



“Our Lord Jesus Christ
himself and God
our Father loved us and
through grace gave
us eternal comfort and
a good hope. May he
encourage your hearts
and give you strength
in every good thing
you do or say.”

2 THESSALONIANS 2:16-17

First Presbyterian Church of Ocean City

Pastor Debbie Johnson

Jacob Todd, Organist and Choirmaster

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Office Hours: 9AM—12 Noon / Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday

Order of Worship: Sunday, December 1, First Sunday of Advent

We Prepare Our Hearts and Minds: "When He returns is not as important as the fact that we are ready for Him when He does return." □ *A.W. Tozer*

Welcome and Announcements

Prelude

Call to Worship: (responsive)

Jackie Bates

Have you seen it...the spark of hope which God is placing among us.

All we can see is hectic lives, crowded stores, darkness and fear.

Look again...the spirit of God is moving, bringing hope.

We need to place our hope in God, but we are afraid.

A long time ago, people were afraid, and God brought to them light.

May God bring that light to us today! Amen.

Choral Introit: "Soon and Very Soon"

*** Hymn: "Lo, He Comes with Clouds Descending" # 241**

*** Passing the Peace - *Please turn to your neighbor and pass the peace of Christ***

Lighting of the Advent Wreath (responsive)

(Chris Greenwood and Robin Quinn)

Wait for the Lord, whose day is near. Wait for the Lord; be strong; take heart. (Sung)

Current Prayer Concerns:

Diane Ayres, Virginia Miller, Marie McCallister, Thomas Simpson, Chris Hazard, Kent Mitchell, Hudson Day, Margy Kreppel, Amy Etheridge, Bonnie Hancock, Eric Richardson, Samantha Kilgore, Lydia Frasca, Diane Devanna, Larry (Black) Blackwell, Kathy Smith, Larry Steele, Mark Payne, Pat and Ben Steele, Joey Martin, Robert Wilkins, Bob & Dee Lebo, Margie Baugher-Cramer, and William Steger.

**** Please let the office know when a loved one can be moved off our prayer list. Call or text Beth at 862-266-6939 or email the office at ocmdpresbyterian@gmail.com.****

Fellowship Hosts Coming Up:

Dec 8	Karen Eberle & Mabel Rogers
Dec 15	Beth Fisher & Peggy Webster
Dec 22	Ann Hales & Brenda Wilkinson
Dec 29	Betsy & Barbara Kipila

Blue Holiday Service

**A Blue Holiday Service will be held at
St Paul's Episcopal in Berlin on
Sunday, December 15 at 4:00.**

The Lunch Bunch Returns!

The Lunch Bunch group is resuming lunch "once a month" on a Tuesday after the holidays. There is a sign-up sheet on the table in the back of the sanctuary to show your interest and express the best Tuesday for you to participate.

Calendar, Birthdays, Flowers

Wed	Dec 3	Grace Parker Set Up	10:00 AM
Wed	Dec 4	Grace Parker Breakfast	7:00 AM
Wed	Dec 4	Hand Bells Practice <i>cancelled</i>	5:00 PM
Wed	Dec 4	Choir Practice	6:00 PM
Fri	Dec 6	Narcotics Anonymous	7:00 PM

Birthdays: *Bill Jones (12/3)*

Flowers: Large Poinsettias are in Memory of:

~ Helen Fisher.... Remembering all the loving times spent with a very special friend brings us many smiles. ~ Lisa and Marty

~ Bob and Jackie Bates' parents ...Charles & Dorothy Zimmerman, and Gilbert and Mary Ruth Bates and Hester Bates. Loving memories.

POINSETTIAS FOR 2024 ADVENT SEASON..

(there has NOT been an increase in price)

6" POT .. size we get. \$10.00 All red

8" pot3 plants \$25.00

December 8th...mixed red and white

December 15th...white

6" pots of red poinsettias will be delivered for Sunday Worship December 22nd and available for pickup after Christmas Eve Service.

DEADLINE FOR REQUESTING POINSETTIAS IS **DECEMBER 8TH**. Please place requests and payment in offering plate.

Grace Parker

The second Grace Parker Breakfast will be this coming Wednesday, December 4 from 7:00—11:00 AM. All hands on deck!

As we gather today, we remember the promised gifts of the Messiah. In the lighting of one candle, we set our gaze upon beacons that sustain us through sleepless nights and restless days. We bear this light together.

We call this candle Hope. (Light the candle.)

We stand in awe of a light that endures, a steady glow through the dimmest days. We draw near to the God who waits with grace, filling us with hope in every season. With hearts ignited, we work and wait for liberative justice, trusting that it shines beyond even the deepest shadows. Though our flames may falter, we press on for God-is-with-us — Emmanuel is near.

Call to Confession:

Preparing for Christ's coming requires honest examination of our lives and our hearts. Let us turn to God in prayer to confess our sins.

