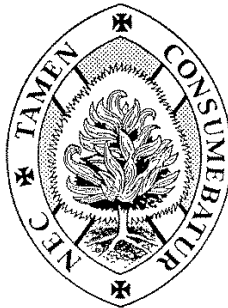


# The Fourth Sunday in Advent

December 20, 2015



COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

*A Congregation of the Presbyterian Church in America*

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*Upon entering the sanctuary please maintain silence for  
the sake of the congregation's preparation for worship, and please make  
sure all electronic devices are turned off or set to silent mode.*

## **-DRAWING NEAR TO GOD-**

### **Welcome and Silent Prayer**

O God, you have prepared for those who love you  
joys beyond understanding.  
Pour into our hearts this day such love for you that,  
loving you above all things,  
we may obtain your promises,  
which exceed our every hope and desire;  
through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

### **\*Call to Worship**

Psalm 98.1-3

### **\*Prayer of Adoration**

## \*Song of Christmas

### O Holy Night!

words John S. Dwight,; music Adolphe Adam



1. O ho-ly night! the stars are bright-ly shin - ing; It is the  
2. Led by the light of faith se - rene - ly beam - ing, With glow - ing  
3. Tru - ly He taught us to love one an - oth - er; His law is  
night of the dear Sav - ior's birth. Long lay the world in sin and er - ror  
hearts by His cra - dle we stand. So led by light of a star sweet - ly  
love and His gos - pel is peace; Chains shall He break, for the slave is our  
pin - ing, Till He ap - peared and the soul felt its worth. A thrill of hope the  
gleam - ing, Here came the wise men from O - ri - ent land. The King of kings lay  
broth - er, And in His name all op - pres - sion shall cease. Sweet hymns of joy in  
wea - ry world re - joice - es, For yon - der breaks a new and glo - rious morn!  
thus in low - ly man - ger, In all our tri - als, born to be our Friend.  
grate - ful chor - us raise we, Let all with - in us praise His ho - ly name,  
Fall on your knees! O hear the an - gel voice - es! O  
He knows our need to our weak - ness is no strang - er. Be -  
Christ is the Lord! O praise His name for - ev - er! His  
night di - vine, O night when Christ was born! O  
hold your King, be - fore Him low - ly bend! Be -  
pow'r and glo - ry ev - er - more pro - claim! His  
night, di - vine, O night, O night di - vine!  
hold your King, be - fore Him low - ly bend.  
pow'r and glo - ry ev - er - more pro - claim!

## **-HAVING OUR HEARTS CLEANSED-**

### **Confession of Sin**

Heavenly Father,

we long to recapture the wonder of Christmas.

You showed the world your splendor in the coming of your Son,  
yet our sins often leave us cold.

Instead of peaceful, our hearts are often anxious;

instead of joyful, irritable;

instead of filled with surprise, bland;

instead of anticipatory, fearful.

In our sophistication we have become impoverished.

Have mercy on us, O God.

Renew us by your grace and mercy.

Deliver us from the things that dim the brightness of your grace within us  
and prevent us from taking our deepest delight in you.

We ask this in the name of Jesus, God with us. Amen.

*Silently Add Your Own Confession of Sin*

### **Assurance of Pardon**

Galatians 4.4-5

### **Lighting of the Fourth Advent Candle:**

Old Testament Reading

Micah 5.2-5a

New Testament Reading

Luke 2.8-15

### **\*Song of Advent**

*Hymn No. 218*

*ANGELS, FROM THE REALMS OF GLORY*

### **Prayer for the Church and the World**

## **-ATTENDING TO THE WORD-**

**Scripture Lesson**

John 1.1-18

**Sermon**

“The Word Become Flesh”

Rev. Ron Gonzales

**\*Song of Response**

*Hymn No. 230*

*THOU WHO WAST RICH BEYOND ALL SPLENDOR*

**Worship of God with Tithes and Offering**

*\*DOXOLOGY*

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow;*

*Praise Him, all creatures here below;*

*Praise Him above, ye heav’nly host;*

*Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

words Thomas Ken, 1709; music Genevan Psalter, 1551; Public Domain

## **Confession of Faith**

We believe in one God, the Father Almighty,  
Maker of heaven and earth,  
of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God,  
begotten of his Father before all worlds,  
God of God, Light of Light,  
very God of very God,  
begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father;  
by whom all things were made;  
who for us and for our salvation  
came down from heaven,  
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary,  
and was made man;  
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate;  
he suffered and was buried;  
and the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures,  
and ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father;  
and he shall come again, with glory, to judge both the living and the dead;  
whose kingdom shall have no end.

And we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son;  
who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified;  
who spoke by the prophets;  
and we believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church;  
we acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins;  
and we look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

—The Nicene Creed

## **-OBSERVING THE SACRAMENT-**

### **The Lord's Supper**

We celebrate the Lord's Supper by coming forward (generally from the back of the sanctuary to the front, though you may commune at any time) and partaking of the bread and the cup. Wine is served in the inner ring of each tray; grape juice in the outer ring. We warmly invite to the Table all baptized Christians, who are living under the authority of Christ and his Church. By eating the bread and drinking of the cup, you are admitting that you are a sinner, without hope except in the sovereign mercy of God, and that you are trusting in Christ alone for salvation.

### **\*Song of Thanksgiving**

*Hymn No. 224*

*GO, TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN*

## **-GOING FORTH TO SERVE-**

### **\*Benediction**

Numbers 6.24-26

### **Postlude and Silent Prayer**

Almighty God, you have poured upon us  
the new light of your incarnate Word:  
Grant that this light, kindled in our hearts,  
may shine forth in our lives,  
through Jesus Christ, our Lord,  
who lives and reigns with you  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and forever. Amen.

\*Please stand if able

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### **Our Nursery Helpers**

Worship

*Today: Anna Vander Griend & Abigail Carpenter*

*Next Week: Nicole Miller*

## **Prayer Concerns**

*Chris & Mary Granberry* (White Swan), along with the Sacred Road team, are busy attending to the physical and spiritual needs on the reservation. Pray for strength and wisdom as they do, and that God opens several hearts to the message of the Christ-child, granting salvation to many.

## **Announcements**

*Christmas Caroling & Hayride:* Dress warm and join us today, at 4:00 PM, at the church. We will carol from a horse-drawn covered wagon, then return to the church for drinks and Christmas treats. The church will provide the beverages. Please bring a Christmas treat to share.

*Christmas Eve Service:* Please join us at 5:30 PM, Christmas Eve, as we gather with Central Christian and Journey Church for a Service of Lessons and Carols. Please invite your family and friends to this most special of all evenings.

*Sunday School* is on break in December. It will resume in January.

*Visitors:* Welcome to Covenant! We are glad you are here and invite you to join us downstairs, following the service, for refreshments and fellowship.

## **Weekly Gatherings**

*The Leinweber's Home Fellowship Group* meets at their home on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays of the month, from 4:00 to 6:00 PM. Dinner is provided, children are welcome, and the group is a lot of fun!

*The Men's Group* is on break for the holidays. It will resume its study of Genesis on January 7, at 6:00 AM, at Pastor Ron's office. All men are invited.

### **Explanation of Cover Symbol**

Since the time of the Reformation, the burning bush has been a symbol of the Church. The Latin words are taken from Exodus 3.2 and read "...and yet it was not consumed." In one of his letters, Samuel Rutherford reminded his correspondent, "The bush has been burning these five thousand years, and no man yet saw the ashes of that fire."