

# PARK CENTRAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



Full Life

in the

Emptiest of Places by Lauren Wright Pittman  
A Sanctified Art

*Third Sunday of Advent*

**THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT**  
DECEMBER 15, 2024 10:30 AM

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**Chiming of the Hour**

*The ringing of the bell invites us to quiet our hearts & minds as we gather for worship.*

**Words of Welcome & Announcements**

*Welcome to worship at Park Central Presbyterian Church!  
May you experience God's grace and love within the worship service.*

**WE GATHER IN GOD'S NAME**

**PRELUDE**

“Pastorale” (from the Christmas Concerto)      Arcangelo Corelli, arr. A. Scheming  
Dan Blumenthal, *violin* and Sandra Murphy, *piano*

**\*CALL TO WORSHIP**

Rejoice in the Lord always.

**We come to worship and rejoice.**

Again, I say "rejoice!"

**We come to worship and rejoice!**

Let your gentleness be known to everyone.

**We come to worship and rejoice.**

The Lord is near!

**We come to worship and rejoice the One who is with us!**

**\*HYMN 16**      The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came

GABRIEL'S MESSAGE

**CALL TO CONFESSION**

## **PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

**Merciful God, the stories of your faithfulness abound,  
yet we confess that we do not trust in your provision and care for us.  
We go our own way, longing for joy and peace,  
but not recognizing our need for communion with you and our neighbors.  
We witness the struggles to live and thrive all around us.  
We confess that we are overwhelmed  
by what is required to love our neighbors.  
We hesitate to get our hands dirty to confront the injustice around us,  
and we doubt our ability to make a difference.**

**Forgive us, O God,  
restore us to the joy of our common life in you,  
and remind us of our call to work together  
to tend to the needs that keep us apart. Amen.**

## **SILENT PRAYER**

## **ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

### **\*GLORIA**

*Gloria, gloria,  
In excelsis Deo!  
Gloria, gloria,  
Alleluia, alleluia!* (Sung twice)

TAIZÉ

## **PASSING OF THE PEACE**

## **LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH**

## **PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & THE LORD'S PRAYER**

**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.**

*\*Please rise in body or spirit*

# WE LISTEN FOR GOD'S WORD

## THE FIRST LESSON

Isaiah 58:9b – 12

- <sup>9b</sup> If you remove the yoke from among you,  
the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil,  
<sup>10</sup> if you offer your food to the hungry  
and satisfy the needs of the afflicted,  
then your light shall rise in the darkness  
and your gloom be like the noonday.  
<sup>11</sup> God will guide you continually  
and satisfy your needs in parched places  
and make your bones strong,  
and you shall be like a watered garden,  
like a spring of water  
whose waters never fail.  
<sup>12</sup> Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt;  
you shall raise up the foundations of many generations;  
you shall be called the repairer of the breach,  
the restorer of streets to live in.

Leader: This is the word of God.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

## MUSICAL MEDITATION

### Distressing Disguise

*He is in the pain, he is in the need,  
He is in the poor we are told to feed.  
Though he was rich, for us he became poor.  
How could he give so much? What was it for?  
In his distressing disguise he waits for us to surmise  
That we rob our brothers by all that we own,  
And that's not the way he has shown.*

*Every time a faithful servant serves a brother that's in need,  
What happens at that moment is a miracle indeed.  
As they look at each other, in an instant it is clear:  
Only Jesus is visible, for they've both disappeared.*

Michael Spencer, *tenor*  
Michael Card

*He is in the hand that reaches out to give,  
He is in the touch that causes men to live.  
So, speak with your life now, as well as your tongue.  
Shelter the homeless, take care of the young.  
In his distressing disguise he hopes that we'll realize  
That when we take care of the poorest of them,  
We've really done it to him.*

## **THE SECOND LESSON**

Luke 3:7-16

<sup>7</sup> John said to the crowds coming out to be baptized by him, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? <sup>8</sup>Therefore, bear fruits worthy of repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our ancestor,’ for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. <sup>9</sup>Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.”

<sup>10</sup> And the crowds asked him, “What, then, should we do?” <sup>11</sup> In reply he said to them, “Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none, and whoever has food must do likewise.” <sup>12</sup> Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, “Teacher, what should we do?” <sup>13</sup> He said to them, “Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you.” <sup>14</sup> Soldiers also asked him, “And we, what should we do?” He said to them, “Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages.”

