

**PARK HILL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**  
**A CONGREGATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (USA)**



*"Mary's Choice – Let It Be"*  
Rev. Carl McCormack



Third Sunday  
of Advent

December 17, 2023

Isaiah 61:1-3  
Luke 1:46-55  
Luke 1:26-38

**Third Sunday of Advent**  
**December 17, 2023**

**3520 JFK Blvd. North Little Rock, AR 72116**

**501-753-9533; parkhillpres@gmail.com**

**Visit our website at parkhillpres.org**

**WORSHIP NOTES**

**Order of Worship**

Our order of worship is Reformed and follows centuries of tradition. These are some brief explanations of the various parts of Reformed Worship.

**The Advent Candle**

Lighting the Advent Candle is a tradition that helps the worshiping community focus on the promise of God while together we wait for the coming of the Messiah.

**Song of Praise**

Together we express vocally our praise and thanksgiving to the God of Glory.

**Prayer of Confession**

Having praised the holiness of God, we must also face the sinful state of the world and of our lives, confessing our unworthiness to enter into God's presence. Nevertheless we approach God with confidence, trusting in the mercy of Jesus Christ. This is one of the hallmarks of the Reformed tradition.

**Assurance of Pardon**

A declaration of forgiveness proclaims the good news of God's mercy and offers the assurance of pardon in Jesus' name. Hearing the words of assurance spoken from the font connects our confession with the grace and cleansing of Baptism, and God's call to a new way of life in Christ.

Welcome & Announcements

Carleton Philbrick

Welcome from the Pastor

Prelude      *"Peace On Earth / Drummer Boy"*      *Quadrphonics*

Lighting the Advent Candle      (Rochelle Greenwood & Sarah Womble)

\*Opening Prayer

**O Lord, our redeemer, you lead us from languishing in sorrow's shadows into your brilliant light, and we break out in joyful laughter on account of your abundant grace. For coming to us, to lead us home along the Way of Jesus Christ we give thanks, Amen.**

\*Opening Song of Praise      #104 *"O Lord, How Shall I Meet You"*  
Matt Butler

Call to Confession      Carleton Philbrick

Prayer Of Confession (Unison)      Carleton Philbrick

**Holy Lord, as we wait and watch and yearn, we look for signs of your coming. You enter our world to bring unconditional love, and then you call us to love you, to love our neighbors, to even love our enemies. We confess that often love is not in our hearts and we lack courage to show love in our actions. We need your mercy; we long for the coming of your Light. We wait, but we also pray, come quickly, Lord. Hear us now as we silently confess the sins of our daily lives...**

Assurance Of Pardon      Rev. Carl McCormack

Friends, in Christ, this promise has become a reality, and is the good news of our salvation:

**In Jesus Christ we are forgiven. Thanks be to God. Amen.**

**Gloria Patri**  
“Glory to the Father!” This is our response of praise for being forgiven.

**Passing the Peace**  
Our sharing the peace with one another is a sign of reconciliation in Christ.

**Prayer for Illumination**  
A prayer for illumination calls on the Holy Spirit to empower our reading, understanding, proclaiming, and living of God’s Word.

**Scripture & Sermon**  
The Scriptures bear witness to the Word of God, revealed most fully in Jesus Christ, the Word of God, who “... became flesh and lived among us...” The role of the worshiper is to listen *prayerfully*, actively, and attentively to the Word that is read and proclaimed.

Gloria Patri #581 Jo Murry

\*Passing the *Peace of Christ*

Prayer for Illumination (Unison) Carleton Philbrick

**Guide us, O God, by your Word, and Holy Spirit, that in your light we may see light, in your truth find freedom, and in your will discover peace; through Christ our Lord, Amen.**

First Scripture Reading Isaiah 61:1-3 Carleton Philbrick

The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me,  
because the LORD has anointed me;  
he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed,  
to bind up the brokenhearted,  
to proclaim liberty to the captives,  
and release to the prisoners;  
to proclaim the year of the LORD’s favor,  
and the day of vengeance of our God;  
to comfort all who mourn;  
to provide for those who mourn in Zion—  
to give them a garland instead of ashes,  
the oil of gladness instead of mourning,  
the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.  
They will be called oaks of righteousness,  
the planting of the LORD, to display his glory.

Second Scripture Reading Luke 1:46-55 Carleton

And Mary said,  
“My soul magnifies the Lord,  
and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant.

Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;  
for the Mighty One has done great things for me,  
and holy is his name.

His mercy is for those who fear him  
from generation to generation.

He has shown strength with his arm;  
he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.  
He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,  
and lifted up the lowly;  
he has filled the hungry with good things,  
and sent the rich away empty.

