

Welcome to Worship at
Joyful Harvest Church
Growing Together for Christ
Rev. Rebecca Gordon, Interim Pastor – 847-497-4JOY (4569)
5050 N. Johnsburg Rd, Johnsburg, IL 60051
www.joyfulharvest.org



December 10th, 2023

Second Sunday of Advent

This week we will be worshipping in-person and on-line through Zoom and Facebook. There will be a link on our website to watch the live-stream on Facebook! Stay safe and God bless!

Gathering

Welcome/Greeting/Announcements

Call to Worship

A: Listen to what the Lord our God says to us:

C: Peace is God's hope for us; salvation is God's gift to us.

A: See what the Lord our God reveals to us:

C: Righteousness is the path to the kingdom; faithfulness is the highway we build.

A: Tell what the Lord our God asks us to speak:

C: prepare God's way; the Christ is coming to redeem us.

Advent Candle Lighting Liturgy

A: Our lists are long, even in this strange mess where we live these days. And we want to do it right, we want to be safe, but we want to be able to enjoy the season. We've got work to do to put right what has gone wrong, to heal what is broken, to mend the relationships, and to prepare for the company that will come.

C: The prophet Isaiah reminded us that there is work to be done.

"Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God." When God comes in, then healing is to be found, but we need to make the way; we need to open the door into our lives.

A: So, we light these candles as a sign of our faith that the God we worship is not far from us and that we can clear the way for that God to come and dwell with us. We light these candles in faith that company is coming.

C: O Come, O Come Emmanuel.

Gathering Songs

Prayer of the Day

Word

FIRST READING: Isaiah 40:1-11

¹Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. ²Speak 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. ³A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. ⁴Every 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. ⁵Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken." ⁶A voice says, "Cry out!" And I said, "What shall I cry?" All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field. ⁷The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the Lord blows upon it; surely the people are grass. ⁸The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand forever. ⁹Get 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!" ¹⁰See, the Lord God comes with might, and
his arm rules for him; his reward is with him, and his recompense before
him. ¹¹He 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.

Psalm: Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13

¹Lord, you were favorable to your land; you restored the fortunes of Jacob.

²You forgave the iniquity of your people; you pardoned all their sin.

⁸Let me hear what God the Lord will speak, for he will speak peace to his
people, to his faithful, to those who turn to him in their hearts.

**⁹Surely his salvation is at hand for those who fear him, that his glory may
dwell in our land.**

¹⁰Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet; righteousness and peace will
kiss each other.

**¹¹Faithfulness will spring up from the ground, and righteousness will look
down from the sky.**

¹²The Lord will give what is good, and our land will yield its increase.

¹³Righteousness will go before him, and will make a path for his steps.

SECOND READING: 2 Peter 3:8-15a

⁸Do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a
thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. ⁹The Lord is not
slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you,
not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance. ¹⁰But the day of
the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a
loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and
everything that is done on it will be disclosed. ¹¹Since all these things are to
be dissolved in this way, what sort of persons ought you to be in leading
lives of holiness and godliness, ¹²waiting for and hastening the coming of
the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set ablaze and
dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire? ¹³But, in accordance with
his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where
righteousness is at home. ¹⁴Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for
these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish;
^{15a}and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation.

GOSPEL: Mark 1:1-8

P: The Holy Gospel according to Mark.

C: Glory to you, O Lord!

¹The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God...

P: This is the gospel of the Lord!

C: Praise to you, O Christ!

