



**THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CHESTNUT HILL
PHILADELPHIA**

The Lord is coming, always coming.
When you have ears to hear and eyes to see,
you will recognize him at any moment of your life.
Life is Advent, life is recognizing the coming of the Lord.

~ Henri Nouwen

In the silence of a midwinter dusk, there is a sound so faint that for all you can tell
it may be only the sound of the silence itself. You hold your breath to listen.

You are aware of the beating of your heart.
The extraordinary thing that is about to happen
is matched only by the extraordinary moment just before it happens.
Advent is the name of that moment.

~Frederick Buechner

**ORDER OF WORSHIP
FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

November 29, 2020

10:00 a.m.

OPENING VOLUNTARY

“Sleepers, Wake!” A Voice Astounds Us

J.S. Bach
(1685-1750)

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

- Leader: We light the first candle of the Advent wreath as a sign of the coming light of Christ.
- People: **God has promised that in the days to come the nations shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks.**
- Leader: Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more..
- People: **Let us walk in the light of God.**

INVOCATION

HYMN

“Sleepers, Wake!” A Voice Astounds Us

WACHET AUF

“Sleepers, wake!” A voice astounds us;
the shout of rampart guards surrounds us:
“Awake, Jerusalem, arise!”
Midnight’s peace their cry has broken,
their urgent summons clearly spoken:
“The time has come, O maidens wise!
Rise up, and give us light;
the Bridegroom is in sight.
Alleluia!
Your lamps prepare and hasten there,
that you the wedding feast may share.”

Zion hears the watchmen singing;
her heart with joyful hope is springing;
she wakes and hurries through the night.
Forth he comes, her Bridegroom glorious
in strength of grace, in truth victorious:
her star is risen, her light grows bright.
Now come, most worthy Lord,
God’s Son, Incarnate Word,
Alleluia!
We follow all and heed your call
to come into the banquet hall.

Lamb of God, the heavens adore you;
let saints and angels sing before you,
as harps and cymbals swell the sound.
Twelve great pearls, the city’s portals:
through them we stream to join the immortals
as we with joy your throne surround.
No eye has known the sight,
no ear heard such delight:
Alleluia!
Therefore we sing to greet our King;
for ever let our praises ring.

WELCOME

CHILDREN'S MOMENT

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION (unison)

Speak to us, gracious God. Speak to us in the waiting, the watching, the hoping, the longing, the sorrow, the sighing, the rejoicing. Speak to us by your word in these Advent days, and walk with us until the day of your coming. Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON

Isaiah 64:1-9

O that you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at your presence—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! When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect, you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence. 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. 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. 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. 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 us into the hand of our iniquity. Yet, O Lord, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand. Do not be exceedingly angry, O Lord, and do not remember iniquity forever. Now consider, we are all your people.

Leader: Holy wisdom, holy Word.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

PSALTER

Psalm 80:1-7

PLAINCHANT

Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock;
shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.

In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh,
stir up your strength and come to help us.

Restore us, O God of hosts;
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

O Lord God of hosts,
how long will you be angered
despite the prayers of your people?

You have fed them with the bread of tears;
you have given them bowls of tears to drink.

You have made us the derision of our neighbors,
and our enemies laugh us to scorn.

Restore us, O God of hosts;
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved

GOSPEL LESSON

Mark 13:24-37

“But in those days, after that suffering, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see ‘the Son of Man coming in clouds’ with great power and glory. Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven. “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. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. “But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. 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. 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, or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.”

Leader: Holy wisdom, holy Word.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

“The Gift of Being Alert”

John Wilkinson

ANTHEM

Virga Jesse

Thomas Juneau
(b. 1977)

Virga Jesse floruit:
Virgo Deum et hominem genuit:
pacem Deus reddidit,
in se reconcilians ima summis.
Alleluja.

*The branch from Jesse blooms:
a Virgin brings forth God and man:
God restores peace,
reconciling in Himself the lowest with the highest.
Alleluia.*

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

from *Our Song of Hope*
Reformed Church in America

We sing to our Lord a new song;
We sing in our world a sure Hope:
Our God loves this world,
God called it into being,
God renews it through Jesus Christ,
God governs it by the Spirit.
God is the world's true Hope.

We are a people of hope
waiting for the return of our Lord.
God has come to us
through the ancient people of Israel,
as the true Son of God, Jesus of Nazareth,
as the Holy Spirit at work in our world.
Our Lord speaks to us now through the inspired Scriptures.
Christ is with us day by day.

Come, Lord Jesus:
We are open to your Spirit.
We await your full presence.
Our world finds rest in you alone. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE and LORD'S PRAYER (unison)

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.

HYMN

Lo, He Comes with Clouds Descending

HELMSLEY

Lo, he comes with clouds descending,
once for our salvation slain;
thousand, thousand saints attending
join to sing the glad refrain:
Alleluia,
alleluia,
alleluia!
Christ the Lord returns to reign.

