

Preparation for Worship

Lord God, you send messengers of good news to prepare the way for your glorious realm. Anoint us with your Spirit to proclaim your Word so that all may repent and believe in you; through Jesus Christ, our way in the wilderness. Amen.

Voluntary	Hymn Prelude on REJOICE, REJOICE	Aaron David Miller (b. 1972)		
Greeting	The Lord be with you. And also with you.			
Lighting of the Advent Wreath				
Handbell Introit	People, Look East	BESANÇON arr. Jason Krug, 2015		
Opening Sentences				
• Hymn 107 <u>(see page 10)</u>	Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn	REJOICE, REJOICE		

† Prayer of Confession

God of Advent, we pray for you to come, but really wish you wouldn't come too close. For then you might really see us our selfishness, our sinfulness, our willfulness, our waywardness, our insensitivity, our ingratitude, our ways which are not your ways.

God of our salvation, forgive us. Straighten the winding ways of our hearts. Smooth out the paths made rough by sin. Bring to perfection the good you have begun in us. Prepare in us a place to receive the promised one when he comes, Jesus our Redeemer.

silent prayer



Response



TEXT Ref. Taizé Community, 1984 MUSIC: Jacques Berthier, 1984

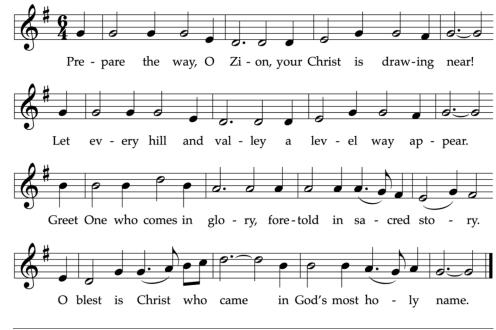
Text and Music © 1984 Les Presses de Taizé (admin. GIA Publications, Inc.)

WAIT FOR THE LORD 8.8

† Declaration of Forgiveness

Believe the Good News. In Jesus Christ we are forgiven.

Response



 TEXT: Frans Mikael Franzen, 1812, rev. 1819; translated by Augustus Nelson, 1958;
 BEREDEN VÄG FÖR HERRAN

 adapted by Charles P. Price, 1980, alt. © 1982 Hope Publishing Company
 7.6.7.6.7.7.6.6

 MUSIC: Then Swenska Psalmboken, 1697; arr. American Lutheran Hymnal, 1930
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The Peace

Peace be with you. Peace be with all.

Conversation with Children

Prayer for Illumination

First Reading

Isaiah 35:1-10

O.T. pg. 663

Holy wisdom, holy Word. Thanks be to God!

Anthem

Advent Carol

Alfred V. Fedak (b. 1953)

Desert, blossom as a Rose Rising, radiant as it grows, All arrayed in crimson show; Come to us, O God of Hope.

Thirsty land, become a stream, Flowing fountain, calm, serene. Clear cascade from heaven above; Come to us, O God of Love. Alleluia.

Weakened hands, be now made strong; Silent tongues, break forth in song; Blinded eyes, your sight employ; Come to us, O God of Joy. Soon a pathway shall be found, For the faithful, Holy Ground; Safe from angry, warring beast, Come to us, O God of Peace. Alleluia.

Sing God's praise, Jerusalem! Hope, joy, love, and peace shall come; Sorrow, sighing now dispel; Come to us, Emmanuel.

King of Glory, Soul of Bliss, Everlasting life is this: Thee to know, thy power to prove, Thus to sing, and thus to love! Alleluia.

> words by Carol McClure (b. 1955) paraphrasing Isaiah 35

Gospel Reading

Matthew 11:2-11

N.T. pg. 1

Holy wisdom, holy Word. Thanks be to God!

Sermon	Waiting for Right Now	John W. Wurster
	silence and stillness	
• Hymn 357 (see page 11)	The Days Are Surely Coming	LLANGLOFFAN

† Affirmation of Faith

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, healing the sick and binding up the brokenhearted, eating with outcasts, forgiving sinners, and calling all to repent and believe the gospel.

Unjustly condemned for blasphemy and sedition, Jesus was crucified, suffering the depths of human pain and giving his life for the sins of the world. God raised this Jesus from the dead, vindicating his sinless life, breaking the power of sin and evil, delivering us from death to life eternal.

