

3 that went before

ADVENT

November 26, 2023



To all who want to approach God in true worship,

To all who sin and know they need the Savior,

To all who desire to serve God and their neighbor,

To all who want the fellowship of Christians,

Providence opens wide its doors, and in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord, says, "Welcome!"

CENTERED ON THE GOSPEL

A congregation of the Presbyterian Church in America, Providence is committed to the historic Christian faith as it is confessed in the Apostles', Nicene, and Chalcedonian Creeds. With the Church of all ages, we confess faith in the Lord Jesus Christ who entered history for us, took upon Himself our nature, voluntarily offered Himself as our substitute upon the cross, and conquered sin and death by His resurrection.

The Gospel is the Good News that Christ has secured salvation for us. We are set free from sin and death through faith in Christ. In response, we seek to worship the Lord, to grow in faith and obedience to Him, and to serve Him and one another.

A more complete explanation of our faith is found in the Westminster Confession of Faith.

SCHEDULE

Sunday 9:00 am	Sunday School	Monday	7:00 pm	Evensong
10:00 am	Worship	Tuesday	7:30 am	Morning Prayer
11:30 am	Fellowship Luncheon (first Sun. of the month)	Wednesday	7:30 am	Morning Prayer
6:00 pm	Evensong (except first Sun. of the month)		10:00 am	Women's Bible Study (during school months)
		Thursday	7:00 pm	Evensong
		Friday	7:30 am	Morning Prayer

THE LORD'S SUPPER

The Lord's Supper or Eucharist (a word meaning gratitude and grace) is distributed to Christ's covenant congregation each Lord's Day. All baptized members of Christ's Church are invited to participate. Those who are not active members of a Christian Church are requested to meet with the elders prior to participation in the Eucharist.

NURSERY

Children of all ages are welcome to worship with us. A nursery is also available upstairs for infants and young children during the morning worship service. An enclosed "cry room," with windows and speakers, is located at the rear of the sanctuary.

SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES

Children have an incredible capacity for learning God's Word and the doctrines of our faith; this instruction is so important that at the baptism of a covenant child, the members of the congregation promise to "assist the parents in the Christian nurture of their child." The children's Sunday School department, an integral part of our church's ministry, exists to aid parents in the spiritual training of the covenant children that God has entrusted to them. Classes for ages two through adult begin at 9:00 am.

LISTENING AID DEVICES

These devices are available for use during our worship services by those with hearing impairments. If you would like to use this equipment, please speak with the greeter.

CONTACT US

Ministers Alan McCall, Seth Skogen Elders Ted Dravis, Emil Nassif

Deacons Terry Brennan, Tom Coughlin, Nathan Eleweanya, Harry Linnemeyer, Eric Smith

Pastor McCall may be reached at 281-980-2522 (281-980-0250). If you have prayer requests or spiritual needs, please make them known to the Pastor. The elders would be happy to meet with all inquirers and to answer questions concerning the Christian faith, the sacraments, and Church membership.

THE DIVINE SERVICE

SUNDAY NEXT BEFORE ADVENT

Preparation

O Almighty God, from whom every good prayer cometh, who pourest out on all who desire it the spirit of grace and of supplication: Deliver us, when we draw nigh to thee, from coldness of heart and wanderings of mind, that with steadfast thoughts and kindled affections we may worship thee in spirit and in truth; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Entrance Hymn #1 (Standing)

Greeting

Our help is in the name of the Lord,

Who made heaven and earth.

Seeing that we have a great high priest, who has entered into the heavens, Jesus Christ the Son of God, let us come boldly unto the throne of grace,

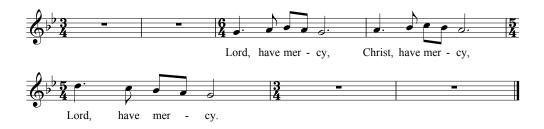
That we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Confession and Forgiveness (Kneeling)

Let us humbly confess our sins unto Almighty God.