Sermon

Prayers of Intercession

A: "Merciful God",C: "receive our prayer"

Offering: Friends, the giving of our offerings are a true act of Worship, given freely to share God's love through this congregation. You may come forward to put your gift in the offering plate, send your gifts to the church at: 5050 N. Johnsbury Rd., Johnsbury, IL 60051 or give online at www.joyfulharvest.org

Offering Prayer

Meal

Confession and Forgiveness

P: God comes! Let us prepare the way.
God comes to forgive us! Let us prepare
our hearts as we confess our sins, saying,

C: We confess that whatever our fine might have been that it has been paid, God of Comfort, yet we still insist on earning our way into your heart. We confess that you are beyond patient with us, but wish you would act quickly against those who hurt us. We confess that while your word will stand forever, it is our words of pain and anger that cause long term harm to others. Your Messenger has come, Approaching God, crying out of your forgiveness and hope. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, you speak to us: not of punishment, but of peace; not of judgment, but of justice; not of a sentence, but salvation. And we offer our hearts in thanksgiving and hope. Amen.

Silence is kept

P: Hear the Good News God speaks to you: I love you; I forgive you; I restore you to new life.

C: We will not ignore the fact that God comes: not to condemn, but to comfort us; not to scold, but to speak tenderly to us of hope, of love, of joy. Thanks be to God. Amen.

Lord's Supper

Prayer of Thanksgiving and Words of Institution

Lord's Prayer

C: 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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever and ever. Amen

Invitation to Communion: *Christ is truly present with us today, especially in the gifts of bread and wine. God's table is open; we invite you to join us at the Lord's Table! After the choir is served, come up the center aisle, from front to back. If you are unable to come forward, please let the pastor or another worship leader know, and we will bring communion to you. If you do not receive communion, you are welcome to come forward for a blessing, simply keep your hands folded. The dark colored liquid is wine, and the light-colored liquid is juice. Please let the pastor know if you need a gluten free wafer. All are welcome!*

Communion Song

Sending

Sending Song

Sending and Benediction

P: As you were present with us through your Word, O God:

C: May we be present to others who will come to us this week.

P: As you fed us with peace, Bread of Life:

C: May we grace others with your peace in the coming days.

P: As you welcomed us to your Table, Spirit of hope:

C: May we welcome those you send us who have no hope.

Commissioning

P: At Joyful Harvest Church, **our mission is growing together for Christ.**

As disciples of Jesus Christ, we value:

C: Family Worship, Relying on Prayer, Unity in Christ, Instruction in the Word, Telling Others, and Service to God's Community.

P: Let us go in peace to love and serve the Lord!

C: Thanks be to God!

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Announcements

If you are looking for a place to worship with your family, join us any Sunday at 9:00 am! Thank you for worshipping with us today.

First Wednesday Fellowship (TBD) - (FWF) Watch for upcoming information about our 1st Wednesday Fellowship presentations which will restart in March 2024. For links go to www.joyfulharvest.org.

Be part of Worship! Help out by reading, greeting or assisting in communion! There is a sign-up sheet for Sunday worship on the Welcome Table. No experience necessary!!!

Rides Needed! Volunteers are needed to provide people with rides to church on Sundays and special church events. Please contact Bruce Harmel (815) 670-7103 for more information.

St. Jude Children's Ranch: We are collecting cards! Please bring in the whole card Juanita will separate the front from the back. Save your used holiday and all-occasion cards, bring them to the church, and we'll ship them off to St. Jude's!

Cross Keys Village Stampers: Cut used postage stamps from the mail you receive at home, bring it to the church and we'll make sure the Cross Keys folks receive them.

Donate for Tijuana Mission Project! - Toys & school supplies! When our volunteers go to Tijuana, they would like to take some items that the kids can use. *If you see a backpack on sale, we can fill it with school supplies. Soccer balls or footballs can be deflated, jump ropes, small toys, T-shirts for kids would be good, too.* There is a box in the narthex for donations. **See Ray Pratscher or Theresa Ancona for info.**

Men's Group: We meet on **Saturday mornings at 7 a.m.** at the church for fellowship and learning more about God's call on our lives. All men are invited to attend.

Joyful Readers Book Club: Do you like to read & are looking for a way to connect with other women? Consider joining the ladies of Joyful Harvest as they embark in this fellowship opportunity. The next meeting will be January 27th at 9:00 a.m. They're reading *The Glass Castle* by Jeannette Walls. Contact Kim DuBois for more info!



