

# First Presbyterian Church

Service for the Lord's Day

3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent

December 17, 2017

10:00 a.m.

## ASSEMBLE IN GOD'S NAME

Gathering Music: Hymn 88, v. 5

**O come, thou Key of David come, and open wide our heavenly home;  
make safe the way that leads on high, and close the path to misery.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.**

Concerns of the Church

Prelude "Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah" arr. DeJong

Call to Worship

The Promised One of God brings good news to the oppressed  
and binds up the brokenhearted.

**We are witnesses to the light of Christ!**

The Promised One of God proclaims liberty to captives  
and release to prisoners.

**We are witnesses to the light of Christ!**

The Promised One of God comforts all who mourn  
and gives a mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.

**We are witnesses to the light of Christ!**

\* Hymn 107 "Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn"  
*Ushers will collect prayer request cards from the center aisle.*

\* Call to Confession

\* Prayer of Confession

**Merciful God, you love justice;**

**why, then, do we persist in wrongdoing and every form of evil?**

**You have given us the gift of your Spirit;**

**why, then, do we quench the Spirit among us?**

**You have given us the words of the prophets and the Word himself;**

**why do we despise and ignore what we have heard from you?**

**You have sent the light into the world;**

**Why, then, have we loved darkness rather than light?**

**Forgive us and restore us.**

**Tend us as your garden until righteousness and praise spring up,  
for the sake of Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray.**

\* Silent Confession

\* Assurance of Pardon and Passing of the Peace

Lighting the Advent Wreath

**The candle of joy reminds us to sing,**

**For God is at work to do a new thing.**

**The proud will be humbled; the lowly will rise.**

**God's kingdom is one of delight and surprise.**

\* Reception of New Members

## PROCLAIM GOD'S WORD

Prayer for Illumination

First Lesson: Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11 (OT, p. 691)

Second Lesson: John 1:6-8, 19-28 (NT, p. 91)

A Time with Children

Anthem

"Advent Tidings"

arr. Michael Akers

Psalter: Psalm 126 (OT, p. 572)

Sermon: "The Laughter of the Redeemed"

Rev. Carter

*Sermon Series: Have Yourself a Spiritual Little Advent*

## RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

\* Hymn 113

"Angels We Have Heard on High"

\* Affirmation of Faith: Apostles' Creed (Hymnal, p. 35)

Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer

Offering

Offertory

"Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming"

arr. Kosche

\* Response 609

***Praise God, from whom all blessings flow.  
Praise God, all creatures high and low, Alleluia, alleluia!  
Praise God, in Jesus fully known: Creator, Word, and Spirit one  
Alleluia, Alleluia! Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!***

\* Prayer of Dedication

**GO IN GOD'S NAME**

\* Hymn 145 "What Child is This"

\* Charge and Benediction

\* Instrumental Response "Gloria"

\* Postlude "Tell Out My Soul" arr. Manz

*You are invited to listen to the Postlude.  
If you are leaving before it is finished, please do so quietly.*

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\* All who are able shall stand.

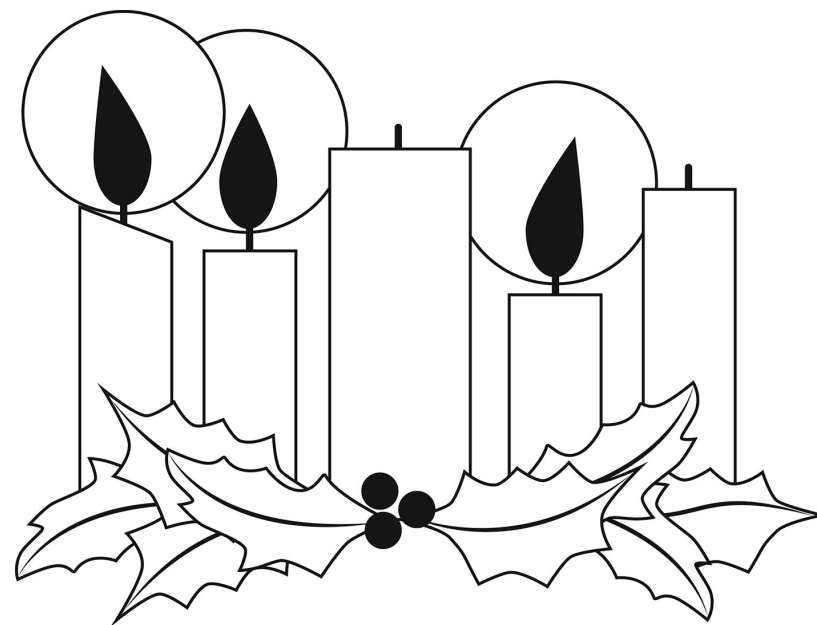
***The flowers*** have been given by Gerry Conklin to the Glory of God and in loving memory of her son, Dale.

**PARTICIPANTS IN TODAY'S SERVICE**

Pastor	Rev. William G. Carter
Director of Music	Frank Jones
Organist	Kay Ten Eyck
Director of Bell Choir	Richard Cochrane
Liturgist/Coordinator Children/Youth	Jana Schillinger
Ushers	Jim McLaughlin, Betty Keen
Welcomer	Janet Stansbury
Advent Candle	Wescott Family

*We are a Stephen Ministry congregation.*

*We are grateful for the many ways that people support our church's ministry to the community and world. If you wish to contribute by cell phone, **scan here.***



THIRD SUNDAY  
OF  
*Advent*

**First Presbyterian Church  
300 School Street  
Clarks Summit, PA 18411  
570/586-6306 [www.fpccs.org](http://www.fpccs.org)**

### ***Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11***

The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to provide for those who mourn in Zion—to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, to display his glory.

They shall build up the ancient ruins, they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations. For I the LORD love justice, I hate robbery and wrongdoing; I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. Their descendants shall be known among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples; all who see them shall acknowledge that they are a people whom the LORD has blessed. I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.

### ***John 1:6-8, 19-28***

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe

through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, "I am not the Messiah." And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No." Then they said to him, "Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" He said, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,'" as the prophet Isaiah said. Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They asked him, "Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?" John answered them, "I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal." This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

### ***Psalms 126***

When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who dream.

Then our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy; then it was said among the nations, "The LORD has done great things for them."

The LORD has done great things for us, and we rejoiced. Restore our fortunes, O LORD, like the watercourses in the Negeb. May those who sow in tears reap with shouts of joy.

Those who go out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing, shall come home with shouts of joy, carrying their sheaves.