

Hope



NOVEMBER 30, 2025
+ THE FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT +

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PRELUDE

Prelude on “Jewels”
Lani Smith
Brian Ward, Organ

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Libby Piotrowski and Jeff Hunter



INTROIT

Comfort, Comfort, Ye My People
Hymnal Selection 131, verses 1 and 3
Chancel Choir, Brian Ward Director

* OPENING HYMN 120

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

Chuck and Jan Olson

The prophet Isaiah reminds us that in the days to come, the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established as the highest of the mountains and shall be raised above the hills; all the nations shall stream to it.

That is our hope!

In those days, many peoples shall come and say, “Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths.”

That is our hope!

In those days, swords shall be beat into plowshares and spears into pruning hooks. Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

That is our hope!

As we light this first advent candle, we are reminded of the hope that we have in Christ’s coming. The days are surely coming when all will be set to right.

The first candle is lit.

Prayer: **God of hope, help us to be people who wait for you with hope and who share that hope with the world. In the midst of brokenness, fear, violence, and injustice, give us eyes and ears to see the signs of your coming and to join you in the work of the unfolding kingdom. We say come Lord, Jesus, come. Amen.**

We sing together verse 1 of Hymn 136, Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers!

* PASSING OF THE PEACE

Emily Cody

The Peace of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

READING OF THE SCRIPTURES

Old Testament Reading

New Testament Reading

* Gospel Reading

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Mary Chase-Ziolek, Reader

Isaiah 2:1-5

Romans 13:11-14

Matthew 24:36-44

WORD FOR THE CHILDREN

CHORAL ANTHEM

Advent

David N. Davenport

Come again, Emanuel,
as your Advent draws us near.

Promised One, O Israel,
drive away all doubt and fear.

Come, Emanuel.

Once you came on a moonlit night,
born a Child, but yet a King.
Lead us to your heav'nly Light,
now Thy gracious Kingdom bring.
Come, Emanuel. Oh, come, Emanuel.

Comfort all who come to thee,
fill our lives with hope and love.
Reign in us forevermore,
lift our thoughts to You above.

Come again, Emanuel,
we are ready to receive.
We prepare our hearts for You.
We believe, yes, we believe.
Come, Emanuel.

MESSAGE

Jeff Hunter

* CONGREGATIONAL SONG

Be Unto Your Name
Gary Sadler, Lynn DeShazo
Led by Kristen Hunter, Anders Johnson,
Sam Parnin, Brian Ward, and Ryan Wendt

PASTORAL PRAYER

GIVING OF OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

Invitation to Generosity

Giving online at any time is an option at www.npcovenant.org/give.

Offertory

Tallis' Canon
Thomas Tallis

Chancel Handbell Choir, Linnea Olfelt, Director
Come, Lord Jesus

* Song of Presentation 141

* Prayer of Dedication

* CLOSING HYMN 769

Hide Not Your Face

* BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Come, Thou Long-expected Jesus
Hymnal Selection 135, arr. Kristina Langlois

*Please remain seated for the postlude, pausing as the light of Christ is carried out
and imagining how you might carry that light into the world this week.*

** Please rise, in body or in spirit.*

The advent liturgy has been adapted from Discipleship Ministries of the United Methodist Church.

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

120

In unison

1 O come, O come, Em-man-u-el, and ran-som cap-tive
 2 O come, thou Day-spring, come and cheer our spir-its by thine
 3 O come, thou Wis-dom from on high, and or-der all things,
 4 O come, De-sire of na-tions, bind all peo-ples in one

Is-ra-el, that mourns in lone-ly ex-ile here, un-til the Son of
 ad-vent here; dis-perse the gloom-y clouds of night, and death's dark shad-ows
 far and nigh; to us the path of knowl-edge show, and cause us in her
 heart and mind; bid now our sad di-vi-sions cease, and be thy-self our

In harmony *In unison*

God ap-pear. Re-joice! Re-joice! Em-
 put to flight.
 King to go.
 of peace.

man-u-el shall come to thee, O Is-ra-el!

Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers!

1 Re - joice, re - joice, be - liev - ers! and let your lights ap - pear;
 2 See that your lamps are burn - ning, re - plen - ish them with oil;
 3 All you who wait his com - ing, re - hearse the joy - ful song,
 4 Our hope and ex - pec - ta - tion, O Je - sus, now ap - pear;


the eve - ning is ad - vanc - ing and dark - er night is near.
 look now for your sal - va - tion, the end of sin and toil.
 which we shall sing in glo - ry with all the an - gel throng.
 a - rise, O Sun so longed for, a - bove this dark - ened sphere!

The Lord is now a - ris - ing, and soon he will draw nigh.
 The watch - ers on the moun - tain pro - claim the Lord is near.
 The ho - ly feast is wait - ing, the gates wide o - pen stand.
 With hearts and hands up - lift - ed, we plead, O Lord, to see

Up, watch in ex - pec - ta - tion! At mid - night comes the cry.
 Go meet him as he comes now with al - le - lu - ias clear.
 Rise up, you heirs of glo - ry! The Mas - ter is at hand.
 the day of earth's re - demp - tion that sets your peo - ple free.

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Come, Lord Jesus

141

In unison

1 Come, Lord Je - sus; come, Lord Je - sus;
2 Come, O Prince of Peace; come, O Prince of Peace;
3 Come, Em - man - u - el; come, Em - man - u - el;

come, Lord Je - sus; come and be born in our hearts.
come, O Prince of Peace; come, and be born in our hearts.
come, Em - man - u - el; come, and be born in our hearts.

WORDS: Carey Landry, twentieth century, © 1976 North American Liturgy Resources, 1955-

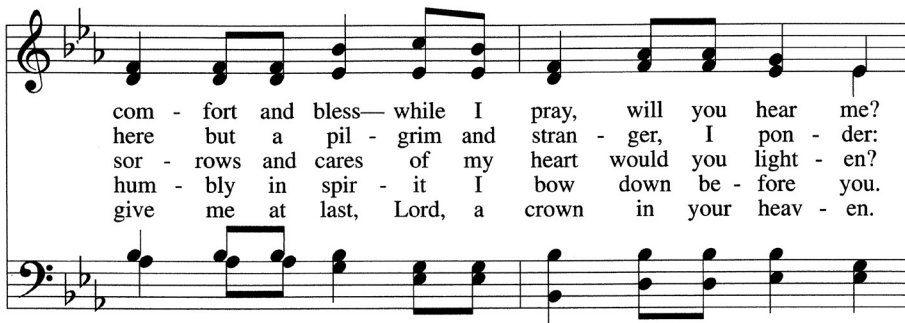
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Hide Not Your Face

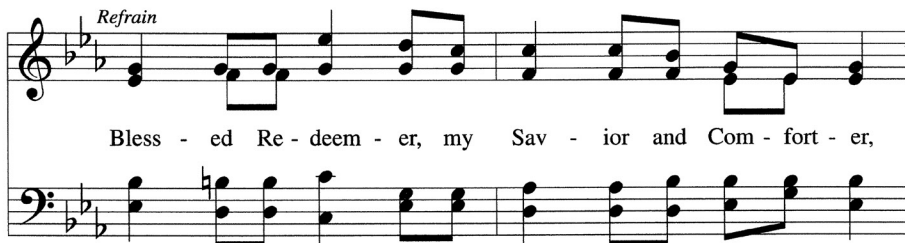
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1 Hide not your face, O my Sav - ior— be near me;
 2 Still far re - moved from my home - land, I wan - der;
 3 While you now tar - ry, my path would you bright - en;
 4 Grant, then, O Lord, that I fear and a - dore you;
 5 Help me the bur - den to bear you have giv - en;



com - fort and bless— while I pray, will you hear me?
 here but a pil - grim and stran - ger, I pon - der:
 sor - rows and cares of my heart would you light - en?
 hum - bly in spir - it I bow down be - fore you.
 give me at last, Lord, a crown in your heav - en.



