pastor, aloud or silently as you prefer)

I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;

he ascended into heaven,
is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy universal church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body
and the life everlasting. Amen.

Pastoral Prayer

Sacrament of the Holy Communion

*In peace and love, in gratitude and faith, I invite you to have your bread
(or chips, crackers, etc.) and juice (or water, wine, etc.) ready.*

Let us come together to Christ's table.

*(we read together the texts in **BOLD**)*

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give thanks and praise.

O God, you are the creator of heaven and earth. You formed us in your image, to love and to be loved. You made a holy covenant with us and sent prophets to teach us your truth. When we turned away and were unfaithful, you kept faith with us.

And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven, we join in your praise, saying,

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.

Taking our form and flesh, Jesus came among us as a servant. He showed us the depth and power of your love. By his suffering, death, and resurrection you delivered us from sin and death, and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit.

On the night in which Jesus gave himself up for us, he took bread. He gave thanks to you, broke the bread, gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

When the supper was over he took the cup, gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said, "Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, poured out for you and for many, for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

Remembering your gracious acts, we offer ourselves to you in service and praise as we keep the feast that Christ prepares:

[lifting the bread] Bread of Heaven,

[lifting the cup] Cup of Salvation,

[lifting bread and cup] Resurrection and Life.

Great is the mystery of faith:

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

O God, pour out your Holy Spirit among us: in this bread, in this cup, in your people; one in the body, one in the blood, one with Christ, one in mission, one in ministry; in this place, in every place, in this world, and in the world to come.

Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor are yours, Almighty God, now and forever. [Lord's Prayer]

Amen.

Receiving the Bread and Cup

Prayer after Receiving

O God, we give you our thanks and praise. You feed us by your grace. You are with us in all our journeys. Give us courage and faith to serve you in all we do. Fill us with the power of your Holy Spirit. Enable us to be faithful and fruitful servants of the gospel and ministry to which you have called us. In Jesus's name we pray.

Amen.

Come to Christ and offer your gifts, not as a burden, but as opportunity to give rest and renewal to those who yearn to know God's love. Thank you again for all the offerings and pledges you have sent in by mail.

*Prayer of Thanksgiving and Dedication:
(please read with Pastor, aloud or silently as you prefer)*

Lord, we give you thanks that in the coming of Christ your steadfast love and faithfulness have met, and that your righteousness and peace have met. May the gifts we offer this day lift up those in need, and prepare the way of your salvation. Amen.

Blessing and Benediction

The day of the Lord is coming, therefore strive to live in peace for God's salvation is near. May faithfulness spring up from the ground and righteousness look down from heaven as you walk in the way of peace, and may the blessing of God -- Holy Comforter, Word, and Eternal Majesty -- be with you.

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Scripture Readings – December 6, 2020

first reading – ISAIAH 40:1-11

Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins.

A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken." A voice says, "Cry out!" And I said, "What shall I cry?" All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the LORD blows upon it; surely the people are grass. The grass withers, the flower

fades; but the word of our God will stand forever.

Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, do not fear; say to the cities of Judah, "Here is your God!" See, the Lord GOD comes with might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead the mother sheep.

second reading – MARK 1:1-8

The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,

"See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way;
the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:
'Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight,'"

John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

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Thank you for worshipping with us today.