First Sunday of Advent
Little Prairie United Methodist Church
November 29, 2026, 9:30 a.m.



Centering in Advent
2980 130th ST E, Dundas, MN 55019
507.663-6150
www.littleprairieumc.org
Our vision: Creating a welcoming community that worships well, disciples well, and serves well; transforming the world for Jesus Christ.

WELCOME AND GATHERING

Gathering Music *Waiting for a King - Joseph M. Martin* *Nan Winsell*
Prepare the Royal Highway - Text: Frans Franzen - Swedish Folk Song

Welcome *Pastor Penny Bonsell*

Centering Time *Come Thou Long Expected Jesus* *Nan Winsell*
arr. Nancy M. Roabe

Call to Worship
Here we are this first Sunday of Advent in our Christian calendar, preparing to welcome the birth of the Christ Child.
Are we excited about this coming season? Are we excited about putting up Christmas trees and decorating our homes? Are we feeling a bit overwhelmed? What happens when we do not want to celebrate at all?
Help us remember that the birth story of Jesus even in challenging situations is a story of new life and new hope.
From ages past no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God, besides you, who works for those who waits for him. *(Isaiah 64:4)*
And, as we hear from the voice from the Prophet Isaiah, *"O, that you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at your presence."(Isa 64:1)*
Let us hear your voice, your song, Isaiah. Help us remember we are all the work of your hand. Amen.

Opening Prayer:
God of power unexpected, we want you to tear open the heavens and come down; to make mountains quake, water boil, and stars to fall until all nations tremble at your presence! *Isa. 64:1, Isa. 64:2b*
But you, you will not perform according to our wants and whims. Instead you come like the sound of sheer silence: Thin. Quiet. Instead you are born among us as an infant. *1 Kgs. 19:12*, *Luke 2:16*
Instead you show us how love is made perfect in weakness. *2 Cor. 12:9*
So we will stay alert, or at least we will try, because we are your people and there is no other God besides you. We are all of work in your hands. Amen. *Mark 13:33*, Isa. *64:9c, 4c, Isa.64:8b*
Long, Kimberly Bracken. Feasting on the Word Worship Companion: Liturgies for Year B, Volume 1 (pp. 2-3). (Function). Kindle Edition.

Hymn: *Come, thou Long-Expected Jesus (UMH # 196)*

The Advent Wreath
Lighting of the first Advent candle *Stowe family*
We light this first advent candle as a symbol of hope, the promise of the Lord's coming. What does it mean for us to prepare? What does it mean to "get your house in order" for the coming of the Lord?
Can we ever be perfectly ready and know exactly when the Lord will come? Yet, have *Hope* for God's unexpected arrival. Come, Lord Jesus, come.

Hanging of the Greens

Sharing the Peace
Children's Moment *Light One Candle (verse 1)* *by Natalie Sleethe*

THE WORD

Scriptures:
Isaiah 64:1-9

O that you would tear open the heavens and come down,
so that the mountains would quake at your presence—
2 [a]as when fire kindles brushwood
and the fire causes water to boil—
to make your name known to your adversaries,
so that the nations might tremble at your presence!
3 When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect,
you came down; the mountains quaked at your presence.
4 From ages past no one has heard,
no ear has perceived,
no eye has seen any God besides you,
who works for those who wait for him.
5 You meet those who gladly do right,
those who remember you in your ways.
But you were angry, and we sinned;
because you hid yourself we transgressed.[b]
6 We have all become like one who is unclean,
and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth.
We all fade like a leaf,
and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.
7 There is no one who calls on your name
or attempts to take hold of you,
for you have hidden your face from us
and have delivered[c] us into the hand of our iniquity.
8 Yet, O Lord, you are our Father;
we are the clay, and you are our potter;
we are all the work of your hand.
9 Do not be exceedingly angry, O Lord,

and do not remember iniquity forever.
Now consider, we are all your people.

Read full chapter

a. 64.2 64.1 in Heb
b. 64.5 Meaning of Heb uncertain
c. 64.7 Gk Syr OL Tg: Heb *melted*

Psalm 80:7, 17-19

Restore us, O God of hosts;
let your face shine, that we may be saved.
But let your hand be upon the one at your right hand,
the one whom you made strong for yourself.
18 Then we will never turn back from you;
give us life, and we will call on your name.
19 Restore us, O Lord God of hosts;
let your face shine, that we may be saved.