In gratitude to God, empowered by the Spirit, we strive to serve Christ in our daily tasks and to live holy and joyful lives, even as we watch for God's new heaven and new earth, praying, "Come, Lord Jesus!"

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.

Offering

Offertory Anthem	
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Never Weather-beaten Sail

Charles Wood (1866-1926)

Never weather-beaten sail more willing bent to shore, Never tired pilgrim's limbs affected slumber more, Than my weary sprite [spirit] now longs to fly out of my troubled breast: O come quickly, sweetest Lord, and take my soul to rest!

Ever blooming are the joys of heaven's high paradise, Cold age deafs not there our ears now vapor dims our eyes; Glory there the sun outshines, whose beams the blessed only see: O come quickly, glorious Lord, and raise my sprite [spirit] to thee!

- words by Thomas Campion (1567-1620)

+ Litany for Advent

Among the poor, among the proud, among the persecuted, among the privileged, **Christ is coming to make all things new.**

In the private house, in the public place, in the wedding feast, in the judgment hall, **Christ is coming to make all things new.**

With a gentle touch, with an angry word, with a clear conscience, with burning love, **Christ is coming to make all things new.**

That the kingdom might come, that the world might believe, that the proud might stumble, that the hidden might be seen, **Christ is coming to make all things new.**

Within us, without us, behind us, before us, in this place, in every place, in this time, for all time, **Christ is coming to make all things new.**

Christ is coming to make all things new – even you, even me. Christ is coming. Thanks be to God!

♥ Hymn 104 (see page 12)	O Lord, How Shall I Meet You	VALET WILL ICH DIR GEBEN
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Charge and Blessing

Please be seated in silence for the closing voluntary, or kindly depart quietly.

Voluntary	Chorale Fantasie: NUN KOMM, DER HEIDEN HEILAND	Johann Sebastian Bach
	BWV 661	(1685–1750)

SERVING TODAY

John W. Wurster | Keatan King | Omar Rouchon

Liturgist Roderick James

Pastors

MusiciansBell Canto Ensemble | Jane Malczewskyj, handbell conductorSt. Philip Staff Singers | Randall Swanson, director of music | Matthew Dirst, organist

WORSHIP NOTES

Today's Lectionary readings:

- Isaiah 35:1–10 The desert will blossom; God's people will return with joy.
- Psalm 146:5–10 *The maker of heaven and earth gives justice and reigns forever.*
- Luke 1:46–55 Mary rejoices in God, who helps the poor and lifts up the lowly.
- James 5:7–10 *Be patient; have courage; the coming of the Lord is near.*
- Matthew 11:2-11 Jesus praises John, the messenger who has prepared the way.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Cover art by Micah Meyers.

Gathering Prayer from Call to Worship, Presbyterian Church (USA).

Prayer of Confession from Book of Common Worship, Presbyterian Church (USA).

Affirmation of Faith from "A Brief Statement of Faith," Book of Confessions, Presbyterian Church (USA).

Litany for Advent from A Wee Worship Book, GIA Publications.

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Music Notes

Organ Music

Today's **opening voluntary** takes the tune of our opening hymn (No. 107) on a highly rhythmic and colorful ride. Its composer, American organist and composer Aaron David Miller, is also one of the finest improvisers of his generation. Written for the 2016 National Convention of the American Guild of Organists here in Houston, this piece was subsequently published in the *Bayoubüchlein*, a collection of hymnbased organ works commissioned for that event.

The **closing voluntary** is a Bach setting of the 1524 Advent chorale NUN KOMM, DER HEIDEN HEILAND (Savior of the Nations, Come). Subtitled *pro organo pleno*, this Chorale Fantasie features the melody in long notes in the pedal—as a *cantus firmus* or "fixed song"—and virtuosic figuration for both hands.

Handbell Music

Today's **introit** features a setting for handbells of the lively French Advent carol BESANÇON. Jason Krug's 2015 arrangement of *People, Look East* makes use of the original carol's repeated-note figures and swinging 6/8 meter in a framework of joyful Advent expectation.