Refrain
 Bless - ed Re - deem - er, my Sav - ior and Com - fort - er,



are you com - ing soon? Are you com - ing soon? A - men.

Welcome to North Park Covenant Church online!

We're glad you're here.

If you're new here today, we invite you to email the co-pastors at copastors@npcovenant.org to learn more about us and, perhaps, get a little more connected.

Childcare is available in the toddler room (lower level, off the hallway south of the parlors) during the worship service for any wee ones ages 0 through 5 needing a place to wiggle and play. We always happily welcome children in the service but recognize that sometimes parents need a break so they can focus on worship.

For your prayers this week:

- **our neighborhood**, specifically North Park University, its professors, staff, students, and families; and our friends at Covenant Home of Chicago and Chicago Methodist Senior Services; *"We pray that God would unveil within our neighbors and ourselves the unlimited riches of his glory and favor until supernatural strength floods their and our innermost beings with his divine might and explosive power."* (Ephesians 3:16)
- **our immigrant brothers and sisters**, as ICE activity continues in the area
- **Lynn Pearson**, back at in the hospital with an ulcer
- **Elizabeth Petersen and family**, mourning the passing of her nephew Robert Ramos on November 13
- **Donn Engebretson**, anticipating knee-replacement surgery on Wednesday, December 3
- **Huck Johnson**, recuperating after another ACL surgery on November 21
- **Janet Olfelt**, Joel Olfelt's mother, adjusting to life in assisted living
- **Andrea Feijoo**, Janice Kelly's niece, diagnosed with an aggressive liver cancer
- Joline and Steve Paska's friend **Maggie**, diagnosed with stage 3 endometrial cancer
- **Kurt Peterson**, recovering at home after open heart surgery three weeks ago, and for **Lisa** as she cares for him
- **Melanie Jones**, for strength to live with chronic pain
- **Steve Brown**, who has been dealing with pancreatic cancer
- **Zeynab and her two sons**, awaiting word about their asylum case; and for Zeynab's daughter, **Soofia**, who remains in a detention center in California
- James and Rachel Ventress's son **Silas**, diagnosed with a degenerative bone disease in his hip and in need of surgery; and their daughter **Mercedes**, diagnosed with a form of epilepsy

Vida Plena, a Spanish-speaking Covenant church plant that meets here, invites you to worship every Sunday at 1:30 pm. For more information, contact Pastor Dany Flores at 872-357-9080.

Members and friends are invited to be a part of a Saturday-morning trash brigade, working to clean up the block mentioned in today's neighborhood prayer. Please reach out to Janette and Roderick Smith at rjonberber@sbcglobal.net for more details.

Join in an Advent Spiritual Practice: In the midst of Christmas busyness, you're invited to join our Advent spiritual practice group. Emily Cody, our pastoral intern, will lead us in spiritual practices to help us rest and listen during this Advent season. This group will meet on Wednesdays, December 3, 10, and 17 after Gather dinner from 6:30-7:15 pm. All are welcome to join for as many or as few nights as you are able. Our goal is to rest together and listen for God in the waiting of Advent!

From the Stewardship Committee: None of the good work we do here at NPCC, for God's glory and neighbors' good, is possible without the faith and generosity of the whole church body. One way we express that generosity is via pledges. In 2025, the number of pledgers increased from 36 to 53, and those who pledged have been faithful in that giving, which means we are ending the year strong. Thank you!

While it's impossible to know for certain how much money will come in, or what unexpected expenses may pop up, the task becomes easier and more predictable when we have many people pledging for the year. This becomes money that can be counted on. Whether you wish to give once a month, once a year, or whenever you can, please consider making a pledge for 2026. Pledge cards can be found in the pews today, and [there is a pledge page on Realm](#). North Park Covenant Church has always been a generous church. Thank you for joining us in mission for 2026!

