



Presbytery of Lake Michigan
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

December, 2025
We Gather to Worship

Prelude "Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus / In Christ Alone" **Rowland Hugh Prichard & Stuart Townend, arr. Phillip Keveren**

***Call to Worship** **Rev. Dr. Cal Bremer (PLM Assistant to the EP)**

A shoot soon comes from Jesse's stump,
And a branch shall spring from roots.

**Rejoice! Rejoice! All God's children.
Let all the people give God praise.**

A leader soon comes who will lift the poor
With righteousness around his waist.

**Rejoice! Rejoice! All God's children.
Let all the people give God praise.**

A child soon comes from an innocent place
With wisdom and might he'll lead the way.

**Rejoice! Rejoice! All God's children.
Let all the people give God praise.¹**

***Hymn #106** "Prepare the Way, O Zion"

Call to Confession **Rev. Annamarie Groenenboom (PLM Associate Clerk)**

We gather together in this season of Advent anticipating hope, praying for peace, attempting to cultivate joy and share love amidst commotion, grief, despair and uncertainty. Trusting in God's grace, let us confess our sins.

Prayer of Confession

God, we confess that we have often placed our hope in people and things that can't fulfill our every need. We have searched for peace in shallow places. We have mistaken joy for temporal pleasure and artificial exhilaration. We have put limits on the ways we love, excluding those who need our loving kindness the most.

God, when we have lost our way, show us yours. Guide us to the hope in you that will renew our strength. Lead us to your peace that transcends all understanding. Fill us with a joy we can only experience in your presence. Remind us that you have always loved us with an everlasting love, so that we may share that love with others. Amen.

Silence

¹ Adapted from Isaiah 11:1-10 and Romans 15:4-13. United Church of Christ. "Worship Ways." UCC.org, United Church of Christ, 2022.

Assurance of God's Love and Sharing in Christ's Peace

In this season of desolation and uncertainty, it is good to know that God's love for us is sure—that God's commitment to us is definite—that God is walking with us, guiding us, as the compassionate companion that we are called to be for each other. Let us live into this gift. Amen. Thanks be to God. The Peace of Christ be with you. **And also with you!**²

Please greet your neighbors with the Peace of Christ.

We Hear the Word

Prayer for Illumination

Rev. Annamarie Groenenboom (PLM Associate Clerk)

Speak to us, Lord. Speak to us in the waiting, the watching, the hoping, the longing, the sorrow, the sighing, the rejoicing. Speak to us by your Word in these Advent days, and walk with us until the day of your coming. Amen.³

Special Music

“Pat-A-Pan”

Bernard de la Monnoye, arr. Victor Labenske

Scripture Readings

Luke 1:46-55

Message

“Theology Matters”

We Respond to the Word

*Hymn #100

“My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout”

*Affirmation of Faith - *Adopted from the Belhar Confession*

**Rev. Dr. Fran Lane-Lawrence
(Executive Presbyter/Stated Clerk)**

We believe that the church must witness against and strive against any form of injustice,
so that justice may roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.
We believe that the church as the possession of God must stand where the Lord stands, namely against injustice and with the wronged.

We believe that in following Christ the church must witness against all the powerful and privileged who selfishly seek their own interest and thus control and harm others.

Installation of the Presbytery Moderator and Vice Moderator

**Rev. Dr. Troy Hauser-Brydon (Grand Haven First)
Elder Benjamin Boerkoel (GR Westminster)
Elder Linda Hardenbergh (East Lansing Eastminster)**

As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.

There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.

Lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

²United Church of Christ. “Worship Ways.” UCC.org, United Church of Christ, 2022

³Rev. James, Andy. “Prayer of Illumination for Advent:.” LiturgyLink.

There is one body and one Spirit, just as we were called to the one hope of our calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.

We are called by God to be the church of Jesus Christ, a sign in the world today of what God intends for all humankind.

The great ends of the church are the proclamation of the gospel for the salvation of humankind; the shelter, nurture, and spiritual fellowship of the children of God; the maintenance of divine worship; the preservation of the truth; the promotion of social righteousness; and the exhibition of the Kingdom of Heaven to the world. The call of Christ is to willing, dedicated discipleship. Our discipleship is a manifestation of the new life we enter through baptism. Discipleship is both a gift and a commitment, an offering and a responsibility. Today it is our joy to share the call of God to Elder Ben Boerkel as moderator and Elder Linda Hardenbergh as vice moderator of the Presbytery of Lake Michigan.