Choral Music

This morning's **first anthem** is by American composer and organist Alfred Fedak, minister of music at Westminster Presbyterian Church on Capitol Hill in Albany, New York. *Advent Carol* is a setting for voices and organ of the medieval carol ORIENTIS PARTIBUS, with a text paraphrasing Isaiah 35 (today's first reading) by American composer and conductor Carol McClure, director of children's choirs at First Presbyterian Church in Nashville, Tennessee.

Today's **offertory anthem** is a setting of the beautiful 16th-century Thomas Campion text *Never Weatherbeaten Sail*. Written for mixed voices with organ accompaniment, the music is by early 20th-century Irish composer Charles Wood, who studied with both Charles Villiers Stanford and Charles Hubert Hastings Parry at the Royal College of Music in London. Chiefly remembered for his Anglican church music, Wood taught at Cambridge, becoming the first director of music and organist at Gonville and Caius College in 1894, and later succeeding Stanford as Professor of Music following the latter's death in 1924.

- Matthew Dirst and Randall Swanson

IN OUR PRAYERS

Bob Ardell and family upon the death of his sister Julie this past weekend.

- St. Philippians and their families Barbara Runge; Beverly Hudson; Susan Huffman; Mary Sinderson; Eleanor Grant; Sondra Sullivan; Judy Nunn; Molly Boren-Whitney; Carolyn Vestal; Lane Fletcher; Renee Wright; Austin Lippincott; Richard Johnson; Don Padgett; Steve Adger; Judith Crane; Shirley Coffman; Ellen MacDonald; Arlette Keene; CJ Miller; Mezgebe Gebray; Carla Burns – cousin of Sharon Webb; Betsy Johnson – mother of Pat Lindsay; Robert Kirtley – father of Amanda Kirtley; Jann Everhart – sister-in-law of Nancy Everhart Johnson; Warren Cash – brother of Kay Cash; Ann Perenyi – mother of Lad Perenyi; Donna Harris – sister of Joyce Fugit; Alma Fonseca- mother of Angelina Fonseca; Darryl Cazes – brother of Pam Taylor; Ann Perkins Cloud – cousin of Stephen Paine; Carol Paine Kendrick – sister of Stephen Paine; John Anderson – brother of Tom Anderson; Mac Wilson – father of Butch Wilson; Shirley Boggus – grandmother of Omi Ford; Alan Rowe – father of William Rowe; and Elizabeth Carlton Lithio – granddaughter of Jeanie Flowers.
- *Homebound* Elizabeth Arp; John Bobbitt; Kitty Curry; George Helland; Jean Nelson; Joyce Randolf; George and Larraine Scott; Marion Takehara; and Jody Tomforde.
- *Friends of St. Philippians* Jackie Childers friend of Robin and Gary Willis; Sharla Hotchkiss, Delores Wheeler, and Kevin Andress friends of Jacqueline Hamilton Taylor; Betsy Shear Lewis friend of Laney Miller; Shirley Stubblefield friend of Barbara Runge; Clayton Amacker friend of Peg Palisin and Gary Gardner.

If you have a pastoral care need or a prayer request you would like to share, please email:

deacons@saintphilip.net.

ADVENT AT ST. PHILIP

Everyone is invited to attend **midweek Advent services**, continuing on **December 14** and **21**. The service begins at 11:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary. Lunch is available in the Gathering Area at 11:30. These services of scripture and song are grounded in the Advent themes of hope and expectation. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper will also be celebrated. Prepare the way of the Lord!

THURSDAYS IN ADVENT – LECTIO DIVINA ON ZOOM

December 15 and 22 at 9:00-9:20 a.m. – *What is Lectio Divina*? The ancient desert fathers and mothers believed that scripture was like a love letter written to us by God. Thus, the meditative, guided scriptural reflection known as *Lectio Divina* ("divine reading") assumes that God speaks to us intimately, God is already praying in us, and we'll experience a profound encounter with the heart of God, rather than an intellectual study of scripture. Keatan King will guide the group through the four cycles of Lectio (read, reflect, respond, rest) for 20 minutes every Thursday morning at 9:00am for the season of Advent. To prepare, you are encouraged to choose a comfortable place to sit wherever you are (at home, work, in the car) and all participants will have video off and sound off during the Zoom. If you would like to participate email Keatan at keatan@saintphilip.net.