**Lectionary texts for
Sunday, December 7:**

Isaiah 11:1-10

Psalms 72:1-7, 18-19

Romans 15:4-13

Matthew 3:1-12

It's Christmas Greetings Time! You are invited to extend Christmas greetings to the members and friends of North Park Covenant Church by donating an amount of your choice to go toward camping scholarships. You are also welcome to share your own Christmas letter with the church family by bringing a copy to the church office for display in the parlors. You can use the paper form in today's bulletin, or you can [fill out the Realm form here](#). The deadline is Wednesday, December 10, and the names of those who fill out the form will appear in the bulletin on Sunday, December 14.

A Christmas gift for the Ventress family in Alaska: In recent years, NPCC has purchased and mailed Christmas gifts to the Ventress family in Nome. This year, we will send them an Amazon gift card, as James and Rachel have been inundated with caring for two of their kids' medical issues and have not been able to get a wish list to us. The gift card will allow them select gifts or meet needs that may arise due to Silas' and Mercedes' care. To make a donation, you may write a check with "Ventress Gift Card" in the memo line or use the "Special Gifts" drop-down at www.npcovenant.org/give. The deadline to make a contribution is Wednesday, December 10. Thank you!

Christmas for Our Missionaries: Throughout the year, we as a church support missionaries in five areas of the world via a percentage of General Fund donations. Now it's time to remember these missionary servants with a special Christmas gift. To make a special donation, write "missionary gift" in the memo line on your check and drop it in the offering plate (using the ivory envelopes in the pews) or select "Missionary Gift" from the drop-down menu at www.npcovenant.org/give. The deadline for these gifts is Sunday, December 14. Thank you!

From Church Co-chairs, Nancy Ebner and Susan Dawson: The season of giving thanks and giving to others is upon us, and we at North Park Covenant Church have a history of expressing our thanks by giving to others. We are grateful for the ministry of the staff throughout the year, and in this season, we have a tangible way to express our thanks to them. Contributions for the staff gift are being received from now through December 15. You can contribute by using the “Staff Gift” option at www.npcovenant.org/give, writing a check with “Staff Gift” in the memo line, or by using the green envelopes stamped with “a Christmas gift for our staff” that can be found in the pews on Sundays. May the Spirit of God move among us all this Advent season, as we wait and pray: “Come, Lord Jesus.”

Are you looking for a way to serve at NPCC? We always welcome people who are willing to hang out with the littlest in our community or help serve refreshments after the worship service! [Click here to put your name down for a Sunday or two.](#)

Upcoming Community Christmas Events and Services:

- On December 6, Uniting Voices Chicago will put on two performances of *Winter Glow*, a one-of-a-kind concert for the whole family!

* Morning (10:30 am) performance, featuring Voice of Chicago; Dimension; and the Beverly, Englewood, Lincoln Park/DePaul, Pilsen/Little Village, and West Town Neighborhood Choir programs.

* Afternoon (2 pm) performance, featuring Voice of Chicago; Dimension; Off the Street Club and the Albany Park, Austin, Humboldt Park, Gage Park, Hyde Park, and Rogers Park Neighborhood Choir programs.

Tickets are reserved seating, \$30 or pay-what-you-can, and available now through the Chicago Symphony Center Box Office. Get your tickets at www.unitingvoiceschicago.org/winter-glow, because you won't want to miss this festive fun!

- Also on December 6, at 4 pm, North Park University invites you to Isaacson Chapel for their annual *Sankta Lucia pageant*. This is a beautiful candlelit time, with songs sung in Swedish, followed by fika.

- On Sunday, December 7, at 1 pm, Minnekirken (2614 N. Kedzie) will hold a *Christmas Concert* in their sanctuary. You'll enjoy singing traditional Norwegian and American Christmas songs together, as well as hearing performances by their choir and guest choirs, and scripture readings. Minnekirken (aka Norwegian Lutheran Memorial Church) was first built by Norwegian immigrants in 1912. It is one of two American churches still using Norwegian as a primary liturgical language.