Ben and Linda, the grace bestowed on you in baptism is sufficient for your calling because it is God's grace. By God's grace we are saved, and enabled to grow in the faith and to commit our lives in ways which serve Christ. God has called you to particular service. Show your purpose by answering these questions.

Who is your Lord and Savior?

Jesus Christ is my Lord and Savior.

Will you be Christ's faithful disciple, obeying his word and showing his love?

I will, with God's help.

Do you welcome the responsibility of this service because you are determined to follow the Lord Jesus, to love neighbors, and to work for the reconciling of the world?

I do.

Will you serve the people with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love, relying on God's mercy and rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit?

I will, with God's help.

Do you, members of the Presbytery of Lake Michigan, confirm the call of God to our siblings Ben Boerkel as moderator and Linda Hardenbergh as vice moderator in the service of Jesus Christ?

We do.

Will you support and encourage them in this ministry?

We will.

Faithful God, in baptism you claimed us; and by your Holy Spirit you are working in our lives, empowering us to live a life worthy of our calling. We thank you for leading Ben and Linda to this time and place. Establish them in your truth, and guide them by your Holy Spirit, that in your service they may grow in faith, hope, and love, and be faithful disciples of Jesus Christ, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and forever.

Almighty God, in Jesus Christ you called disciples and, by the Holy Spirit, made them one church to serve you. Let your Spirit rule your church, so that we may be joined in love and service to Jesus Christ, who, having gone before us, is coming to meet us in the promise of your kingdom. Amen.

Ben, you are installed to service as moderator and Linda, you are installed to service as vice-

moderator in the Presbytery of Lake Michigan. Whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God through him.

Offering

Elder Kirk Truesdell (PLM Treasurer)

The offering today is designated to support the PLM Inquirers and Candidates

Offertory

"Open the Eyes Of My Heart"

Paul Baloche, arr. Phillip Keveren

*Doxology

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

*Prayer of Thanksgiving and Dedication

Elder Kirk Truesdell (PLM Treasurer)

For the wondrous ways this offering will bless this community

We dedicate these gifts.

For the ways it'll help us live out God's mission

We dedicate these gifts.

Let these gifts strengthen our call to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly. Amen.⁴

Celebration of the Lord's Supper

**Rev. Sarah Juist (Jenison Parkwood)
Rev. Kristin Stroble (COM Staff Support)**

Invitation

As we come to this table of remembrance, this table of grace, we remember those members of this presbytery who have joined the heavenly communion this year. As each name is spoken, let us give thanks that their baptism is now complete.

Celebration of the Saints

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

Rev. Sarah Juist (Jenison Parkwood)

The Lord be with you,
and also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to God.

Let us give thanks to God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

How can we thank you, O God? For sun and moon and stars, for breath and life and all things good, for your steadfast promise and your faithful love, for the day that is surely coming when all things will be made new.

With saints, with angels, and with the whole creation, we join the ancient and eternal hymn:

⁴United Church of Christ. "Worship Ways." UCC.org, United Church of Christ, 2022.

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

We give you thanks, Holy God, for Jesus,
who came to be your living Word,
to baptize us with Spirit and fire,
to feed the hungry, to humble the mighty,
and to announce the good news of your coming realm.

With thanks and praise we offer ourselves to you,
sharing this holy meal, remembering Christ's dying and rising, and praying: Come Lord Jesus!

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

Pour out your Holy Spirit upon us—
this bread, this cup, these people—
Christ's body and blood, given in love for the world.
Make us one in the Spirit, one in the church,
and one with Christ our Lord.
Make us gentle, joyful, thankful people,
serving our neighbors, worshiping you alone.
Keep us in the peace of Christ until you gather us at your table in glory.
Even now, a voice is crying in the wilderness: **prepare the way of the Lord!**
Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor are yours,
almighty God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Communion of the People

We invite you to remain in your seats to receive the elements. All of the bread is gluten-free.

Prayer After Communion

***Hymn #82**

“Come Thou Long Expected Jesus”

***Charge and Benediction**

Rev. Lynette Sparks (GR Westminster)

Postlude

“We Three Kings”

John H. Hopkins, Jr.; arr. Victor Labenske

Thank you to all those who participated in leading worship today.

Music Director: Libbie Niewiada