Donate to help the ministries of Joyful Harvest! Scan the QR code on the left with your mobile device or visit the giving kiosk in the narthex. You'll go to our online giving page to set up a one-time or recurring gift through your debit/credit card processed through PayPal. Your generous gift will support our many outreach ministries. ***Thank you for making so much possible!***

Weekly Calendar

Tue. Dec 12	Breakfast Club at Midwest Breakfast	8:00 a.m.
Tue. Dec 12	Food Pantry Service Opportunity	4:00-6:30 p.m.
Thur. Dec 14	Food Pantry Service Opportunity	4:00-6:30 p.m.
Sat. Dec 16	Men's Group	7:00 a.m-9:30 a.m.
Sun. Dec 10	Sunday Morning Worship	9:00 a.m.
Sun. Dec 10	Gifts of Joy Christmas Shopping	10:30 a.m.-11:30a.m.

Upcoming Events

Sun. Dec 17	Gifts of Joy Christmas Shopping	10:30 a.m.-11:30a.m.
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DECEMBER 10, 2023
SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT



Now is the time to prepare the way of the Lord.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	Mark 1:1-8	The beginning of the good news
Monday	Isaiah 40:1-11	Comfort my people
Tuesday	2 Peter 3:8-15a	Promise of the Lord's coming
Wednesday	1 John 4:16-21	God is love
Thursday	1 Timothy 1:12-17	Gratitude for God's mercy
Friday	Malachi 3:1-4	God promises a messenger
Saturday	Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13	A prayer for God's peace
Sunday	John 1:6-8,19-28	John's witness to the light

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God." **Isaiah 40:3 (NRSV)**

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Lord God, make us ready to be your messengers of comfort, love, and forgiveness through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

God our Savior, thank you for this food and all who prepared it. Help us to prepare the way for you. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May the God of love and comfort, fill you with the good news of Jesus Christ and give you peace.

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CARING CONVERSATIONS

Take a moment to tell or think about a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your life. Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- Talk about how you have been comforted during a time of need.
- Tell about a time you have felt God's comfort in your life.
- Mark 1:1 speaks of the beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ. Reflect on how this good news is filled with the comfort of God's love and forgiveness.

DEVOTIONS

December 10 is the second Sunday in Advent. Continue to use an Advent wreath with four blue or purple candles and a white center candle. Light the first and second candles, and use the following words: *Say:* The second candle on our Advent wreath is the love candle because God's love comes to all through the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd who comforts, feeds, leads, and loves the sheep. [Light the first and second candles.] *Read:* Mark 1:1-3 and Isaiah 40:1-3, 11. The gospel of Mark starts with the theme for the whole book: "The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God." Isaiah 40 begins a new section in the larger book of Isaiah. Both emphasize a new era of God's love that has overcome judgment with forgiveness. *Pray:* **Lord God, like a shepherd caring for the sheep, you come to us full of love and comfort with the good news of your Son. Fill us with the love you have for us through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.**

SERVICE

1 John 4:20 states, "We love because [God] first loved us." God's passion and love for us leads to acts of comfort, love, and forgiveness of others. Talk about or make a list of acts of kindness offered by you and others during the week. Give thanks to God for the good news of Jesus Christ that leads you to love the world that God so loves.

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

Setting up a Christmas tree in our home is a tradition and a Christian symbol reminding us of God's love. The evergreen tree reminds us of the ever-present love of God. The lights symbolize the light of Christ. The shape of an evergreen tree serves as an arrow that points to heaven. As you reflect on the symbolism of the Christmas tree, offer the following prayer:

Dear God, we thank you for this tree as a reminder of your loving and saving presence in our lives and world. May the good news of Jesus Christ light up our hearts with your love, joy, and peace, and may the gifts placed under it remind us of the great gift of your Son Jesus Christ.



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