

First Sunday of Advent

November 29, 2015

Scriptural Meditation

For a child has been born for us, a son given to us;
authority rests upon his shoulders;
and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. *Isaiah 9:6*

~Gathering the Family of God~

The Peal of Our Church Bell

Welcome and Greeting One Another with the Peace of Christ

Prelude *From Heaven Above* (Tune: "Vom Himmel Hoch") by Rudolf Moser

Call to Worship

One: Have you seen itthe Spark of Hope which God is placing among us.

All: All we can see is hectic lives, crowded stores, darkness and fear.

One: Look again.....the spirit of God is moving, bringing hope.

All: We need to place our hope in God, but we are afraid.

One: A long time ago, people were afraid and God brought to them Light.

All: May God bring that light to us today! Amen.

Prayer of Invocation

* **Gathering Song** *Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus* # 82

***Prayer of Reconciliation**

Let us remain standing and express ourselves to God

All: It is so easy for us, Lord, to let the anger, frustration, and fear overshadow our lives. We can't seem to escape it. We sometimes act out our fear in ways which are not helpful and, far too often, go against the ways you have taught us to live. We feel the pressure to give, and resentment in giving. We feel the push to be present at every upcoming event, and want to run and hide. Help us, Lord.

Free us again to look to you for Hope. Let us see the many ways in which you are present to us..... guiding, healing, loving, encouraging us. Forgive us for our fears and our stubbornness. Bring us again to your light, for we ask this in Jesus' Name. Amen.

***A Time for Contemplation** (a private time for you and God)

***Assurance of Forgiveness**

One: "The days are coming", says the prophet Isaiah, "when all God's promises will be fulfilled." These promises of hope, peace, joy, and love are for you. Receive the hope that God offers to you today. Friends, believe the good news of the Gospel.

All: In Jesus Christ we are forgiven.

***Gloria** (Adapted from # 113 *Angels We Have Heard on High*)

All: Glo-ri-a in ex-cel-sis De-o!

Glo-ri-a in ex-cel-sis De-o!

Text: French Carol, trans. By James Chadwick, Music: French Carol, arr. by Edward Shippen Barnes
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God's Word for Little Ears (Children are welcome to come forward.)

Lighting of our Advent Wreath

The circle of the wreath reminds us of God, his eternity and endless mercy, which has no beginning and no end. The green of the wreath speaks of the hope that Christians have in God, the hope of newness, of renewal, of eternal life. Today we light the first candle, the candle of hope.

Advent Wreath Song *He Came Down* (adapted from # 137)

All: He came down that we may have hope;

He came down that we may have hope;

He came down that we may have hope,

Hal-le-lu-jah for-ever more. (Repeat)

Text: Traditional Cameroon, Music: Traditional Cameroon; trans. and arr. by John Bell
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~Hearing God's Word~

Prayer for Understanding God's Word (from Psalm 25)

All: Make your ways known, O Lord; teach us your paths. Lead us into your truth and instruct our hearts—for you are the God of our salvation; for you we wait all day long. Amen.

Old Testament Lesson Jeremiah 33:14-16 p.738

One: The Word of the Lord. **All: Thanks be to God.**

Anthem *O Come, O Come Emmanuel* arr. Alice Parker and Robert Shaw

New Testament Epistle First Letter to the Thessalonians 3:9-13 p.204

One: The Word of the Lord. **All: Thanks be to God**

Gospel Lesson Luke 21:25-36 p.85

One: The Word of the Lord. **All: Thanks be to God**

Message *A Good Reason to Give Thanks* Pastor Kim Nelson

~Responding to God's Word~

***Affirmation of Faith**

Let us stand and affirm our faith.

One: Jesus was born in a barn because there was no room available in the inn. The innkeeper and most of the people in Bethlehem that night thought he was nobody, but we say,

All: He is the Christ!

One: Jesus made friends with everyone. He ate dinner with Zaccheus, the cheating tax-collector. He healed foreigners. He touched lepers. Lots of people said he was a troublemaker, but we say,

All: He is the Christ!

One: Jesus was a teacher. Crowds of people gathered on hillsides to hear him speak about God's love. The teachers in the Temple said he was wrong about God's love, but we say,

All: He is the Christ!

One: Jesus said, "Love your enemies," "Give to those in need," and "Those who lose their life for my sake will save it." Most people thought he was crazy, but we say,

All: He is the Christ!

One: Jesus was arrested, tried, and sentenced to die on a cross. The political and religious leaders thought they were rid of him, but he rose, and he lives. We know that ..

All: He is the Christ!

One: When Jesus said, "If anyone wants to come with me, he must forget himself, carry his cross, and follow me," most people went home.

But we stay, and we say,

All: He is the Christ!

Invitation to Become a Joyful Giver

Giving of our Tithes and Offerings & Friendship Pad

Please take a moment to sign your name and contact information in the pew pad.