CHRISTMAS AT ST. PHILIP

DECEMBER 24

Christmas Eve Candlelight Services

5:30 p.m. – A Whimsical Telling of the Birth of Jesus

8:00 p.m. - Communion Service with the St. Philip Choir

DECEMBER 25

11:00 a.m. - Christmas Day worship with the St. Philip Choir

JANUARY 1, 2023

11:00 a.m. – Worship for the First Sunday of Christmas and the First Communion of 2023

OPPORTUNITIES FOR LEARNING

SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES FOR ALL AGES AT 9:45 A.M.

GODLY PLAY (Age 3-Kindergarten) – Room 104–Omi Ford, Joyce Fox and Ruthie Waldrop

ELEMENTARY (Grades 1-5) – Room 105 – Linda Bevill and Jon Martin

YOUTH (Grades 6-12) – Room 206–Melissa and Guy Aldrich

SPa (St. Philip Adults) – Room 200—rotating leadership—We are using the adult resources from the new Follow Me curriculum to guide our informal weekly discussion about biblical practices such as hospitality, forgiveness and honoring sabbath. All adults of any age are welcomed to participate. There is no need to prepare or purchase materials for class, so come as you are able!

CHURCH & SOCIETY - Room 201 - Church and Society regularly features speakers and presentations on a variety of contemporary and historical matters of faith and practice. This class meets from 9:40 a.m.-10:45 a.m. with presentations in person and some by Zoom, projected in the classroom. Dec. 18 Film study - Encanto. The Madrigal family lives in an enchanted town in the mountains of Colombia. Even their home is magical. And though every member of Mirabel Madrigal's family has a special power - like healing, or extra strength -Mirabel appears to have been skipped. Yet she becomes the only one who can save her family from losing its magic. The Academy Award winning film Encanto has several meanings, not least of which is "charm." Director Byron Howard's love of the legacy of Disney animation shines through in the film's beautiful and vibrant images, and Encanto's magical and emotional moments show us that making your family proud, and serving them to the best of your abilities, is the real magic. Presented by St. Philip Media Guru - Kate Burkart. Church & Society will not meet Christmas Day, Dec. 25. Email Mickey Meyers if you would like to join any of the classes: churchsociety_stphilip@comcast.net.

ADULT BIBLE STUDY – Room 204 – We have resumed our study of the Kingdoms of Israel and Judah in 1-2 Kings with the story of Elijah's confrontation with Ahab and Jezebel in Dr. Robert Alter's <u>Ancient Israel, The Former Prophets</u> (2013). Join us from **9:30 a.m. – 10:40 a.m.** to deepen our understanding of God's faithfulness to God's people from Dr. Alter's translation and commentary on the Biblical Hebrew. All are welcome.

MIDWEEK BIBLE STUDY – Wednesday Bible study with John Wurster has returned. The morning class, meeting at 9:30 a.m., is a hybrid format with an inperson option in the Office Conference Room and also a Zoom option. The afternoon class, meeting at 3:30 p.m., is Zoom only. To get on the list for the Zoom links, send a note to john@saintphlip.net. Bible novices, Bible experts, and everyone in between is welcome!

WOMEN'S MONTHLY BOOK CLUB—This self-led, interactive group produces lively discussions and wonderful fellowship. The next meeting is **Jan. 12** we will discuss *The Four Winds* by Kristin Hannah. Watch your email for details of the next meeting. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Nina Lambright at: nl@lambrightlaw.com.

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN BIBLE STUDY – All women of the church are invited to join any of the meetings of Presbyterian Women. If you are not a member of a circle, you are welcome to participate; to be directed to a group leader please email <u>welcome@saintphilip.net</u>. All circles meet in the Dining Room in the Administration Building.

Monday Morning Saints Second Monday of each month @ 10:00 a.m. Sunday Circle Third Sunday of each month @ 12:30 p.m. Thursday Evening Circle First Thursday of each month @ 7:00 p.m.

PRESBYTERIAN MEN'S WEEKLY FELLOWSHIP

Men of all ages are welcome to participate in this self-led group. The Men's Weekly Fellowship meets each Friday **in person in the office conference room and via Zoom** at **11:45** a.m. Please contact Gary Gardner at <u>ggardne148@aol.com</u> if you would like to join them.

CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS

It is the time to adorn our chancel with poinsettias. Beginning right away you have the opportunity to make a donation to assist with this. You can go to the website, saintphilip.net, and click on the Christmas Poinsettia Icon on top of page. Follow the instructions to help. Choose *Flowers/Holiday*. In the optional memo put "Point". Email your honor/memorial designations to Lorrie Castle at lorrie@saintphilip.net. Otherwise, you will receive an email, within a few days asking for names of people you want to honor/remember. Questions? There are blank forms in the Narthex to assist you. Call Church Office at 713-622-4807.

Due Monday, December 12





Welcome to Worship at St. Philip

Please register your attendance by scanning the QR code or by visiting the Guest Book tab at saintphlip.net.

AS FOLLOWERS OF JESUS CHRIST, we seek to be an inclusive, grace-filled community, engaging the world with open minds, willing hands and generous hearts. WE LONG for deeper faith, vibrant hope and boundless love for everyone, every day, everywhere.

Thank you for joining us today! We hope that you find our worship together to be joyous, meaningful, and thought-provoking. **Children of all ages** are welcome to worship with their families. Activity bags containing worship aids for children are available in the narthex on the way into the sanctuary.

Nursery care is available throughout the morning from 8:30 a.m. -12:30 p.m. Infants to age 4 are invited to our Nursery which is staffed by professional childcare providers. Please find our Nursery in Room 106 of the Education Building along the Sunday School Classroom hallway on the first floor. An usher or a greeter will be happy to direct you there.

A Hearing Loop is installed within the sanctuary. If you have a hearing aid equipped with a telecoil, please activate your "T switch" to hear the worship service most clearly. If you need assistance with hearing the service clearly and do not have a t-coil equipped hearing aid, please ask an usher for wireless headphones. **LARGE PRINT COPIES OF TODAY'S HYMNS ARE IN THE NARTHEX.**

Connect with St. Philip through <u>saintphilip.net</u> and our social media. To join our e-mail list for regular news updates, send a note to <u>lorrie@saintphilip.net</u>.

If you are interested in joining St. Philip Presbyterian Church by profession of faith, by reaffirming your faith, or by transferring your membership, please speak with one of the ministers today or call the church office during the week. The Session meets the third Sunday of each month after the 11:00 worship service in Room 100 for the purpose of receiving new members.

Worship with us, whenever, wherever. Our 11:00 a.m. Sunday service is live-streamed at saintphilip.net. We also live-stream a midweek prayer on Wednesdays at 11:00 a.m. Services can be viewed live or later in our video archives.

Contributions, pledge payments, communion gifts and other donations to support the Church can be made anytime through our website, text "SPPC" to 73256 and follow the prompts, or sent to the Church Office at 4807 San Felipe, Houston, TX 77056.

Pledges, if you have not yet made a pledge for 2023, but would like to do so, we encourage you to pledge before the end of the year when the Session finalizes the budget. They can be put in the offering plate, or mailed to the Church Office.



After attending a carol concert, the author and composer of this hymn was moved to create a contemporary, accessible carol that drew on the familiar images in a new way. There are echoes here of passages such as Isaiah 9:6, Isaiah 7:14/Matthew 1:23, Isaiah 35:5–6, Isaiah 2:4.

TEXT: Marty Haugen, 1983, alt. MUSIC: Marty Haugen, 1983 Text and Music © 1983 GIA Publications, Inc. REJOICE, REJOICE 9.8.9.8.8.7.8.9

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This text uses imagery from Jeremiah 33:14–16 and Matthew 24:29–36/Mark 13:24–32/Luke 21:25–36. These passages are especially associated with the beginning of Advent, a season that looks forward to Christ's second coming while also preparing us to remember his first coming.

TEXT: David Gambrell, 2009

MUSIC: Welsh folk melody: Lwybrau Moliant, 1872; harm. The English Hymnal, 1906 Text © 2011 David Gambrell (admin. Presbyterian Publishing Corp.) LLANGLOFFAN 7.6.7.6.D

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considers how an individual prepares for and responds to Christ's coming. It also brings together a recollection of the First Coming with an anticipation of the Second Coming.

TEXT: Paul Gerhardt, 1653; trans. Catherine Winkworth and others, 1863, alt. MUSIC: Melchior Teschner, 1614; harm. William Henry Monk, 1861

VALET WILL ICH DIR GEBEN 7.6.7.6.D

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