



SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY

PEWEE VALLEY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT – DECEMBER 24, 2017

10:30 A.M.

Please worship silently through the lighting of the Advent Candle.

Bold text is read or sung by the congregation.

**Please stand if able.*

PVPC welcomes children and encourages them to participate in our entire worship service. Pick up a children's worship tote bag at the sanctuary door.

The origin of bells in Christian worship can be traced to the ram's horns and silver trumpets used in the Old Testament to announce the beginning of a feast. In churches which are fortunate enough to have them, bells are rung just before the liturgy to call the people together.

An "Introit" is the name given to a piece of music which is sung at the beginning of the service, a tradition which began in the 16th century.

This introit is based on scripture from the Old Testament book of Habakkuk 2:20, and was written by Dr. George F. Root, author of more than 130 hymns.

GATHERING IN GOD'S NAME

A TIME OF SILENT REFLECTION

This week we place the star on the top of our tree. Sometimes an angel is placed at the top, for an angel appeared to Jesus' mother, Mary, many months before Jesus was born. And angels also sang the song of glory to God on the hillside of Bethlehem.

Whether a star, an angel, or even a Chrismon finds its way to the top of our tree, we are reminded to reach up and out, just like a tree, to be a living witness of good news we learn from Jesus, God's holy child. How might your life be "a living witness" of the good news?

THE RINGING OF THE BELL

INTROIT (ALL)

The Lord is in his holy tem - ple, the Lord is in his holy
tem-ple; let all the earth keep si - lence, let all the earth keep
silence be - fore him, keep silence, keep silence be - fore him.

PREPARING OUR HEARTS

The Advent wreath is perhaps the most common Advent symbol, and is also one of the most popular traditions in private homes. Each part of the Advent wreath symbolizes our spiritual preparation for the birth of Jesus Christ, on Christmas day. The circular shape of the Advent wreath symbolizes eternal life; the purple candles symbolize our repentance and waiting; the pink Advent candle symbolizes our joy that Christmas is coming soon. The white "Christ" candle, lit on Christmas Eve, symbolizes the coming of Jesus as "The Light of the World."

This hymn was written to provide a new Advent text for an existing carol tune, here named for the city in eastern France where it originated. The author has imaginatively expressed the cosmic effects of Christ's coming by addressing each stanza to a part of creation.

In the presence of a holy God, we become aware of the ways we fall short of God's best hopes for us, and the ways we have hurt others. We turn to God in prayer, asking for forgiveness.

We express gratitude that through God's grace and Christ's giving of himself on the cross we are forgiven and restored to God and one another.

We sing in thanksgiving for the gifts of forgiveness and new life.

The Passing of the Peace is one of the most ancient responses in worship. Having received Christ's peace, we pass it on.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE Lamont Coverstone and Tom Guilford
Today we light the fourth Advent candle, the angels' candle. This candle is offered in honor of the angels who told the good news of the shepherds, "Glory to God in the highest and on earth, peace and goodwill toward all."

The angels sang with joy so that all who could hear were filled with joy. In honor of all the angels who continue to proclaim the good news of joy, we light this candle. (*Light Candle*) Let us pray together using the prayer in our bulletin ...

Dear God, you surround us with your angel of love so that we are able to live a life filled with joy. Thank you for these angels, and help us to become angels of love for others. Amen.

***OPENING HYMN NO. 12**

"People, Look East"

BESANCON

CALL TO PRAYER

Ashia Stoess

Now is the time to wake from sleep.

Salvation is near. Let us pray together for what is coming:

Come, Christ Jesus, be our guest, and may our lives by you be blest. Come God-with-us, and free us from the false claims of the empires of this world. We are lonely for you and your peace. Come, Emmanuel, and dwell with us, make us your people indeed, the people through whom you bring love and justice to the world. Come, Christ, and reign; claim your rightful place in our hearts and in the midst of our community. Plant the seeds of hope within us that we, too, may establish the Kingdom of God among us. Hear our silent prayers of return ...