Prayer of Confession: (unison)

The chances we have to be more compassionate; the moments to offer hope to a lonely friend; the good fortune we could give to those who have so little. The signs are all around us, good and upright God, of how we fail to live as your people. Do not meditate on our bungling ways, God of steadfast love, but remember the mercy of Your heart- that mercy which forgives us; that mercy which makes us whole; and especially, that living mercy who came down one night so long ago, Jesus the Advent of our redemption.

Assurance of Pardon: (responsive)

Raise your heads, children of God! In the bleak mid-winter of our lives, our redemption draws near. In the

springtime of our doubts, the kingdom of God approaches.

Even when we feel most alone, the One who comes to us is the salvation promised so long ago. Thanks be to God, we are forgiven! Amen.

*** Gloria Patri:** (unison)

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.

Invitation to the Offering: (2 Peter 3:8-15)

"All things in heaven and earth belong to God, who is coming in glory to reveal a new creation." Let us present our tithes and offerings to the Lord.

Offertory

*** Doxology:** (unison)

Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise Him all creatures here below. Praise Him above ye heavenly Hosts. Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Prayer of Dedication:

Christ calls us to live generous and grateful lives. Take these gifts we offer today, O God, and use them to the fulfillment of Christ's ministry. May these gifts help to free the captives, heal the sick, comfort the lonely, feed the hungry, heal the wounded. As Christ's hands and feet, use us too, in service to building your beloved community. Amen.

Choral Anthem: "Is Your Heart Prepared for a King"

Pastor Debbie's Info:

Email: djhj3675@gmail.com.
Cell phone: (843) 568-6480.
Always available by texting or calling.

Note for this week:

Pastor Debbie will be off this coming Tuesday, December 3, but she will be participating in a Presbytery meeting at 4PM that day by Zoom.

Nominating Committee Forms

See sheets on the back table. Please suggest persons to serve as deacons or as elders. Don't ask them. Let us know and we will ask.

- Mabel Rogers & Lisa Bayles

Samaritan Shelter Christmas Gifts

The women of WOW are buying \$25 gift cards for the Samaritan Shelter to be used by them to buy gifts for the residents. If you would like to participate in this, please give your money to Mabel Rogers (they can be purchased from Seaside Academy, which will benefit). If you cannot give the \$25, any amount will be appreciated. Deadline is December 1st.

glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Invitation to the Lord's Table

Great Thanksgiving

Let us lift up our 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.

It is indeed right to give you our thanks and praise, O God, for even when the whole earth is thrown into chaos, your tenderness and lasting love are our sure hope...

Words of Institution

Communion of the People

The body of Christ broken for you.

The blood of Christ poured out for you.

Prayer after communion and the Lord's Prayer (unison)

*** Hymn: *Hymn "While We Are Waiting, Come" #242**

Charge

Benediction

Postlude and Response: "Go Into the World"

Liturgy credit: The Rev. Walter Canter for The Presbyterian Outlook,

Prayer for Illumination: (unison)

We wait for you, Lord, our souls wait for you, and in your Word we hope. Open our hearts and minds to hear your Word read and proclaimed, that we may have hope and believe in the good news. Amen

1st Scripture Reading: Jeremiah 33: 14-16 [NRSV]

Barbara Kipila

14 The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. 15 In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David, and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. 16 In those days Judah will be saved, and Jerusalem will live in safety. And this is the name by which it will be called: "The Lord is our righteousness."

2nd Scripture Reading: Luke 21: 25-36 [NRSV]

Pastor Debbie Johnson

25 "There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves. 26 People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. 27 Then they will see 'the Son of Man coming in a cloud' with power and great glory. 28 Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near. 29 Then he told them a parable: "Look at the fig tree and all the trees; 30 as soon as they sprout leaves you can see for yourselves and know that

summer is already near. 31 So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near. 32 Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all things have taken place. 33 Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. 34 "Be on guard so that your hearts are not weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of this life and that day does not catch you unexpectedly, 35 like a trap. For it will come upon all who live on the face of the whole earth. 36 Be alert at all times, praying that you may have the strength to escape all these things that will take place and to stand before the Son of Man."

This is the word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Time with Children & Youth
Pastor Debbie Johnson

Sermon: "Stay Alert: Be Ready"
Pastor Debbie Johnson

*** Hymn: "God, You Alone Know What You've Planned" (Tune: "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear")**

God, you alone know what you've planned for earth and sky and sea. Creation waits your loving hand to bring in what will be. When things we trust in shift and shake and sorrows multiply, We hear you calling, "Keep awake! Redemption is close by!"

O Christ, you taught us, "Watch the trees as seasons change each year, For when they bud and grow new leaves You

know that summer's near." May we look round this changing earth and see with faith-filled eyes Your signs of newness, life and birth That witness to the wise.

Though heav'n and earth will pass away, your word will still be true. O Son of Man, on that great day, We'll be secure in you. For at the close of history When all that's past shall end, The one who judges us will be No stranger, but a friend.

So by your Spirit may we share the life you're bringing forth: May we seek justice, end despair, and work to heal the earth. For there's a new day coming near with no more death or pain; Till then, we'll seek to serve you here and welcome in your reign.

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*** The Nicene Creed (Unison)**

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and