- At 4 pm that same day, North Park University will begin Advent with a celebration to engage and connect their community in anticipation of the coming of Christ, through *A Festival of Lessons and Carols*, in Anderson Chapel on the University campus.

- On Sunday, December 14, Queen of All Saints Basilica (6280 N. Sauganash Avenue, Chicago) invites you to *A Worldwide Candle Lighting for the Loss of a Child Service* at 6:45 pm. For more information about this service, visit www.compassionatefriends.org.



We invite you to join us this Advent as we wait in hope for the coming of Christ. All services are at 10:30 am, unless otherwise noted.

Sunday, November 30: Advent I Worship Service

Sunday, December 7: Advent II Worship Service

Sunday, December 14: Advent III/A Service of Lessons & Carols

Sunday, December 21: Advent IV Worship Service

Sunday, December 21, 7 pm: Blue Christmas Worship Service

Wednesday, December 24, 5 pm: Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Thursday, December 25, 6:30 am: Julotta Worship Service

The Church Calendar This Week

The calendar is available at www.npcovenant.org/calendar and is updated as changes occur.

Monday, December 1

9:15 am	Women's Bible Study (Hybrid/Large Conference Room)
10:30 am	Staff Meeting (Staff Conference Room)
11:30 am	NPCCP Board Meeting (Parlors)
4 pm	Tutoring (Parlors)
6:30 pm	Geezerball (Gym)
7:30 pm	Centering Prayer (Staff Conference Room)

Tuesday, December 2

8 am	Men's Bible Study (Hybrid/Large Conference Room)
4:30 pm	Uniting Voices Chicago Rehearsal (Sanctuary)
6 pm	Cudahy Basketball (Gym)

Wednesday, December 3

10 am	Women's Bible Study (Edstrom Home)
6 pm	Gather Dinner (Parlors)
6:30 pm	Chancel Handbell Choir Rehearsal (Sanctuary)
	Contemporary Music Rehearsal (Choir Room)
7 pm	Knit or Not (Coffee Lounge)
	Middle-school Youth Group (Youth Room)
7:15 pm	Chancel Choir Rehearsal (Choir Room)

Thursday, December 4

4:30 pm	Uniting Voices Chicago Rehearsal (Sanctuary)
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Friday, December 5

1 pm	Prayer Group Gathering (Edstrom Home)
7:30 pm	LTAC Girls' Basketball Practice (Gym)

Saturday, December 6

8 am	Geezerball (Gym)
10 am	LT Scandi Club Dance Practice (Parlors)
10:15 am	Cudahy Basketball (Gym)
1 pm	Neighborhood Mutual Aid Meeting (Parlors)
5 pm	Pantazelos Concert (Sanctuary)

Sunday, December 7 - The Second Sunday of Advent

9 am	Confirmation (Staff Conference Room)
9:15 am	Adult Formation (Parlors)
	Bible Journaling (Art Room)
	Sunday School for Preschool - 6th Grade (Junior Chapel)
10:30 am	Worship (Sanctuary)
11:45 am	Community Connection Town Hall (Parlors)
1:30 pm	Vida Plena Covenant Church Worship Service (Parlors)
7 pm	AA Meeting (Parlors)
	High-school Youth Group (Attic Youth Room)

North Park Covenant Church Staff

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Chris Peterson,
Regional Coordinator for Europe

Peter and Anna Kim, Taiwan

James and Rachel Ventress, Alaska

Paul and Sheryl Noren, Congo

Eugenio and Pia Restrepo,
Regional Coordinators for Latin America

Welcome Statement

We welcome all people to begin or deepen their relationship with Christ through worship and study. We invite all believers to fully participate in the life and ministry of our church as members, leaders, and lay staff. We celebrate the gifts and presence of diverse Christians among us—whether those differences be race, ethnicity, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, ability, or socioeconomic status. We are blessed by our diversity and are unified in Christ.

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