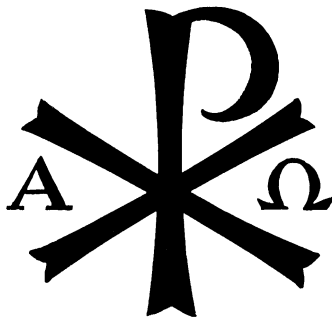


# The Fourth Sunday in Advent

December 24, 2017



COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

*A Congregation of the Presbyterian Church in America*

Dr. Ron Gonzales, Minister

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*Upon entering the sanctuary, please be sensitive  
to 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**

Heavenly Father, Giver and Sustainer of all life:

Help us, as we draw near, to love and adore and worship you  
with all that we are and all that we have to offer,  
for you alone are worthy. Amen.

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

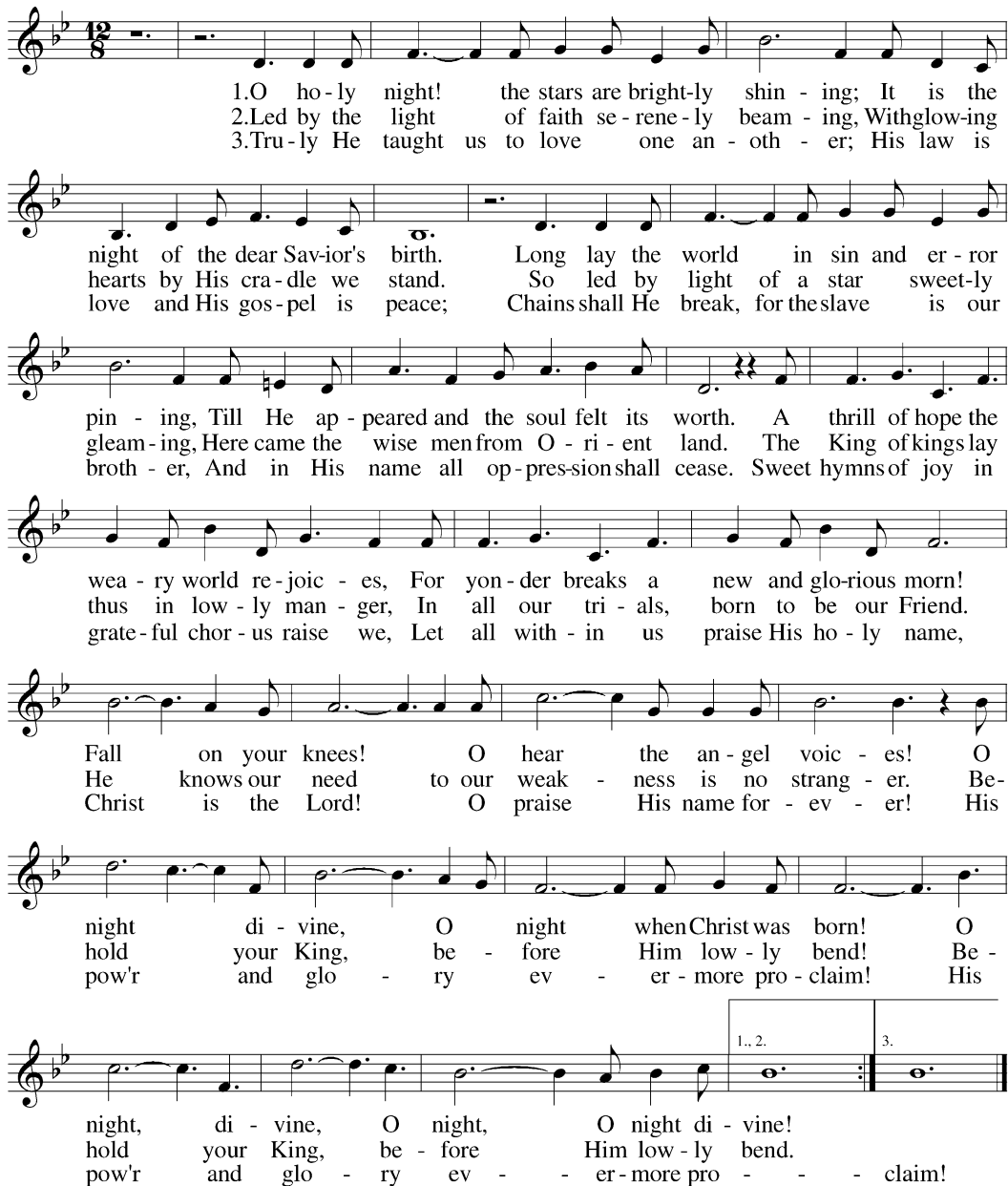
Luke 1.68-79

### **Prayer of Adoration**

# \*Song of Advent

## 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-ning, 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-joic-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 voic-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**