Lord God, Eternal and Almighty Father,

we acknowledge and confess before Your holy majesty that we are poor sinners; conceived and born in guilt and in corruption, prone to do evil, unable of ourselves to do any good; who by reason of our depravity, transgress without end Your holy commandments. But O Lord, with heartfelt sorrow we repent and deplore our offenses! We condemn ourselves and our evil ways, with true penitence beseeching that Your grace may relieve our distress. Be pleased then to have compassion upon us, O most gracious God, Father of all mercies; for the sake of Your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



Assurance of Pardon (Kneeling)

Hear the good news! This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance: Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners.

As you have confessed your sins through faith in Him, God the Father assures you that you are forgiven.

Hymn of Praise (Standing)



Prayer for Illumination (Standing)

First Lesson

Genesis 49:29-50:26

²⁹ Then he charged them and said to them: "I am to be gathered to my people; bury me with my fathers in the cave that *is* in the field of Ephron the Hittite, ³⁰ in the cave that *is* in the field of Machpelah, which *is* before Mamre in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought with the field of Ephron the Hittite as a possession for a burial place. ³¹ There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife, there they buried Isaac and Rebekah his wife, and there I buried Leah. ³² The field and the cave that *is* there *were* purchased from the sons of Heth." ³³ And when Jacob had finished commanding his sons, he drew his feet up into the bed and breathed his last, and was gathered to his people.

¹ Then Joseph fell on his father's face and wept over him, and kissed him. ² And Joseph commanded his servants the physicians to embalm his father. So the physicians embalmed Israel. ³ Forty days were required for him, for such are the days required for those who are embalmed; and the Egyptians mourned for him seventy days.

⁴Now when the days of his mourning were past, Joseph spoke to the household of Pharaoh, saying, "If now I have found favor in your eyes, please speak in the hearing of Pharaoh, saying, ⁵ 'My father made me swear, saying, "Behold, I am dying; in my grave which I dug for myself in the land of Canaan, there you shall bury me." Now therefore, please let me go up and bury my father, and I will come back.'"

⁶ And Pharaoh said, "Go up and bury your father, as he made you swear."

⁷ So Joseph went up to bury his father; and with him went up all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his house, and all the elders of the land of Egypt, ⁸ as well as all the house of Joseph, his brothers, and his father's house. Only their little ones, their flocks, and their herds they left in the land of Goshen. ⁹ And there went up with him both chariots and horsemen, and it was a very great gathering.

¹⁰ Then they came to the threshing floor of Atad, which *is* beyond the Jordan, and they mourned there with a great and very solemn lamentation. He observed seven days of mourning for his father. ¹¹ And when the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, saw the mourning at the threshing floor of Atad, they said, "This *is* a deep mourning of the Egyptians." Therefore its name was called Abel Mizraim, which *is* beyond the Jordan.

¹² So his sons did for him just as he had commanded them. ¹³ For his sons carried him to the land of Canaan, and buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah, before Mamre, which Abraham bought with the field from Ephron the Hittite as property for a burial place. ¹⁴ And after he had buried his father, Joseph returned to Egypt, he and his brothers and all who went up with him to bury his father.

¹⁵ When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, "Perhaps Joseph will hate us, and may actually repay us for all the evil which we did to him." ¹⁶ So they sent *messengers* to Joseph, saying, "Before your father died he commanded, saying, ¹⁷ 'Thus you shall say to Joseph: "I beg you, please forgive the trespass of your brothers and their sin; for they did evil to you." 'Now, please, forgive the trespass of the servants of the God of your father." And Joseph wept when they spoke to him.

¹⁸ Then his brothers also went and fell down before his face, and they said, "Behold, we *are* your servants."

¹⁹ Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid, for *am* I in the place of God? ²⁰ But as for you, you meant evil against me; *but* God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as *it is* this day, to save many people alive. ²¹ Now therefore, do not be afraid; I will provide for you and your little ones." And he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.