Now redemption, long expected,
comes in solemn splendor near;
all the saints this world rejected
thrill the trumpet sound to hear:
Alleluia,
alleluia,
alleluia!
See the day of God appear!

Yea, amen, let all adore thee,
high on thine eternal throne;
Savior, take the power and glory;
claim the kingdom as thine own.
Come, Lord Jesus;
Come, Lord Jesus;
Come, Lord Jesus.
Thou shalt reign, and thou alone!

CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

CHORAL BENEDICTION

Peter Lutkin
(1858-1931)

Amen.

In Memoriam: We extend our sympathy to long-time church member Marianne Bux, whose husband William died on November 19. We thank God for Bill's life and keep Marianne in our prayers.

WORSHIP LEADERS: Brian Russo, Associate Pastor; Austin Crenshaw Shelley, Associate Pastor; John Wilkinson, Pastor

LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH: Peter, Sarah and Sadie Finbow

MUSIC: Members of the Gallery Choir: Katy Avery, Joanna Gates, Rebecca Siler, Julie Snyder, Colin Dill, Kevin Radtke, Jackson Williams and Steve Williamson; Daniel Spratlan, conductor; Ken Lovett, organist

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Church Staff

John Wilkinson, *Pastor*

Brian D. Russo, *Associate Pastor for Youth and Senior Adults*
Austin Crenshaw Shelley, *Associate Pastor for Christian Education*

Daniel Spratlan, *Director of Music*

Ken Lovett, *Organist/Associate Director of Music*

Esther Cole, *Church Administrator*

Carla James, *Director, Preschool*

Mariangela Saavedra, *Director, Center on the Hill*

Leslie A. Lefer, *Communications Coordinator*

Evelyn F. Carpenter, *Administrative Assistant*

Felix Delgado, *Sexton*

Owintier Charles, *Sunday Sexton*

Icilda James and Debbie Lambeth, *Sunday Child Care Givers*

The Presbyterian Church of Chestnut Hill

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facebook link: www.facebook.com/PCChestnutHill

Preschool: 215.247.8865

THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH

CHILDREN AND YOUTH

CHURCH SCHOOL

Every Sunday at 9:30 a.m.

Log onto our website at <https://www.chestnuthillpres.org/> and click on the Church School button at the top of the page.

Church School begins at 9:30 a.m. every Sunday prior to worship for children of all ages. We would love to have the adults tuning in to pay attention to what we do in church school—often a purely behind the scenes venture. The sessions continue to be available on the website.

YOUTH GROUP

No meetings this weekend. Enjoy the Thanksgiving holiday.

THE CHURCH IN COMMUNITY

WALKING IN FAITH: STEWARDSHIP 2021 THANK YOU

Thanks to the many of you who have responded already to our 2021 stewardship effort by returning a pledge card to the church. We had a fun time on Sunday receiving pledges—thanks to Trish Franklin for the fabulous masks. Thus far we have received 62 pledges totaling \$342,613. Send your completed pledge card to the church office or send a confidential email to ecole@chestnuthillpres.org. Your timely support is appreciated.

SECOND HOUR LIVE (ON ZOOM)

December 6 at 11:00 a.m.: What is Advent led by John Wilkinson

December 13 at 11:00 a.m.: The Music of Advent led by Ken Lovett

Come join us for this lively and interactive conversation. Here is the link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86312882088?pwd=ZUdESFhEdXZLWkQwU1hYNUc1bTB2UT09>

ADVENT RETREAT

Saturday, December 12, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon, (via Zoom)

“The Gifts of Christmas” led by John Wilkinson

Join us as we reflect on the promises of Advent and Christmas through prose, poetry, music and art. RSVP at 215.247.8855 or ecarpenter@chestnuthillpres.org by December 10 to receive Zoom link and retreat materials.

ONGOING OPPORTUNITIES

Wednesday – Bible Study, 12:00 noon, Facebook Live (Returns December 2)

Friday – Morning Prayer, 7:30 a.m., Facebook Live (Returns December 4)

Visit our website www.chestnuthillpres.org and our Facebook page regularly for updates and events. Let us know if you have prayer concerns.

THE CHURCH IN SERVICE

SOULS SHOT EXHIBITION

November 1, 2020—January 15, 2021

Widener Hall, Free and open to the public.

Visiting hours: Monday–Friday, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. or by appointment.

Calling the church office 215-247-8855 ahead is recommended. Safety protocols must be followed: masks must be worn, visitors must stay at least 6 feet apart, occupancy numbers will be limited.

The Souls Shot Portrait Project pairs fine artists with families and friends of victims of gun violence. The artists create portraits using diverse approaches and emphasize the individuality and uniqueness of the victims portrayed. The exhibition is a truly moving tribute. Please join us for this powerful experience. Questions: soulshotportraitproject@gmail.com

WALK OF THE HOLY FAMILY IN THE SPIRIT OF LAS POSADAS

Saturday, December 12, 4:30 p.m.

