

**December 18, 2016**  
**Ten o'clock**  
**Fourth Sunday of Advent**

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**GATHERING**

REFLECTION

*Did I offer peace today? Did I bring a smile to someone's face? Did I say words of healing? Did I let go of my anger and resentment? Did I forgive? Did I love? These are the real questions. I must trust that the little bit of love that I sow now will bear many fruits, here in this world and the life to come.*

*Henri Nouwen (1932-1996)*

PRELUDE

“Overture” from MESSIAH

G.F. Handel (1685-1759)

CALL TO WORSHIP

The sudden sense of a larger mystery.

**A flood of unexpected tears.**

Some chorus faintly heard.

**A cherished memory brought to mind.**

A fragment of a dream.

**The tail end of a story.**

An awesome peace in the midst of a pressing chaos.

**A holy reverence on a starlit, moon-bright night.**

An unexplained act of kindness.

**An unexpected letter, a surprise visit.**

In many and varied ways

**God nudges, tugs, calls and beckons us.**

We turn and discover God already waiting for us.

**Our longing met by God's yearning.**

**Rejoice and sing!**

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

*Lighting the fourth Candle of Advent are members of Dads With A Mission, Inc.*

\*HYMN NO. 106

*“Prepare the Way, O Zion”*

Bereden Väg För Herran

*Lighting the candles today is Acolyte Daniel Barnes*

CONFESSION

CORPORATE CONFESSION

**Our God of Advent, as we retell the Christmas story and wait for the celebration of Christmas Day, we marvel again that you would send the babe to live here on this planet. For we learn early in life that it is painful to live here, on this planet of uncertainty; it can be hard here, Lord - and lonely, and meaningless; for our spirits grow cold; our hearts lose hope too easily; and it is painful, sometimes, even to love too much, or to care too deeply. So we wait, anxiously, for the birth of the Promised One who turns the darkness to light, removes the dreaded sting of death and in his birth brings eternal hope.**

**Our God, we confess now, as your church, that we often have been the cause of pain. And so, in the words of our Jewish brothers and sisters, we pray: ‘For the sins which we have committed against thee under stress or through choice, in stubbornness or in error, in the evil meditations of the heart, by word of mouth, by abuse of power, by exploiting and dealing treacherously with our neighbor, bear with us, pardon us, forgive us!’**

#### PERSONAL CONFESSION

For this we pray in the name of the Prince of Peace, the Savior born unto us in the city of David, even Jesus Christ, the Lord.

**Amen.**

#### ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

... Friends, believe the good news.

**In Jesus Christ we are forgiven.**

\*RESPONSE OF PRAISE NO. 86     *“The People Who Walked in Darkness”*

**The people who walked in darkness awaken to see a great light.**

**The people who dwelt in the land of the shadow rise to a star shining bright.**

**His name is Wonderful Counselor, Almighty God, Father forever, Prince of Peace.**

**Wonderful Counselor, Almighty God, Father forever, Prince of Peace.**

### PROCLAIMING AND RESPONDING

ANTHEM

*“Procession Carol (Sussex Carol)”*  
*Pilgrim Choir & Chapel Bells*

arr. James R. Green

TIME WITH THE CHILDREN

**Please note:** Children through 7th grade may leave the sanctuary for Sunday School following the Time with the Children. Please exit through the doors on either side of the Choir loft.

PARISH LIFE

**Members, friends and visitors,** please sign the Friendship Pad in each pew and pass it to the person next to you. The last person will pass the pad back to the first person, who will then please place the sheet in the offering plate. **Worshippers are invited to use the cards in the pew racks for prayer requests so we may share one another’s joys and concerns.** *The ushers will collect the cards during the hymn following the sermon and they will be offered during the Prayers of the People.*

MINUTE FOR MINISTRY

*Card Writing*

Debbie Reynolds

SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 9:2, 6-7  
Philippians 4:4-7

Page 600, OT  
Page 187, NT

SERMON

*“Prince of Peace”*

Dr. Sommers

\*HYMN NO. 115

*“Away in a Manger”*

Mueller

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.**

OFFERING

OFFERTORY

*"For unto us a Child is born"* From MESSIAH  
Chancel Choir

G.F. Handel (1685-1759)

\*RESPONSE OF THANKSGIVING NO. 119 *"Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"*

**Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the sun of righteousness!  
Light and life to all he brings, risen with healing in his wings.  
Mild he lays his glory by, born that we no more may die,  
born to raise us from the earth, born to give us second birth.  
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king!"**

\*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

**GOING FORTH**

\*HYMN NO. 121

*"O Little Town of Bethlehem"*

St Louis

\*BENEDICTION

\*CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE NO. 92 *"While We Are Waiting, Come"*

**Come, Savior, quickly come; come, Savior, quickly come.  
Jesus, our Lord, Emmanuel, while we are waiting, come.**

\*THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you.

**And also with you.**

*Please exchange greetings of welcome and peace with your neighbor.*

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***\*Please rise in body or in spirit***

†The red rose today celebrates the birth of...

...Jamison Chiong Garland on December 11, 2016 to Jackson and Regine Garland. He is the grandson of Neil and Sally Garland.

†Your prayers of intercession are requested for those members and friends known to be *currently or recently* hospitalized or who continue to need our prayers and support:

... Mary Ann Bainbridge, Harry Coppens, Bill Hayden, Edith Jipp, Barbara Piggery, Louise Ritscher, Laura Winter and Helena Wispelwey. The church office will be happy to verify their home addresses for you should you wish to send them words of encouragement or get well wishes.



THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
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