Read full chapter

Mark 13:24-37

The Coming of the Son of Man

24 "But in those days, after that suffering,
the sun will be darkened,
and the moon will not give its light,
25 and the stars will be falling from heaven,
and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.
26 "Then they will see 'the Son of Man coming in clouds' with great power and glory. **27** Then he will send out the angels and gather the[a] elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

The Lesson of the Fig Tree

28 "From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. **29** So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he[b] is near, at the very gates. **30** Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. **31** Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

The Necessity for Watchfulness

32 "But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven nor the Son, but only the Father.33 Beware, keep alert,[c] for you do not know when the time will come. 34 It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. 35 Therefore, keep awake, for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening or at midnight or at cockcrow or at dawn,36 or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. 37 And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake."

Read full chapter

a. 13.27 Other ancient authorities read *his*
b. 13.29 Or *it*
c. 13.33 Other ancient authorities add *and pray*

The Word of God for the People of God. **Thanks be to God.**

Message *Centering in Advent* *Pastor Penny Bonsell*

Hymn *Change My Heart, O God (TFWS # 2152)* ***All***

RESPONSE TO THE WORD

Prayers of the People

God of power and glory, we remember your awesome deeds across the ages—the times you saved us and brought us home. Yet, we also remember times when we felt alone and afraid.O God, we are your people, the work of your hand. Look upon us with your shining face, especially in the time of need.

We pray for those who look to you for healing and hope … those who are sick or recuperating from illness and injury … those who are lonely and need companionship and care …

those for whom the holidays bring sorrow or pain … those whose deep sadness overshadows joy. Let your face shine upon us, O God.

We pray for people in need of restoration and reconciliation: for those battling addictions and those in recovery … for people estranged from those they love … for someone lost in grief … for someone far from home. Let your face shine upon us, O God, that we might be saved.

Renew the spirit of a world grown weary with waiting and hoping. Especially we pray for wars to end, for hunger and poverty to be crowded out by abundance.

And we pray, too, for the church because we also grow weary in our waiting and watching for your power and glory to be made known.

Grant us clarity, passion, and true fellowship so that we are awake to your presence.

Let your face shine upon the church and all this weary world, we pray; in the name of the One born in a manger and coming again on clouds of glory. Amen.
Long, Kimberly Bracken. Feasting on the Word Worship Companion: Liturgies for Year B, Volume 1 (p. 4). (Function). Kindle Edition.

Offering *Advent - arr. Lani Smith* *Nan Winsell*

Doxology *Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow (UMH # 95)* ***All***

Prayer of Thanksgiving
Ever-Watchful God, you call us to live not in fear, but in faithful anticipation. As we offer these gifts, we do so as people preparing our hearts, our hands, and our world for your coming reign.
We confess that we often cling too tightly to our comforts and schedules, forgetting that your kingdom calls us to loosen our grip and lift our eyes.
Awaken us, Lord, to the "someday" you are already shaping through our love, our justice, and our generosity.
Let these offerings be signs of readiness, trust, and joy as we wait—and work—for your future to break into our present. In the name of the one who comes, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

And the prayer which unites us…

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 trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the Kingdom, and the Power and the Glory forever. Amen.

Hymn *Blessed Be the God of Israel (UMH # 209)* ***All***

Sending
May God strengthen us to the end, Christ draw near to our very gates, and the Holy Spirit awaken our spirits; until, with eager longing, we greet the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.
May the love of Christ be fully present in you even as we wait, so that a stranger will see in you a friend and neighbor. God sends you. The Spirit fills you. Christ goes with you and you with Christ, always and everywhere. God Bless!
Go in Hope! Shalom. Amen.

Postlude *People Look East….Love, the Guest, is in the Way* *Nan Winsell*
arr. Eugene Butler

INFORMATION

Little Prairie UMC UPCOMING EVENTS

Sundays, Worship at 9:30 am
Tuesdays, 8:30 am: Breakfast Club, at L&M
9-10:30 am James Gang coffee shop with Pastor Penny
Saturdays 9-11 am Soul Sisters (see Theresa for details)
Sun. Nov. 29, 9:30 am Hanging of the Greens service Advent begins
7:00 pm Cluster Charge Conference at Little Prairie
Thurs. Dec 24, 4:00 pm Candle light Christmas Eve Service
See our website for more details at www.littleprairieumc.org.

Website **Online Giving**