Offertory

What Child is This? (Tune: "Greensleeves") by Hugo Gehrke

*Doxology

Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow (# 675, verse 4)

**All: Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. A-men.**

Tune: Tallis' Canon, Whole Psalter 1561, Public Domain.

Prayers of the People followed by Pastoral Prayer

The Lord's Prayer

All: 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.

Sung Prayer Response *While We Are Waiting, Come* (#92, v.1 & 3)

**All: 1) While we are waiting come; while we are waiting, come.
Jesus, our Lord, Emmanuel, while we are waiting come.
3) Come, Savior, quickly come; come, Savior, quickly come.
Jesus our Lord, Emmanuel, while we are waiting come.**

Text: Claire Cloninger, 1986, Music: Don Cason, 1986

~Going Forth to Serve God~

Life in Our Church Community

***Song of Going Forth** *Live Into Hope* # 772

*Benediction

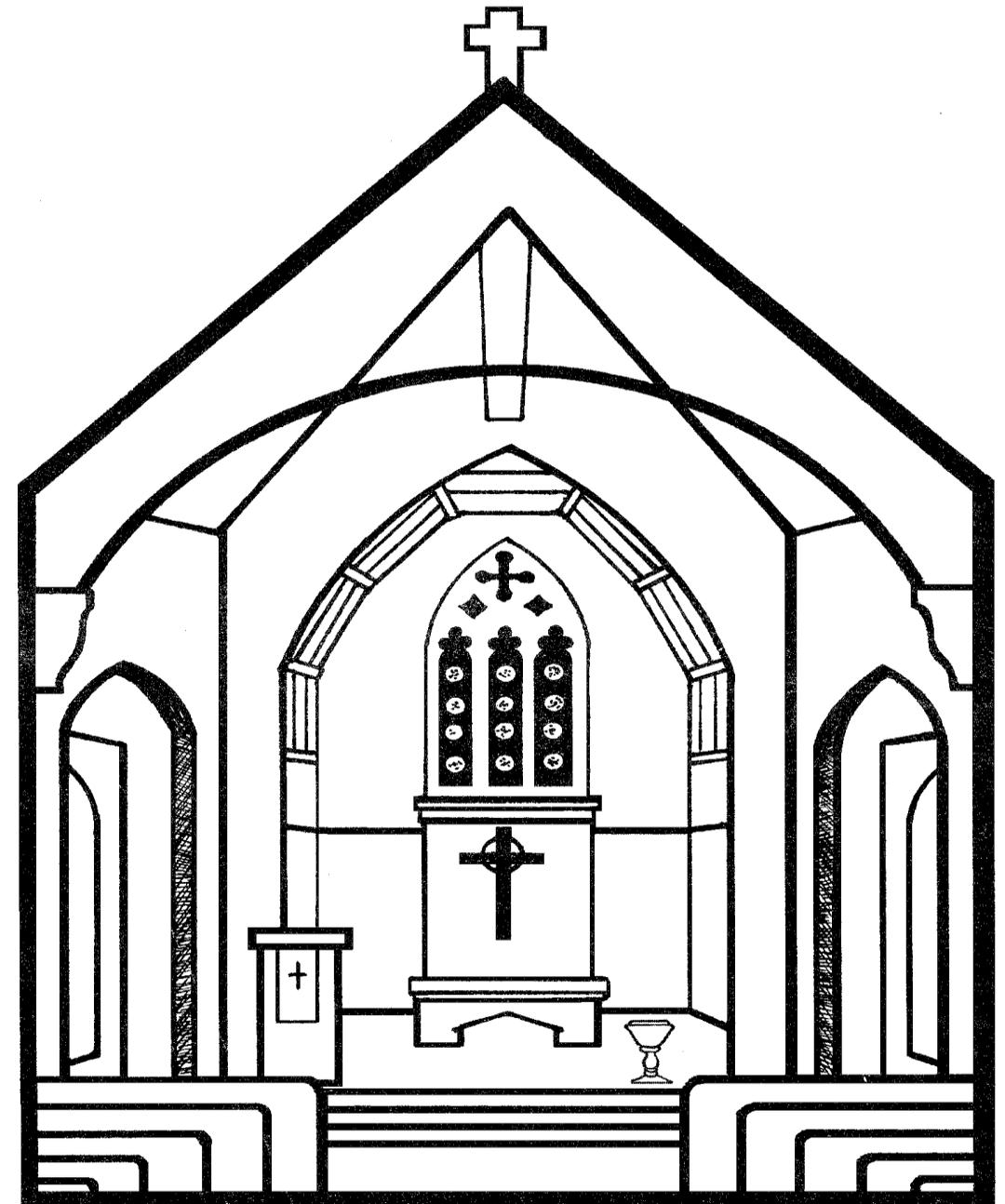
***Postlude** *Let Us All with Gladsome Voice* (Tune: "Lasst Uns Alle") by H. A. Metzger

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***Please stand, if you are able.**

Electronic aid for the hearing impaired is available from the usher.

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