

## 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

O Come, Little Children

arr. by B. Kinyon

First Presbyterian Handbell Choir

Kate Broeckling, Jean Cairns, Peter Durow, Julie Harrison,  
Katherine Harrison, Sheri Mitchell, Rebecca Nelson

## Call to Worship

One: If your soul feels more tarnished than your jewelry, take heart.

**All: Our God is like a refiner's fire and a cleaner's soap.**

One: If your spirit feels marred by life's difficult choices, have hope.

**All: Our God will polish us up Brighter than the finest silver and gold.**

One: If your heart feels too beat down to praise God, Be at peace.

**All: Our God breaks into our darkness Filling us with light, love, and joy.**

One: Let us prepare for Christ's birth And rejoice in the salvation of our God.

## Prayer of Invocation

## \* Gathering Song

*On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry*

# 96

## \*Prayer of Reconciliation

*Let us remain standing and express ourselves to God*

**All: Lord, hear us this day as we open our hearts and our spirits to you. These times in which we live are often confusing and fearful. We are pushed to make preparations for a season which is supposed to bring hope and peace; yet we crowd it with obligations and stresses and shut the door to your healing love and compassion. We find ourselves being on edge, wondering if we have done enough. You answer our fears with your voice, "Peace, be still". Help us to hear you. Slow us down. Encourage us to take some time to listen rather than shout, to stop and rest rather than run. Cause us to look around at situations and people who are in need and to place our focus on helping them. For it is in helping your people and reaching out in love that we will find true peace. These things we pray, in Jesus' Name. Amen.**

## \*Assurance of Forgiveness

One: Jesus said, "I bring you peace, not the kind of peace the world would give to you. My peace I give to you, now and forever."

Be at peace. Know God's love is given for you.

**All: (Meditate on the spiritual reality of God's love of you!)**

One: Friends, believe the good news of the Gospel.

**All: In Jesus Christ, I am loved and 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  
Copyright © 1937, renewed 1965, Fleming H. Revell Company. H. Augustine Smith, Jr., from the *New Church Hymnal*.

## Lighting of our Advent Wreath (children are welcome to come forward)

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. Last week we lit the candle of hope. Today we light the second candle, **the Candle of Peace.**

## 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.**

v. 2) **He came down that we may have peace;**

**He came down that we may have peace;**

**He came down that we may have peace,**

**Hal-le-lu-jah for-ever more.**

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

**All: During this season of Advent help us, Lord, to prepare ourselves to receive Jesus in our hearts. As we listen to your Holy Scriptures help us to truly become a loving community in Christ. May we gently nurture each other in faith, and uphold each other in prayer, and enthusiastically encourage each other in service. Amen.**

## Old Testament Lesson

Malachi 3:1-4

p.889

One: The Word of the Lord.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

## Gospel Lesson

Luke 3:2-6

p.60

One: The Word of the Lord.

**All: Thanks be to God**

## Anthem

*Every Valley*

by John Ness Beck

## The Canticle of Zechariah

Luke 1:68-79

Right Side (Lorimier St.): We bless you LORD God:

Left Side (River Side): **you have smiled on your people and saved them;**

RS: you raised up a savior from the house of David your servant,

LS: **just as you promised through the prophets long ago,**

**saving us from our enemies and those who would do us in.**

RS: You have shown the mercy you promised to our ancestors in the faith

LS: **remembering your holy covenant, sworn to Abraham;**

RS: to free us from our enemies to serve you,  
 LS: ***upright and without fear, all our days.***  
 RS: A child is born to be called the prophet of the Most High;  
 who is going before you to prepare your ways;

LS: ***to teach of the salvation to your people by the forgiveness of their sins.***  
**All: By your tender mercy, O God, your dawn from on high has broken in upon  
 our lives, lighting up the darkness, and the shadow of death, in which we sit,  
 and guiding our feet into your way of peace.**

**New Testament Epistle** Philippians 1:3-11 p.196

**One:** The Word of the Lord. **All: Thanks be to God**  
*A Love That Will Grow*

<sup>1:3-6</sup>Every time you cross my mind, I break out in exclamations of thanks to God. Each exclamation is a trigger to prayer. I find myself praying for you with a glad heart. I am so pleased that you have continued on in this with us, believing and proclaiming God's Message, from the day you heard it right up to the present. There has never been the slightest doubt in my mind that the God who started this great work in you would keep at it and bring it to a flourishing finish on the very day Christ Jesus appears.

<sup>7-8</sup>It's not at all fanciful for me to think this way about you. My prayers and hopes have deep roots in reality. You have, after all, stuck with me all the way from the time I was thrown in jail, put on trial, and came out of it in one piece. All along you have experienced with me the most generous help from God. He knows how much I love and miss you these days. Sometimes I think I feel as strongly about you as Christ does!