²² So Joseph dwelt in Egypt, he and his father's household. And Joseph lived one hundred and ten years. ²³ Joseph saw Ephraim's children to the third *generation*. The children of Machir, the son of Manasseh, were also brought up on Joseph's knees.

²⁴ And Joseph said to his brethren, "I am dying; but God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land to the land of which He swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob." ²⁵ Then Joseph took an oath from the children of Israel, saying, "God will surely visit you, and you shall carry up my bones from here." ²⁶ So Joseph died, *being* one hundred and ten years old; and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt.

This is the Word of the Lord.

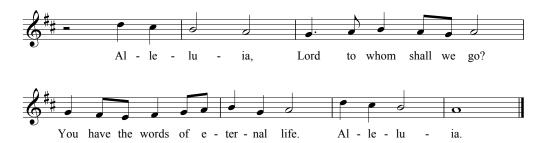
Psalm 121



-4-

Gospel Lesson (Standing)

The Gospel of our Lord according to Mark 9:14-29



¹⁴ And when He came to the disciples, He saw a great multitude around them, and scribes disputing with them. ¹⁵ Immediately, when they saw Him, all the people were greatly amazed, and running to *Him*, greeted Him. ¹⁶ And He asked the scribes, "What are you discussing with them?"

¹⁷Then one of the crowd answered and said, "Teacher, I brought You my son, who has a mute spirit. ¹⁸ And wherever it seizes him, it throws him down; he foams at the mouth, gnashes his teeth, and becomes rigid. So I spoke to Your disciples, that they should cast it out, but they could not."

¹⁹ He answered him and said, "O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him to Me." ²⁰ Then they brought him to Him. And when he saw Him, immediately the spirit convulsed him, and he fell on the ground and wallowed, foaming at the mouth.

²¹ So He asked his father, "How long has this been happening to him?"

And he said, "From childhood. ²² And often he has thrown him both into the fire and into the water to destroy him. But if You can do anything, have compassion on us and help us."

²³ Jesus said to him, "If you can believe, all things *are* possible to him who believes."

²⁴ Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!"

²⁵ When Jesus saw that the people came running together, He rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, "Deaf and dumb spirit, I command you, come out of him and enter him no more!" ²⁶ Then *the spirit* cried out, convulsed him greatly, and came out of him. And he became as one dead, so that many said, "He is dead." ²⁷ But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose.

²⁸ And when He had come into the house, His disciples asked Him privately, "Why could we not cast it out?"

²⁹ So He said to them, "This kind can come out by nothing but prayer and fasting."

The Gospel of our Lord.



Sermon Hope in the Promise Pastor Alan

Affirmation of Faith (Standing)





Prayers of the Church (Standing)

Silent Prayer,

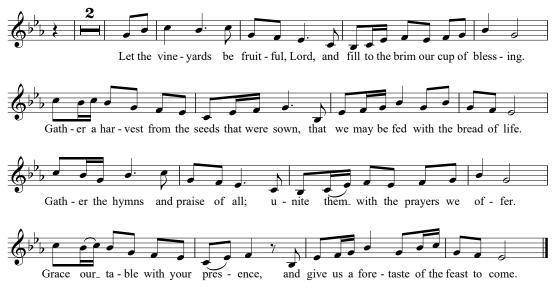
Pastoral Prayer,

. . . Lord, in Your mercy,

hear our 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.

Presentation of Tithes & Offerings (Standing)



Great Thanksgiving (Standing)

The Lord be with you.

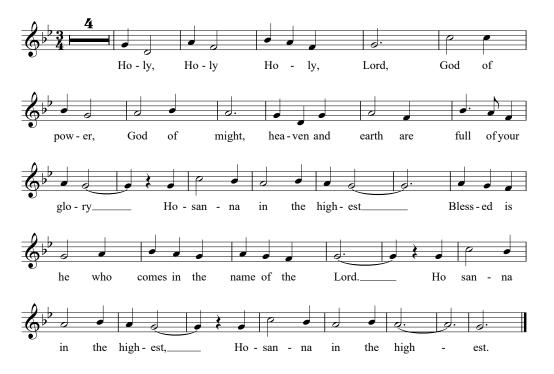
And with your spirit.

