

POLLOCKSVILLE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



Sunday, December 10, 2023

Leader in Worship: Jay Bender

Music Accompanist: Jennifer Miller

311 Main Street / P O Box 205 / Pollocksville, NC 28573

www.PollocksvillePresbyterian.org

(252) 224-8181



The Session & Committee Chairs for 2022

| | | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------------|--|--|
| Clerk of Session: Jay Bender | (252-224-6201) | jaybender@ec.rr.com | |
| Treasurer: Ron Pound | (252-638-8397) | ronnclbs@aol.com | |
| Jean Bender, Christian Ed | (252-229-6545) | jbbender2@embarqmail.com | [Class of 2024] |
| John Bender, Worship | (252-675-8431) | jmbender1991@gmail.com | [Class of 2024] |
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| Presbyterian Men Moderator - | Jeremy LeRay | (252-474-7678) | idleray@gmail.com |

Pollocksville Presbyterian Church

2nd Sunday of Advent

Order of Worship

11:00 a.m.

December 10, 2023

Prelude

Welcome and Announcements

In the ancient world, various peoples lit fires to mark the turning of the light into winter's season and to pray for the return of the light. The church has Christianized that practice in the lighting of the Advent wreath. To us, these candles are signs of the growing light of Christ who is coming again in all fullness into the darkness of our world. Until the dawning of that Great Day, we watch and wait in Holy Spirit for Christ's coming into the darkness of our world, lighting candles of hope, peace, joy, and love, and remembering the promises of God with prayer.

Lighting of the Advent Candle (see insert) ~ Peace ~ ~ Adam and Margaret Ross

Response *(remain seated)*

"He Came Down"

See Hymn Insert

Call to Worship *(Responsive)*

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

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

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

People: **righteousness is the path to the kingdom; faithfulness is the highway we build.**

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

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

Prayer of Invocation

~ Liturgist

*The Peace of Christ

Leader: ...The peace of our Lord, Jesus Christ, be with you all.

People: **And also with you.**

*Opening

"Prepare the Way"

The Presbyterian Hymnal

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Call to Confession

Unison Prayer of Forgiveness

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.

Silence is Kept

Assurance of God's Pardon

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

People: **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.**

Anthem

"Emmanuel" by Jan Reese

~ Choir

Prayer for Illumination

~ Jay Bender

Scripture

Mark 1: 1-8 (NIV)

¹ The beginning of the good news about Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God, ² as it is written in Isaiah the prophet: "I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way"—

³ "a voice of one calling in the wilderness, 'Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.'"

⁴ And so John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵ The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem went out to him. Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River. ⁶ John wore clothing made of camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷ And this was his message: "After me comes the one more powerful than I, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. ⁸ I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

Sermon

"*PREPARE the Way*"

~ Jay Bender

Sharing of Joys and Concerns

Morning Prayer and 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.

*The Apostles’ Creed

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, And in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. AMEN.

*Gloria Patri

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.

Offering of our Tithes and Gifts

Offertory

*Doxology

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

*Prayer of Dedication

~ Jay Bender

*Closing Hymn

“Fairest Lord Jesus”

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Sing to the Lord Hymnal

*Charge and Benediction

*Postlude



The poinsettias in the sanctuary today and throughout the Advent Season are given to the glory of God and in loving memory of Penny Bender by her Family.

Welcome!

Welcome to everyone who is worshiping with us today.

~ Next Sunday, December 17th ~

Lyle Swanger will be filling the pulpit during the morning worship service

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Prayer List Additions as of 12/2/2023

Hilda Bender is sick again and needs our prayers (Kay Bender)

Prayers for Our Nation; Our Military; Our Church; PPC Childcare

Our complete prayer list is available in the PollyPress. These names will remain on this list for 3 weeks.



December: Ron Pound

January: Rebecca Diane McCaffity

Thank you to all the volunteers who fill in as needed!

You are appreciated!!!

A new year is here and ushers are needed for 2024.

If you would be willing to serve as an usher, please contact

John Bender at 252-675-8431 or email: jmbender1991@gmail.com.



The Annual Christmas Joy Offering will be received today during the

Morning Worship Service. Please use the enclosed envelope and place in the offering plate.

God has blessed the Church with incredible leadership in every time and place, but those leaders often need to be supported by their communities as well. This Offering addresses the support needed by some of our leaders, including supporting leadership development for communities of color, and providing support for Presbyterian church workers in their time of need.