He has helped his servant Israel,  
in remembrance of his mercy,  
according to the promise he made to our ancestors,  
to Abraham and to his descendants forever.”

The Word of the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

Special Music “Gift of Love” Quadraphonics

Gospel Reading Rev. Carl McCormack

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin’s name was Mary. And he came to her and said, “Greetings, favored one!

## Affirmation of Faith

Responding to the Word proclaimed, we affirm *our* faith in the holy, triune God.

The Lord is with you.” But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.” Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I am a virgin?” The angel said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God.” Then Mary said, “Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.” Then the angel departed from her.

The Gospel of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon *“Mary’s Choice – Let It Be”* Pastor McCormack

### \*Affirmation of Faith

**In life and in death we belong to God. Through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, we trust in one triune God, the Holy One of Israel, whom alone we worship and serve. We trust in Jesus Christ, fully human, fully God. Jesus proclaimed the reign of God: preaching good news to the poor and release to the captives, teaching by word and deed and blessing the children, forgiving sinners, and calling all to repent and believe the gospel. With believers in every time and place, we rejoice that nothing in life or death can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

## Offering & Doxology

Christian life is an offering of one's self to God. As those who have been claimed and set free by his grace, we respond with gratitude, offering him our lives, our spiritual gifts, and our material goods, followed with a song of praise.

## Charge & Benediction

We are blessed in order to be a blessing to others. The charge calls the church to go forth as agents of God's mission in the world

\*Prayers of the People

**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.**

## Stewardship Moment

Offering/Offertory

*Doxology	#606	Jo Murry
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\*Prayer of Dedication

Closing Song of Dedication #772 Matt Butler

## Charge & Benediction

Postlude	Matt Butler
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Assisting in Worship:  
Pastor Carl McCormick  
Carleton Philbrick, as Liturgist  
Cindy Witherspoon-Allen, as Greeter  
Karene Jones & Dale Hanson, Ushers  
Jo Murry, as Pianist  
Matt Butler, Organist



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### Third Sunday of Advent—December 17, 2023

#### “Commitment Sunday” Cards Due

#### Deadline for the Poinsettia Orders

9:45am—Fellowship Bible Study—Parlor

11am—Worship Service—Pastor Carl McCormack

Church Family Dinner (With Special Guest)

Session Meeting after Church Family Dinner

### Monday, December 18, 2023

10:30am—Monday Morning Prayer Group—Conference Room

6:30pm—AR Scottish Dance Society

### Wednesday, December 20, 2023

4:30—Handbell Choir

### Fourth Sunday of Advent—December 24, 2023

9:45am—Fellowship Sunday School—Parlor

11am—Worship Service—Pastor Carl McCormack  
(Pastor Carl McCormack’s Last Sunday)

## PRAYER NOTES—

**Recent Members:** Diana McCray, Robert (Bob) Miller, Dianne Taylor

**Continued Prayers:** Patt Bond, Pat Clark, Donna Ellis, Bill Jones, Ginny Jones, Jesse Macom-Teague, Grady Nixon, Wendell Phillips, Elizabeth Pollard,

**Prayers For Friends Of The Church:** Judy Barfield, Air Force SMSGT Scott Burris (Phil & Liz Terrell's son, while he is deployed to Kuwait for 6 months), Dana Chadwick, Lynn Chadwick, Charles Clark, Darnell Clark, Susan Gibbes; Constance Hughes, Candy Jackson (Karene Jones daughter), Travis Kasper, Stephanie Phillips, Dee Pizzalato (Bill Bond’s niece), Ralph Pollard (Barbara Biedenharn’s brother), Jennifer Willen,

**Praise and Thanksgiving:** Liam Pierce is improving in his health.

**Prayers For Those In Home Confinement:** John Atterbury, Ann Cother, Bunn Falls (Johnson County Health & Rehab), Clarksville, Ann McCollum, Jack McCollum, Steve Pollard (AR State VA Home), David Rennie, Ann Woods.

**Prayers For Those In Grief:** For those who are still mourning the loss of a loved one.

\*Please pray for the family of Jeff Conner, who passed away last weekend.

Dear Lord, I lift my voice in thanksgiving for the blessing of family and friends. They are the foundation of support, the source of joy, and the comfort in times of need. Thank You for the laughter we share, the memories we create, and the love that binds us together. May we continue to cherish and nurture these relationships, always seeking to strengthen the bond of love between us. In Jesus’ name, I pray. Amen.

**\*Please contact the church office if you need someone placed on or taken off the prayer notes. Thank you.**