Lift up your hearts.

We have lifted them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord.

It is right that we should at all times give thanks unto You, O Lord, our heavenly Father, for You did create the heavens and the earth and all that is in them; You did make man in Your own image and your tender mercies are over all Your works. Therefore with angels and archangels and all the company of heaven, we worship and adore Your glorious name, evermore praising You—



Words of Institution

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night in which He was betrayed, took bread and gave thanks.

Prayer

When He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is my body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of me."

In like manner also He took the cup after supper, and gave thanks.

Prayer

When He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

Invitation and Participation

Come in the faith you have professed; come in joyous thanksgiving and partake of the feast which God has set for you; come to the table of our Lord.

All baptized members of Christ's Church are invited to participate.

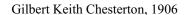
Please come forward to receive the bread and wine, and wait until all are served to partake.

Let us eat and drink together from the food which God has graciously given to nourish and sustain us in the faith.

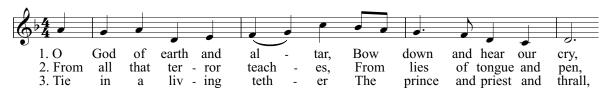
Prayer of Thanksgiving (Standing)



O GOD OF EARTH AND ALTAR

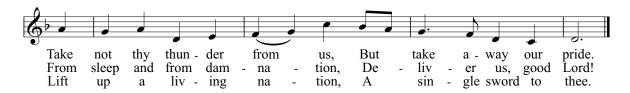


KING'S LYNN Traditional English Melody Arr. R. Vaughan Williams, 1906









Benediction (Standing)

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

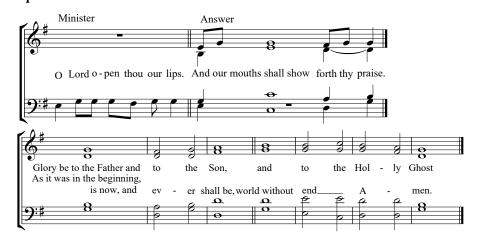


Evensong

6:00 PM

Preparation

Call to Worship



Psalm Psalm 70 Blue Book Part I

Canticle Magnificat Blue Book Part II

Gospel Lesson *Matthew 25:31-46*



Creed The Apostles Creed Blue Book Part II

Prayers of Intercession

Canticle Gloria in Excelsis Blue Book Part II

Scripture Lesson 1 Corinthians 15:20-28

Sermon Faith Working Through Love Pastor Seth

Canticle Nunc Dimittis Blue Book Part II

Benediction



THE GOSPEL IN OUR WORSHIP

O come let us worship and bow down; Let us kneel before the Lord our Maker, For He is our God, And we are the people of His pasture, And the sheep of His hand. Psalm 95: 6, 7

The Gospel—the finished work of Jesus Christ—lies at the heart of all that we celebrate each Sunday as we come into the presence of God, for it is only by the blood of Jesus Christ that we have been granted merciful access to the Throne of Grace. And so, it is only fitting that we should pattern our order of worship after the Gospel, thus declaring by self-conscious acts of worship the plan of God's redeeming work for us.

We begin by responding to the call of God, entering His presence with joyous singing. A sinful people, we must also acknowledge our unrighteousness, confess our sin, and receive again His words of absolution. With confidence in God's presence and promises, we cry out, "Lord have mercy," and then we join with the angels in a hymn of praise.

As God's children, we long to hear His voice, and so we listen as He speaks to us through His written Word, presented to us in the form of two or three Scripture lessons. One of these serves as the text for the sermon, which offers us instruction, encouragement, and help, so that we might more faithfully live the Christian life.

In response to God's Word, we renew our commitment to Him by confessing our faith. On Sunday mornings, we use as our confession the Nicene Creed. Written in A.D. 325 by an ecumenical council and accepted thereafter by all Christian churches, the Nicene Creed underlines for us the core focus of our faith: Jesus Christ, God incarnate, crucified, resurrected, and now reigning at the right hand of God the Father. Then, as a further expression of faith and obedience, we present ourselves and our work to God through our tithes and offerings.