For Congregational Use: Lectionary Readings:

Isaiah 40:1-11 and Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13; 2 Peter 3:8-15a; Mark 1:1-8

Daily Readings for December 10 – 16 use the following web link:

<http://gamc.pcusa.org/ministries/devotions/month-month-lectionary-reading-list/>



“Holding On To Christmas” – Embracing the Heart of the Season

Cantata by the Pollocksville Methodist Church Choir – TODAY

December 10th at 4:30 PM

Christmas Dinner to Follow



Reminders & Announcements

**Sunday Mornings: 11:00 am – Worship in the Church Sanctuary &
Streaming Live on Facebook & on PPC Website**

Sundays at 9:45 am Adult Sunday School – *Remember your Bibles!*

Children’s Sunday School at 11 am

Wednesdays 6 pm Choir Practice

Sunday, December 10 Annual Christmas Joy Offering

Monday, December 11 6:30 pm Women’s Annual White Elephant Party Christmas

Wednesday, December 13 5 pm Annual Community Christmas Dinner at PPC

Sunday, December 24th Morning Worship Service - Building Fund Sunday

Sunday, December 24th 6:30 pm Christmas Eve Service at PPC

– Communion & Candlelight Service

Monday, December 25th & Tuesday, December 26th – Church Office Closed - HOLIDAY

Monday, December 25th Through January 1st

– Childcare Closed – Reopen Tuesday, January 2nd

Monday, January 1st Church Office Closed - HOLIDAY

Sunday, January 7th Ordination & Installation of 2026 Elders

5 pm Session Meeting

Monday, January 15th Church Office & Childcare Closed – MLK HOLIDAY



**" LESSONS AND CAROLS " ~~~ Sunday Evening, December 17th at 6:00 pm
in the Pollocksville Presbyterian Church Sanctuary**



PPC Communion & Candle Light Service



Sunday, December 24th at 6:30 pm ~ Christmas Eve Service



\$590 has been received to date for The Annual Thanksgiving Offering for Children's Hope Alliance, formally known as Barium Springs. It is not too late if you wish to contribute. Just mark on your check or pew envelope Thanksgiving Offering and drop in offering plate or give to Ron Pound. ~ Their mission is to provide a safe, healing journey for hurting children and families - creating hope now and in the future.



**Please read the *Back Cover* in today's bulletin
"Getting Through The Holidays"**

Information on Grief Support Workshops at the Filling Station



Attention Women of the Church ~ TODAY !

**You are invited to a floating baby shower ~ Sunday, December 10th from 2 to 4
in the fellowship hall of the church for Dana and John Bender.**

**Please mark your calendar and come help celebrate with them. Their baby list is
at <https://www.babylist.com/list/baby-dana-bender>**



**Reminder to those ladies who are planning to attend and have RSVP'ed
The Women of the Church ~ Annual White Elephant Christmas Dinner
Tomorrow, December 11th @ 6:30 p.m. at Attitudes in River Bend**



Getting Through The Holidays

A Three Session Series of **GRIEF SUPPORT WORKSHOPS** at The Filling Station in Pollocksville, NC

The upcoming holidays can be a difficult time for those who are experiencing loss in their lives. Pruitt Health at Home is offering a series of workshops to provide education, information, and support for those who are dealing with grief and loss.

The workshops are free & open to adults of all ages. Some topics discussed will include:

Dealing with Difficult Emotions During the Holidays
Survival Tips for Handling the Holidays
Making Decisions About Holiday Traditions and Rituals

Tuesday, December 5, 2023 at 10AM

Thursday, December 7, 2023 at 10AM

Tuesday, December 12, 2023 at 10AM

Join us at The Filling Station, 221 Main Street, Pollocksville
Facilitated by Carol Jackson, Medical Social Worker at Pruitt Health at Home

TO REGISTER, PLEASE CALL 252-514-6016



LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH – 2023

WEEK TWO: PEACE

(Reader 1): In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth; and set lights in the sky – sun and moon and stars. By these stars, our ancestors chartered their journeys. By these stars, they knew God was with them.

(Reader2): This morning we light two candles to bring the fire of the stars down from heaven to earth, to nestle among the greens.

(Reader 1): Last week, we lit the Candle of Hope. *(Light last week's purple candle).* This morning we also light a purple candle – the Candle of Peace – also called the Bethlehem Candle. *(Light a purple candle)*

(Reader 2): We too are on a journey, and we do not always know the way. But we chart our path by the star of peace. Even when violence and fear are raging and peace seems like a pipedream, we set our face steadily towards the light.

(Reader 1): Hear Zechariah's song of hope for peace to the Christ Child from Luke 1: 76-79:

"You, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways, to give knowledge of salvation to his people by the forgiveness of their sins. By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us, to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace."

(Reader 2): Let us pray:

God of hope, Prince of Peace, You speak peace into the world in the Way of the Christ child. Help us embody your peace and live as peacemakers that we may be called children of God. As we search for signs of peace this week, help us to BECOME the signs of peace that others are seeking. As these candles are but a glimpse of the light of the heavens, help us to be a glimpse of heaven's peace. AMEN.

(Reader 1): Let us sing verses 1 and 2 of "He Came Down" – on your insert.

He Came Down

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He came down that we may have hope; he

came down that we may have hope; he came down that we may

have hope; hal-le-lu-jah for-ev-er-more.

Leader: Why did he come?

Additional stanzas:

... that we may have peace
 ... that we may have joy
 ... that we may have love

Because this traditional Cameroon piece begins with the refrain, it does not initially reveal that it is cast as a call-and-response song. Assigning the answers to the congregation rather than to the leader is a notable affirmation of the corporate wisdom of God's people.