<sup>15</sup> As the people were filled with expectation and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, <sup>16</sup> John answered all of them by saying, “I baptize you with water, but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the strap of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.”

Leader: This is the word of God.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

## **SERMON**

Rev. Brigid Boyle

## **SILENT MOMENT OF REFLECTION**

*\*Please rise in body or spirit*

# WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

## INVITATION TO ENGAGEMENT

*You may place donations to the church in the offering plate as you exit. You may also send in a check or click Donate on the church website.*

## PRAYER OF DEDICATION

\***HYMN 13** Prepare the Way

BEREDEN VÄG FÖR HERRAN

## \***BENEDICTION**

## POSTLUDE

“Hark, A Thrilling Voice” (MERTON)

arr. Malcolm Archer

Sandra Murphy, *organ*  
Dan Blumenthal, *violin obligato*

*During the postlude, some people sit or stand quietly and listen to the music.  
Others prefer to connect with those around them or greet visitors as they leave.  
Please feel free to make the transition between worship and re-entering the world  
in whatever way is meaningful to you.*

*Please join us in the Gathering Hall following worship  
for the Household Closet Christmas Party.*

## Announcements for December 15, 2024

Scan here to donate!

### Sunday, December 22

9:00 am Bible study (virtual)

10:30 am Worship service

11:30 am Fellowship hour



### Household Closet Christmas Party

Please join us in the Gathering Hall today after worship for the Household Closet Christmas Party! We will open gifts for the Household Closet and bless them for use by anyone who is starting over. All are welcome!

### Fourth Sunday of Advent

Next Sunday, December 22, bring your favorite nativity set to worship! We'll display them in the Gathering Hall. You may also want to write up a card describing where you got it and what you love about it!

### Christmas Eve

Our Christmas Eve Candlelight Service will be held on Tuesday, December 24 at 5:30 pm. Music before the service will begin at 5:15 pm. All are welcome!

### Office Closure

The church office will close at noon on Tuesday, December 24 and reopen on Thursday, January 2.

### Sound Bath

The next sound bath will be Monday, January 13 at 7 pm. The sound bath is a time to allow your body and your mind to rest and recenter. All are welcome!

### Get Involved!

There are sign-up sheets in the Gathering Hall for greeters and coffee hour hosts. You can get more information about each of these roles by emailing the office! You can also contact the office if you are interested in reading during worship. Don't hesitate to ask questions about how any of these roles can be adapted to fit your situation. For example, you can partner with someone else to host coffee hour, provide financial support, or even just make or bring a few things! Mission, Membership, and Outreach is happy to help you get involved in whatever way works best for you!

*\*Please rise in body or spirit*

Metaphorically speaking, the health of the garden depends on the hard work of gardeners culling weeds (which in the Isaiah passage could be represented by removing the yoke, the pointing of fingers, and the speaking of evil). The garden also depends on adding necessary nutrients to the soil (offering food to the hungry and satisfying the needs of the afflicted). This is the good that is ours to do.

—from the artist’s statement for “Full Life in the Emptiest of Places”  
by Rev. Lauren Wright Pittman

Park Central has accepted the invitation  
from the Presbyterian Church (USA) to become a Matthew 25 congregation.  
We are answering Christ's call to become even more a church of action,  
where God's love, justice, and mercy shine forth and are contagious.

To learn more about Matthew 25, please visit [pcusa.org/matthew25](http://pcusa.org/matthew25)

Robert Allen.....Director of Arts and Technology  
Brigid Boyle..... Parish Associate  
Lenora Joyner-Hayes ..... Finance Administrator/Bookkeeper  
Sarah McTyre.....Pastor  
Sandra Murphy.....Keyboard Musician  
Kenneth Pfeffer.....Building Manager  
Briana Vaught.....Office and Communications Manager

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Church Office Hours: 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM, M-Th

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Website: [www.parkcentralchurch.org](http://www.parkcentralchurch.org) • Facebook: Park Central Presbyterian Church

Instagram: [parkcentralsyr](https://www.instagram.com/parkcentralsyr) • TikTok: [parkcentralchurch](https://www.tiktok.com/@parkcentralchurch) • Bluesky: [parkcentralchurch.org](https://bsky.app/profile/parkcentralchurch.org)