

SERVICE OF THE LORD'S DAY

NORTHMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

DECEMBER 24, 2017

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

THE WORLD IS ABOUT TO TURN

Love



GATHERING AROUND THE WORD

WELCOME

As the welcome pads are passed down your aisle, please help us to celebrate your worshipping with us today by signing the register.

A Thought as You Prepare for Worship

God has created us so we do small things with great love. I believe in that great love that comes, or should come, from our hearts and should start at home: with my family, my neighbors across the street, those right next door. And this love should then reach everyone.

— Mother Teresa

On the fourth Sunday in Advent, having already visited themes of Hope, Peace and Joy, we are invited to acknowledge that Love "came down at Christmas."

PRELUDE Two Settings of *Veni Emmanuel* R. Bonighton - P. Manz

INTROIT *Come O Prince of Peace*

*CALL TO WORSHIP AND LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES
Friends, we come to this circular wreath as a symbolic reminder that God's love has no beginning or end.

When you see an asterisk () you are invited to stand in body or in Spirit as you feel led and are able.*

Please join in speaking or singing all parts in **bold italics**.

Today's version of the Lord's Prayer can be found in the Purple hymnal on page 35 and uses "debts" and "debtors."

Today's Acknowledgement of Our Need for Grace and Assurance of Forgiveness were written by Rev. Dr. Moira Laidlaw, a retired pastor of the Uniting Churches of Australia.

When we talk about Christmas, we talk about a love song of God, kneeling down like a mother to her child, saying, "Oh, how I love you" to each and every one of us.

Today we light the candles of hope, peace and joy as the touchstones of Christian faith. From those lights we also light the candle of love, which in one word tells the Christian story. (Candles are lighted.)

We are loved. God is love. And Christmas is God's love story for us all. Thanks be to God! Amen.

*HYMN *People, Look East* Purple, No. 105

*OPENING PRAYER AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

*ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF OUR NEED FOR GOD'S GRACE

We give thanks, O God, that you are unchanging, that your concern for justice and righteousness was so strong that you came in human form to share that concern with us in person. We confess that all too often we hesitate to speak or act when we see people being treated unjustly. Forgive us, O God, for the times when we have been happy to hear the gospel without truly living it. Forgive us for uncaring attitudes when we base our opinion of another person's worth on what they own, or how they look; on what they say, or how they live, rather than accepting them for who they are—people made in your image. Forgive us for placing our hope in other than the Christ-child, born in a poor stable. Our hope lies in the promise of your mercy and grace, O God, extending to those who fear you from generation to generation. Heal, restore and bless us, we pray. Amen.

*ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

May the God of peace cleanse you through and through. The promise is that our whole being—spirit, soul and body—has been created new in Christ.

We rejoice and give thanks as we receive grace and healing in Christ's name. Amen.

*RESPONSE *O Come, O Come Emmanuel* Purple, No. 88, Verse 6

*SHARING THE PEACE

The Peace of Christ be with you. ***And also with you.***

PROCLAIMING THE WORD

A TIME WITH THE CHILDREN

HYMN OF PREPARATION/SUNG PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION
O Come, O Come Emmanuel Purple, No. 88, Verse 2

ANTHEM *Of the Father's Heart Begotten* Arr. D. Willcocks

SERMON READING John 1:1-18 NT, pp. 91-92
This is the word of the Lord. ***Thanks be to God.***

SERMON *Fully Engaged*

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

*SERMON HYMN Purple, No. 98
To a Maid Whose Name Was Mary

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

RESPONSE *O Come, O Come Emmanuel* Purple, No. 88, Verse 7

OUR WORSHIPFUL WORK TOGETHER

WORSHIP THROUGH GIVING

Call to Offering

Offertory *Soon and Very Soon* A. Crouch

*Response *Prepare the Way of the Lord* Purple, No. 95, 2x

*Prayer of Thanksgiving

Holy One, we bring back to you only what is already yours. Use it to your good for the benefit of your world and your Good News breaking into the world. Use us too, that we might be living beacons of your love not simply in this season of the year, but all our days. Amen.

Today in the One-Room Schoolhouse Sunday School, Northminster's children will be visiting a variety of Christmas activity stations.

Our Sermon hymn, originally published in 1983, is written in the same key, G minor, as Vivaldi's Magnificat.

BEARING AND FOLLOWING THE WORD INTO THE WORLD

*CLOSING HYMN

Purple, No. 100

*My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout
(The Canticle of the Turning)*

*CHARGE AND BLESSING

*CHORAL RESPONSE

Hallelujah!

POSTLUDE

Thou Didst Leave Thy Throne

F. Bock

*If you leave during the
Postlude, please show
respect for those who
remain in their seats to
listen. Thank you.*

TODAY'S WORSHIP LEADERSHIP

Preaching—Rev. Jessica C. Gregory

Liturgist—Rev. Michael D. Kirby

A Time with the Children—Pastor Michael

Musicians—Dr. Christopher Owen, Paul Vander Weele, the Chancel Choir

Choral Soloists—Johanna Moffitt, soprano; Jackie King, alto; Steve Uliana, tenor

Ushers—Tom Abendroth, Linda Beckstedt, Bruce Eddy, Scott Kellogg

Acolytes—Nate & Theo Janes-Smith

Advent Candle Lighters—Kurt Peters & Elizabeth Hopp-Peters, Emily Peters & Peter Tingley,
and Julia & Gus Tingley

Our Northminster Family at Work

PROGRAM AND WORSHIP STAFF

Rev. Michael D. Kirby—*Senior Pastor & Head of Staff*

Rev. Jessica C. Gregory—*Associate Pastor*

Rev. Ann Ohlrogge Johnson—*Parish Associate*

Dr. Christopher Owen—*Director of Music*

Paul Vander Weele—*Organist*

Kate Lee—*Director of Youth Music*

Margaret Parcell—*Director of Northminster Nursery School*

Meredith Rogowski—*Director of Children's Ministry*

Alex DeMarco—*Director of Youth Ministry*

Lisa Martinez—*Sunday Nursery Supervisor*

Carey Garrison—*Director of Mom's Morning Out*

Claudinetta Voltaire—*Mom's Morning Out Assistant/
Sunday Nursery Assistant*

ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPPORT STAFF

Sharyn Wilson Woods—*Parish Administrator*

Athina Sato—*Financial Secretary*

Davit Hovakimyan—*Facilities Manager*

Alex Villegas—*Sunday Sexton*

CONGREGATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Greg Boyer—*Clerk of Session*

Tom Buess—*Moderator of Deacons*

Members—*Ministers*

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