Commencing at Christ Ascension Lutheran Church, 8300 Germantown Avenue PCCH will join with area churches in a Christmas event that raises critical funds for the Philadelphia Interfaith Hospitality Network (PIHN) to support homeless families in our community.

Las Posadas is a traditional Latin American festival that commemorates the journey of Mary and Joseph as they seek shelter to welcome the birth of the baby Jesus.

The walk commences at *Christ Ascension Lutheran Church* (8300 Germantown Avenue) and concludes at *St. Paul's Episcopal Church* (22 E. Chestnut Hill Avenue) with numerous stops at businesses along Germantown Avenue. The walk is approximately 6/10 of a mile and is suitable for all ages. Walkers will wear masks and travel in small groups to maintain social distancing. Join us as a walk-a-thon fundraiser, create a team of walkers with church friends, or simply participate by making a donation of your choice. To learn more about the event and how to take part visit <http://philashelter.org/index.php/news-and-events/walk-of-the-holy-family/>

THE FACE TO FACE SANDWICH BRIGADE MARCHES ON!

Last month we had such an *amazing* congregational response—nearly 200 sandwiches and lunch bag items—to Face To Face's request to supply its food-insecure clients, that we have signed on for several more dates. Mark your calendars to join the next sandwich brigade on **Thursday December 16**; details to follow. In the meantime, we are collecting shelf-stable items for the lunch bags: granola bars, packets of nuts, fruit cups or applesauce, bottled water, sandwich size Ziploc bags, and paper lunch bags. Drop these off in the Reception Room at your convenience. In addition to in-home sandwich-making, we will be looking for a few volunteers to help assemble the lunch bags that Thursday evening, and to transport them to Face to Face on Friday morning. Questions? Contact Beth Vaccaro (bethnellvaccaro@gmail.com) or Suzan Willcox (sewillcox@comcast.net).

SUPPORTING ACHIEVABILITY AT CHRISTMAS

This holiday season, PCCH has committed to collecting gifts for 40 children participating in the Achievability program. **ACHIEVEability**, works to permanently break the generational cycle of poverty for low income, single parent, and homeless families through higher education, affordable housing, supportive services, community and economic development, and accountability. Every year, ACHIEVEability provides holiday gifts to children in West Philadelphia that would otherwise go without—and this year will be no exception. ACHIEVEability has made the process both safe and easy for us to give this year. After Thanksgiving, we will receive Amazon wish lists for each child we will sponsor. Congregation

members can choose to deliver gifts to PCCH or have them sent directly to ACHIEVEability. Please be on the lookout for more details about how to sign up to sponsor a child. You may go ahead and let Beth Vaccaro know that you would like to participate at bethnellvaccaro@gmail.com and she will get you a wish list when we receive information from ACHIEVEability.

RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE UPDATES AND FALL SCHEDULE

During the three blood drives in September the Red Cross collected 84 units of blood which will help up to 252 hospital patients in the area. Our contact at the Red Cross is very grateful for our support and many donors have expressed gratitude for a local donation site. Future blood drives:

- Friday, December 11 — 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

If you can volunteer to greet potential donors, take their temperature, and check them in using the Red Cross computerized system, please email Liz Podraza at lizpodraza@gmail.com.

If you would like to be a blood donor, go to redcrossblood.org and search for Presbyterian Church of Chestnut Hill using the zip code 19118. You must have an appointment to donate; no walk-ins can be accepted, but appointments may be made the day of the drive.

THE CENTER ON THE HILL

The Center on the Hill is returning to activities offered and streamed ONLINE ONLY for people to participate in or watch from home. New online content, such as virtual tours, fitness videos, art lessons, recorded presentations and more, is also posted Monday—Thursday at Noon on our programs page here: <https://www.chestnuthillpres.org/center-on-the-hill/programs/>. The links and schedule for upcoming online events can also be found there.

Upcoming events online:

REGISTRATION REQUIRED for online participation in real time.

Call 215-247-4654 to register.

Recorded versions are posted on our programs page in the days following the event.

DIABETES WORKSHOPS

Wednesdays, December 2 and 9, 12:00 noon—1:00 p.m., Free

Presented Live on Zoom for phone and online access.

You can live well with diabetes, pre-diabetes or gestational diabetes. Ambler Nutrition's certified diabetes educator Kirsten Puskar, CDE, will help you understand managing diabetes to stay healthy. All are welcome to take part in this series of four interactive discussions, where participants receive personalized attention and learn what it takes to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

THE HEALTHY BRAIN

Thursday, December 3, 11:00 a.m.—12:00 noon, Free

Presented online and by phone.

Brain Health and Heart Health are very similar but most of us do not think about brain health. Age and health are often dependent on your genes but lifestyle choices can help to maintain both a healthy body and brain. The discussion will include tips to enhance brain health and what you can do now to support a healthy brain.