O God, our great shepherd,  
you tenderly gather us as lambs,  
carrying us with your all-embracing love.  
Yet, like sheep, we wander from you:  
following our own ways, ignoring your voice,  
distrusting your provisions.  
Forgive our stubborn rebellion, our hardened hearts, our lack of trust.  
Refresh us once again by your quiet waters of mercy  
and restore our souls by your redeeming love.  
Guide our paths, that we might follow you more closely.  
This we ask, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

*Silently Add Your Own Confession of Sin*

### **Assurance of Pardon**

Isaiah 53.6

## **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 1.1-5

**Sermon**

“Life and Light”  
Rev. Ron Gonzales

**\*Song of Response**

*Hymn No. 181*

*WE COME, O CHRIST, TO YOU*

**Worship of God with Tithes and Offerings**

*\*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 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. If this does not describe you, we are glad you are here and commend to you the following prayers for your use during this time.

#### *A Prayer for those Searching for the Truth*

Jesus, you claim to be the way, the truth, and the life. Grant that I might be undaunted by the cost of following you as I consider the reasons for doing so. Guide me, teach me, and open to me the reality of who you are. Give me an understanding of you that is coherent, convincing, and leads to the life you promise. Amen.

#### *A Prayer of Belief*

Lord Jesus, I admit that I am weaker and more sinful than I ever believed, but through you I am more loved and accepted than I ever dared hope. I thank you for paying my debt, bearing my punishment on the cross, and offering forgiveness and new life. I turn from my sins and receive you as Savior and Lord. Amen.

#### *A Prayer for those Struggling with Sin*

Lord Jesus, grant that I may see in you the fulfillment of all my need and may turn from every false pleasure to feed on you, the true and living bread. Enable me to lay aside the sin that clings so closely, and run with perseverance the race set before me, looking to you, the author and perfecter of my faith. Amen.

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

*Hymn No. 224*

*GO, TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN*

**-GOING FORTH TO SERVE-**

**\*Benediction**

2 Corinthians 13.14

**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:* Abigail and Annie Carpenter

*Next Week:* Nicole Miller

### **Gatherings**

*Kids' Quest* is a catechism class for children, ages 5 through elementary grades, taught by Pastor Ron. It meets on the second and fourth Thursdays of each month (September through May), from 3:30 to 4:45 PM, at the church.

*The Leinweber Home Fellowship Group* is on break until March or April.

*The Martin Home Fellowship Group* is on break until January.

*The Men's Group* is on break until January 10, when it will resume its study of Ecclesiastes.

*Prayer Meeting:* We meet the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month, at 7:00 PM in the sanctuary, to pray for one another, the kingdom, and our world. Please join us.

## **Sermon Notes: "Life and Light" (John 1.1-5)**

1. Physical, Spiritual, and Eternal Life

2. The Light of Men

3. Light and Darkness

## Prayer Concerns

*Andrew Allen:* Pray for Andrew's battle with cancer and for his time with Amy and Katherine.

*Vickie Myers:* Pray for Vickie as she continues her recovery from surgery; that her strength returns and that she knows God's daily presence.

*Oaks Parrish:* Pray for Rev. Bryan Buck, our church-planter in Portland; that God strengthens him and blesses the ministry of the Word, as he gives himself to the city and the church he is planting.

*Bret Reller* has been redeployed to the Middle East and will be there for six months. Pray for safety for him and his team, and for the success of their mission.

*Shawn & Jamie Riley* (Chester, CA): Pray for the Rileys as they minister to students and congregation at St Andrews Almanor, as well as for their outreach to Chester.

*Rev. Dan York*, the Assistant Pastor of Resurrection Presbyterian Church in Puyallup, will be preaching and leading the service next Sunday. Pray for his ministry here and for the congregation's worship.

## Announcements

*Birthdays & Anniversaries this Week:*

December 27	C.J. Early
December 28	Eric and Karen Carpenter
December 28	Steve and Eileen Davis

*Christmas Eve Service:* Please join us this evening, at 5:00 PM, as we gather with Central Christian and Crazy Love for a Service of Lessons and Carols.

*Congregational Meeting:* As you may have heard, Central Christian would like to give the church to Covenant and Crazy Love. We will have a congregational meeting after worship, January 7, to discuss what this means, to answer questions, and to pray.

*Pastor Ron* will be on vacation until January 3. Should you need to reach him, he will be at home. And as always, if you have an immediate need, the elders welcome your call.

### Explanation of Cover Symbol

The Chi Rho symbol is one of the most ancient Christian symbols. XP, the first two letters of the Greek "Christ," is an abbreviation of the name of the Lord. This symbol is often, as here, accompanied with other symbols, in this case "Alpha" and "Omega," the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. The symbol originates from Revelation 22.13: "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End" (cf. Revelation 1.8, 17; 21.6). This particular symbol dates from the first few centuries of the Christian era and is often found on tombs.