The Lord's Supper—which commemorates the Last Supper and anticipates the coming Marriage Supper of the Lamb—represents the climax of our worship. All our worship up to this point has been in preparation for our approach to the Table. God, having forgiven and reconciled us to Himself, speaks to us through His Word, renews His covenant with us, and now invites us to feast at His Table.

This order of worship follows the basic outline of the Gospel and the historic liturgy of the Western Church. Following the emphasis of the Reformation on the participation of the congregation, many of our prayers are printed in the bulletin to facilitate corporate worship.

THE GOSPEL IN OUR WINDOWS

Far more than window-dressing, the stained glass art at the front of our sanctuary was designed to highlight the story of God's supreme work of redemption through Jesus Christ. Together, the four windows serve to remind us of the key events that God initiated to draw to Himself a people He could call His own.

The first panel depicts the incarnation of our Lord. Born in a lowly stable and laid in an earthy manger, the eternal, omnipotent God demonstrated incomparable humility as He took upon Himself the fullness of human form and nature. The glorious appearing of the Bethlehem star marked His advent.

The second panel draws attention to the events of Holy Week. The cross, a symbol of death and sacrifice, stands atop Golgotha, reminding us of the ultimate price of sin that was paid by God the Son. The cup reminds us of the Lord's Supper, instituted the night before His death. When we partake of this sacrament, we are, as St. Paul says, sharing in the body and blood of Christ.

The third panel celebrates the victorious resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. The empty tomb, the Easter lilies and the butterflies, historic symbols of the resurrection, remind us that we have a resurrection faith. Each Sunday, when we come into the presence of God to commemorate Christ's resurrection, God renews His covenant with us. We then return into the world to resume our place as citizens of His kingdom, lifting high Christ's banner, proclaiming a risen Savior, and living our lives in the light of resurrection hope.

The fourth panel illustrates in symbolic detail the birth of the Church of Christ, an event proclaimed in power by God's gift of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. One of the earliest images for the church was a ship, reminiscent of a more ancient symbol of salvation, Noah's ark. The historic Christian symbols of the Spirit—the tongues of fire and the dove—descend upon the ship, the Church. The triangle at the top of this fourth panel reminds us that our salvation is the work of the Triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, each Person of the Godhead active in history to secure for us eternal life.

Acknowledgements:

Advent and Lent:

All service music reprinted from Service Book and Hymnal, copyright © 1958. Used by permission of Augsburg Fortress license #12003-L.

Christmas and Eastertide:

All service music reprinted from Lutheran Book of Worship, copyright © 1978. Used by permission of Augsburg Fortress license #12003-L.

Epiphany and Trinity:

Kyrie, Gloria and Sanctus composed by Marty Haugen, copyright © 1984, GIA Publications, Inc., Chicago. Reprinted under license #1207. All rights reserved. Gospel responses, and Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful reprinted from Lutheran Book of Worship, copyright © 1978. Used by permission of Augsburg Fortress license #12003-L.

Trinity Season

Beginning on the day after Pentecost, we enter the final period of the Church calendar. This period is known by different names in various traditions: Trinity, Pentecost, or simply Ordinary Time. Rather than meaning "common" or "mundane," this term comes from the word "ordinal," which simply means counted time (1st Sunday after Trinity, etc.) While the first half of the Church Year focuses on the life and work of the incarnate Son, the second half of the Year focuses on the application of that work by the Spirit, and hence the teachings of Jesus (and of the whole Bible) are in view during this period. Counted time after Pentecost always begins with Trinity Sunday (the first Sunday after Pentecost) and ends with the beginning of Advent.

Providence Presbyterian Church 3510 Austin Parkway

3510 Austin Parkway Sugar Land, Texas 77479 281-980-2522 www.providencepresbyterian.org