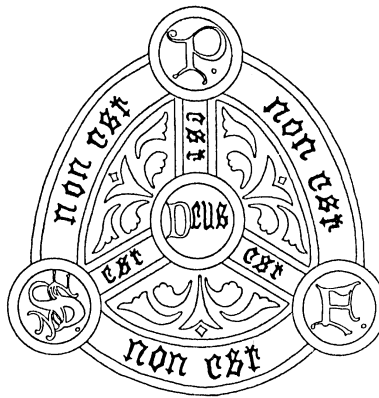


Fourth Sunday in Advent

December 21, 2025



COVENANT

— PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH —

A Congregation of the Presbyterian Church in America

Dr. Ron Gonzales, Minister

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*Upon entering the sanctuary, please be sensitive
to the congregation's preparation for worship, and please make sure
all electronic devices are turned off or set to silent mode.*

-DRAWING NEAR TO GOD-

Welcome and Silent Prayer

A voice cries:

"In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD,
make straight in the desert a highway for our God."

O Lord, as we worship today, help us to prepare to welcome your dramatic work in our midst, in our hearts, in our community, and in all of creation. Help us to worship you.

—based on Isaiah 40.3

***Call to Worship**

Psalm 66.1-4

***Prayer of Adoration**

***Song of Advent**

Hymn No. 214

ANGELS WE HAVE HEARD ON HIGH

-HAVING OUR HEARTS CLEANSED-

Confession of Sin

O God, in the beginning you spoke and creation was born—the object of your loving care. In the fullness of time you spoke and the Word became flesh—Jesus, the gift of your love. We wonder at the miracle of creation; we stand in awe before the mystery of the incarnation. Forgive us earthbound creatures, feeble in faith, empty in hope, lacking in love. This year let the miracle and mystery of Christmas happen for us again. We wait upon you with ready hearts, O God; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Silently add your own confession of sin.

Lighting of the Fourth Advent Candle

Old Testament Reading Micah 5.2-5a

New Testament Reading Luke 2.8-15

***Song of Advent**

Hymn No. 218

ANGELS, FROM THE REALMS OF GLORY

***Confession of Faith**

I believe in God the Father Almighty,
 Maker of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
 who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
 and born of the virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
 was crucified, died, and was buried;
 he descended into hell.
The third day he rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
 and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
 the holy catholic church,
 the communion of saints,
 the forgiveness of sins,
 the resurrection of the body,
 and the life everlasting. Amen.

—The Apostles' Creed¹

¹ Although not written by the apostles, the Apostles' Creed is a concise summary of their teachings. It originated as a baptismal confession, probably in the second century, and developed into its present form by the sixth or seventh century.

Congregational Petitions and 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 also have forgiven 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.

-ATTENDING TO THE WORD-

Sermon

“The Unfathomable Wonder of Christmas”

Galatians 4.4-5

Rev. Ron Gonzales

***Song of Response**

Hymn No. 230

THOU WHO WAST RICH BEYOND ALL SPLENDOR

Worship of God with Tithes and Offerings

**DOXOLOGY*

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;

Praise Him, all creatures here below;

Praise Him above, ye heav'nly host;

Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

***Prayer of Thanksgiving**

-OBSERVING THE SACRAMENT-

The Lord's Supper

We celebrate the Lord's Supper by coming forward (generally from the back of the sanctuary to the front) and partaking of the bread and the cup. Wine is served in clear cups, grape juice in colored cups. We warmly invite to the Table all baptized Christians, who are living under the authority of Christ and his body, the Church. By eating the bread and drinking of the cup, you are acknowledging that you are a sinner, without hope except in the sovereign mercy of God, and that you are trusting in Christ alone for salvation. If this does not describe you, we are glad you are here and commend to you the following prayers for your use during this time.

A Prayer for those Searching for the Truth

Jesus, you claim to be the way, the truth, and the life. Grant that I might be undaunted by the cost of following you as I consider the reasons for doing so. Guide me, teach me, and open to me the reality of who you are. Give me an understanding of you that is coherent, convincing, and leads to the life you promise. Amen.