(a time of silence for personal confession)

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Every valley is lifted up; every mountain, made low.

Now the glory of the Lord is revealed, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.

In the name of Jesus Christ, we are remembered and have returned!

Thanks be to God.

***CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE, HYMN NO. 1 (First Stanza)**

Come, thou long-expected Jesus,
Born to set Thy people free;
From our fears and sins release us;
Let us find our rest in Thee.

***PASSING OF THE PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you.
And also with you.

HEARING GOD'S WORD

*We invite children to come to
the front at this time.*

TIME WITH THE YOUNGER DISCIPLES

Rev. Joel Weible

MUSICAL OFFERING

The Chancel Choir

“Behold a Star from Jacob Shining”

F. MENDELSSOHN

SCRIPTURE LESSON Luke 2:8-11

(Page 58, NT, Pew Bible)

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

SERMON

JESUS: MESSIAH

Reverend Joel Weible

*This African
American spiritual, cast in a
call-and-response style,
provides a reminder that the
good news of the Incarnation
should lead Christians not only
to awe and adoration but also
to living and acting in ways
that make God's purposes
known to others.*

*In 1983 the two largest
Presbyterian churches in the
United States reunited. The
“Brief Statement of Faith” was
commissioned and accepted
for inclusion in the “Book of
Confessions.” It celebrates the
rediscovery that for all our
diversity, we are bound
together by a common faith
and a common task.*

*We bring to God our joys and
concerns, praying for the
world, the church and those
close to us.*

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

*PROCLAMATION HYMN NO. 50

“Rise Up, Shepherd, and Follow”

AFRICAN AMERICAN SPIRITUAL

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

FROM A BRIEF STATEMENT OF FAITH

In a broken and fearful world, God's Spirit gives us courage to pray without ceasing, to witness among all peoples to Christ as Lord and Savior, to unmask idolatries in church and culture, to hear the voices of peoples long silenced, and to work with others for justice, freedom and peace.

In gratitude to God and empowered by the Spirit, we strive to serve Christ in our daily tasks and to live holy and faithful lives, even as we watch for God's new heaven and earth, saying: “Come Lord Jesus!”

TIME OF GIVING THANKS

CELEBRATIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

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.

The English text of this 13th- or 14th century Polish carol does not try to tell a story but to offer verbal snapshots of well-known Nativity narrative of Luke 2:6-20.

Doxology literally means "words of glory." Doxologies have long been used by Jews and Christians to praise God. Here we honor and thank God "from whom all blessings flow."

This unusual dialogue hymn alternates between the voice of a traveler and that of a watchman, setting up an exchange that creates parallels between the coming of dawn and the birth of Christ.

The **Hallelujah Chorus**, from Handel's *Messiah*, is one of the most well-known musical pieces from the baroque period. To this day it is performed regularly all around the world, is the subject of study in schools and universities, and features frequently in movies, television programs and commercials. Our Chancel Choir offers this piece during the Christmas and Easter services.

PRESENTATION OF GIFTS, TITHES, AND OFFERINGS

OFFERTORY "Infant Holy, Infant Lowly"

JAMES SOUTHBRIDGE

*DOXOLOGY

Praise God, from whom all bless-ings flow; Praise *Him, all crea- tures
here be - low; Praise *Him a - bove, ye heaven - ly host;
Praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost. A - men.

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

We give you thanks and praise, O God, that you have built us up in faith and bound us together in love. By your grace, may all that we do show the glory of your name and serve the good of your people, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

*CLOSING HYMN NO. 20

"Watchman, Tell Us of the Night"

ABERYSTWYTH

*CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

Reverend Joel Weible

*BENEDICTION RESPONSE

"The Hallelujah Chorus"

The Chancel Choir

G.F. HANDEL

THE RINGING OF THE BELL

PLEASE NOTE: Food and drinks are not allowed in the Sanctuary

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT...

All elements of recent services may be heard on our website; transcripts, videos, and audio podcasts can also be found:

PeweeValleyPresbyterian.org

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