<sup>9-11</sup>So this is my prayer: that your love will flourish and that you will not only love much but well. Learn to love appropriately. You need to use your head and test your feelings so that your love is sincere and intelligent, not sentimental gush. Live a lover's life, circumspect and exemplary, a life Jesus will be proud of: bountiful in fruits from the soul, making Jesus Christ attractive to all, getting everyone involved in the glory and praise of God. (The Message)

**Message** *Jesus' Prayer for You* 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** Rejoice, Greatly, O Daughter of Jerusalem from G. F. Handel's "Messiah"  
 Brittany Moleski, Choir Choral Scholar

**\*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.

**Celebration of Holy Communion**

Communion Music  
 "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" (Tune: Veni Emmanuel) Plainsong Chant  
 Ed Burford/Piano and Rebecca Nelson/Organ

**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

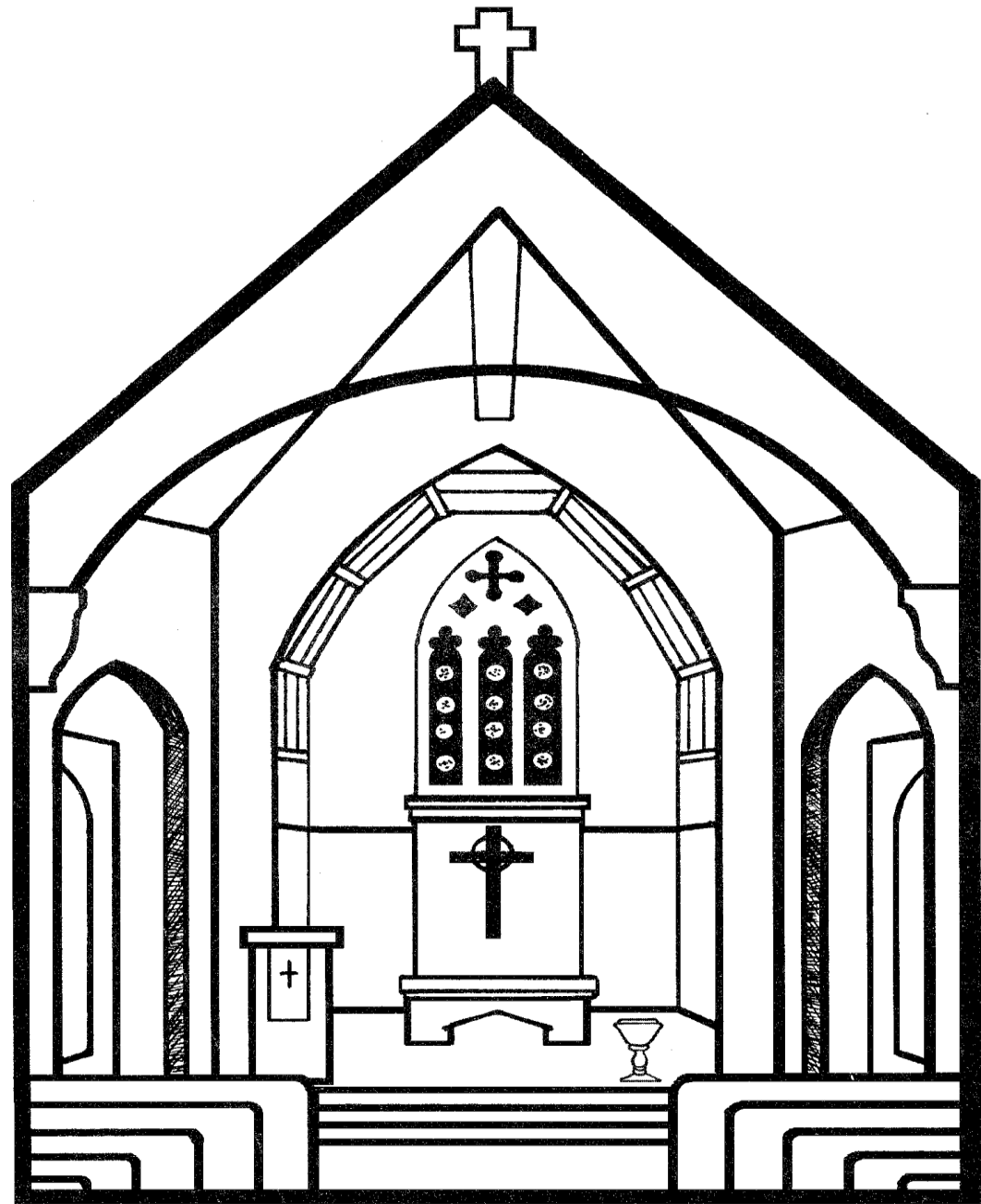
**~Going Forth to Serve God~**

**Life in Our Church Community**

**\*Benediction**  
**\*Song of Going Forth** *People, Look East* # 105  
**\*Postlude** *Vom Himmel Hoch* arr. by Wilbur Held

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\*Please stand, if you are able.  
 Electronic aid for the hearing impaired is available from the usher.  
 Music printed and recorded for congregational use only under CCLI # 11373529



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