A Prayer of Belief

Lord Jesus, I admit that I am weaker and more sinful than I ever believed, but through you I am more loved and accepted than I ever dared hope. I thank you for paying my debt, bearing my punishment on the cross, and offering forgiveness and new life. I turn from my sins and receive you as Savior and Lord. Amen.

A Prayer for those Struggling with Sin

Lord Jesus, grant that I may see in you the fulfillment of all my need and may turn from every false pleasure to feed on you, the true and living bread. Enable me to lay aside the sin that clings so closely, and run with perseverance the race set before me, looking to you, the author and perfecter of my faith. Amen.

***Song of Thanksgiving**

Hymn No. 211

GOD REST YOU MERRY, GENTLEMEN

-GOING FORTH TO SERVE-

***Benediction**

Numbers 6.24-26

Gatherings

Home Fellowship Group, led by Pastor Ron, meets the first and third Tuesdays of each month at Chad and Heidi Leinwebers', from 6:00 to 7:30 PM, for fellowship, prayer, and Bible study. This year they will be studying the Gospel of John, in tandem with the Sunday sermon series. All are welcome!

A Men's Leadership Bible Study, led by Kirk Alden, meets Fridays, 6:00-7:00 AM, in the Coffee Hour room. They are going through a series entitled, "Leadership by the Book," in which 52 leadership principles related to personal development, relationships, and life skills are studied from a biblical perspective. All men and older sons are invited.

A Men's Leadership Bible Study, led by Kirk Alden, meets at Tate's Umapine Mercantile on Thursdays, from 6:30 to 7:30 PM. All men are invited. For more information, talk to Kirk.

Prayer Meeting: We meet the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month, at 5:15 PM, in the Coffee Hour room, to pray for one another, for the kingdom, and the world. Please join us.

Sermon Notes: "The Unfathomable Wonder of Christmas" (Galatians 4.4-5)

Prayer Concerns

Saint Andrews Presbyterian Church (Yakima): Pray for the elders and Pastor Harris, as they lead the congregation. Pray for the body as they seek to know Christ and grow in grace. And pray that, together, they reflect the character of the Lord Jesus, and that many are drawn to him through their love.

The Persecuted Church: There are nearly 2 million Christians out of 21 million people in *Sri Lanka*, a country where Christians continue to reel from Islamic jihadists, as well as from radical Buddhist and Hindu groups that harass and discriminate against converts to Christianity. Pray for those who have lost loved ones at the hands of violent extremists, that God comforts and strengthens them in the faith. Pray for the church of Sri Lanka, that it grows despite the suffering it is enduring. And pray for protection from further attacks on Christians and Christian churches.

Taking Refuge in the Lord: David prayed, “Be merciful to me, O God, be merciful to me, for in you my soul takes refuge; in the shadow of your wings I will take refuge, till the storms of destruction pass by” (Ps 57.1). In addition to strength and healing, pray that *Kristi Alden, Sandy Cupolillo, Judie Jud, Heather Keatts, Theresa Krumbah, Patton McBean, Rick Myers, Doreen Teall, and Janice Vander Griend* take refuge in the Lord this week.

Announcements

Christmas Eve: Please join at 5:00 PM on Christmas Eve for a Service of Lessons and Carols.

The Covenant Story of Redemption: The Bible as a whole is best understood as a story. To be sure, Scripture is more than just a story, but its storyline of creation, fall, redemption, and consummation holds it all together. This winter and spring, join the adult Sunday school class as we look at the overarching story of Scripture, from Genesis to Revelation, and seek to understand how our triune God acted covenantally in history on behalf of his people.

Daily Bible Reading: Reading through the Bible regularly is important to our spiritual growth. Many of us will be doing so again in 2026 using M’Cheyne’s daily schedule, which is available on the literature table. Please consider joining us.

Directory Update: We will publish an updated Church Directory in January. If your information has changed, or you would like to be in it, please let Pastor Ron know.