

# THE SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY

The First Presbyterian Church  
of Howard County

*The First Sunday of Advent*  
November 29, 2015

10:30 a.m.

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## GATHERING

*Let all enter the sanctuary in a spirit of prayer.  
Please remember to turn cell phones and pagers to silent for worship.  
Where you see an asterisk (\*) please stand if you are able.  
Words in **bold** are read by the congregation.  
Please fill out the red Friendship Pad in each pew.*

### **For Meditation before Worship** *(for personal use before worship)*

*The flickering light of Advent is a faint and vulnerable thing, but somehow  
refuses to allow the overwhelming darkness to snuff it out totally.*

*Ron Ferguson*

### Gathering Music

**Instrumental Preludes**

### Greeting

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.  
**And also with you.**

### Lighting the Advent Candles

The evening of the year is upon us.  
**We enter the darkness and wait for light's return.**

All of our waiting is waiting for God.  
**God of our hearts, we wait for you alone.**

We light the first candle today  
to remind us of God's light  
which has come to us all through Christ.  
**We open our hearts to this light,  
and ask for help to shine with the brilliance of love.**  
*(the candle is lighted)*

### Song for the Wreath 350

Keep Your Lamps Trimmed and Burning

*Keep Your Lamps*

## Prayer for Sunday Morning

May God be with you.

**And also with you.**

Urgent God,

breaking through the static to speak to our heart:

**Disarm our love of control**

**and shake the silent heavens**

**to reveal your dawning glory,**

**judging all in the light of love;**

**through Jesus Christ, the one who is to come.**

**Amen.**

\* **Hymn 83**

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

*Stuttgart*

## Call to Confession

### Prayer of Confession

Holy God, Maker of all:

**Have mercy on us.**

Jesus Christ, servant of the poor:

**Have mercy on us.**

Holy Spirit, Breath of life:

**Have mercy on us.**

**To you, O God, we lift our souls.**

**You know us through and through;**

**we confess our sin to you.**

**You seek justice and righteousness,  
but we pursue selfish agendas.**

**You promise us salvation,**

**but we trust in our own strength.**

**Forgive us, God of grace.**

**Show us your ways; teach us your path;**

**Lead us in justice and truth,**

**for the sake of your goodness in Jesus Christ,  
the one who is to come.**

*(We continue in silent, personal prayer...)*

## Assurance of Grace

... sisters and brothers, draw water from the well of grace.

**We belong to Christ;**

**we are anointed to serve.**

**Stand up and raise your heads,**

**for the reign of God is near!**

\* **Response of Praise** (*singing together*)

*God of Wonders*

God of wonders beyond our galaxy:  
You are holy, holy...  
The universe declares your majesty:  
You are holy, holy...  
God of heaven and earth,  
God of heaven and earth.

\* **Sharing the Peace**

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

*We greet each other with signs of peace and reconciliation.  
A touch on the shoulder, a nod, a bow – can be a substitute  
for handshakes to hinder the spread of the flu.*

\* **Response of Praise 654** (*singing together*)

*In the Lord I'll Be Ever Thankful*

In the Lord I'll be ever thankful;  
in the Lord I will rejoice!  
Look to God; do not be afraid.  
Lift up your voices; the Lord is near.  
Lift up your voices; the Lord is near.

**Words of Welcome**

*Please fill out the red Friendship Pad in each pew.  
Newcomers please leave us your address and phone number!  
Then, pass the folder the length of the pew and back.*

## THE WORD

**Prayer for Illumination**

**First Lesson:** Jeremiah 33:14-16

*Page 645; pew Bible*

The Word of God for the People of God.  
**Thanks be to God!**

**Second Lesson:** 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13

*Page 962; pew Bible*

The Word of God for the People of God.  
**Thanks be to God!**

**Children's Prayer and The Lord's Prayer**

*Afterwards, children ages 4-7 may go with Ms. Kathy Moore to Godly Play.  
Parents can pick up their children following worship in Rooms 110 & 113.*

*Older children, grades 2-5, may go with Ms. Virginia Callegary to  
The Worship Bridge. They will return to worship later in the service.*

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.

**Third Lesson:** Luke 21:25-36

*Page 856; pew Bible*

For the Word of God in scripture,  
For the Word of God among us,  
For the Word of God within us,

**Thanks be to God!**

**Sermon**

Unseasonal

*Sue Lowcock Harris*

*(after the sermon, we observe a time of silence and prayer)*

## RESPONDING

### \* **A Declaration for Advent**

Among the poor, among the proud,  
Among the persecuted, among the privileged,  
Christ is coming!

**Christ is coming to make all things new.**

In the private house, in the market place,  
In the wedding feast, in the judgment hall,  
Christ is coming!

**Christ is coming to make all things new.**

With a gentle touch, with an angry word,  
With a clear conscience, with burning love,  
Christ is coming!

**Christ is coming to make all things new.**

That peace may come, that hope may shine,  
That the powerful might stumble,  
that the humble might be raised,  
Christ is coming!

**Christ is coming to make all things new.**

Within us, without us, among us, before us,  
In this place, in every place, for this time, for all time,  
Christ is coming!

**Christ is coming to make all things new.**

### \* **Hymn 104**

O Lord, How Shall I Meet You

*Valet Will Ich Dir Geben*

### **Concerns and Remembrances**

### **Prayers of Gratitude and Concern**

Emmanuel, come.

**O come and save us.**

**Concluding Prayer** *(together)*

We are waiting, O God, for the day of peace.  
Give us the will to bring that day  
through our own simple goodness and hope.  
Fill us with patient desire  
that our work may be holy,  
and our holiness bright,  
through the Christ for whose coming we long,  
and the Spirit in whose presence we live.  
Amen.

**The Offering**

**Offertory Anthem**      E'en so Lord Jesus Quickly Come      *Paul Manz*

\* **Doxology 84, verse 4** *(singing together)*      *Creator of the Stars of Night*

To God the Father, God the Son,  
and God the Spirit, Three in One,  
praise, honor, might, and glory be  
from age to age eternally. Amen.

\* **Prayer of Thanksgiving and Dedication**

God fill the hungry with good things.  
**We are a living body, offering our lives to the Lord.**  
*(We stand quietly as the liturgist offers a prayer.)*

**SENDING**

**This Week at First Presbyterian Church**

\* **Hymn 378**      We Wait the Peaceful Kingdom      *Merle's Tune*

\* **Closing Responses**

The Light of Life is coming into the world.  
**We are Christ's people, and we cling to this light.**  
The Light of Life will fill the world with peace.  
**We will follow this light.**  
**We will carry this light.**  
**We will tend this light.**

\* **Benediction**

\* **Response 100**      *Canticle of the Turning*

My heart shall sing of the day you bring.  
Let the fires of your justice burn.  
Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near,  
and the world is about to turn.

\* **Postlude**



# WELCOME TO WORSHIP AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

*We are grateful for your presence and invite you to participate in the worship, education, mission and common life of First Church.*

## During Today's Worship

**Please turn all cell phones to "silent" when in the Sanctuary.**

**Large print bulletins (including hymns and scripture readings) and individual listening devices** are available from the ushers. Photography during worship is discouraged, and flash is not permitted. Please, no food or drink in the Sanctuary.

**If your infant or child needs care** or becomes too restless during the worship service, you may leave the Sanctuary and return as you wish. Child care for infants and children under four years old is available all morning. The nursery is in Room 159. We have a texting system to alert you if you are needed while in the worship service. The ushers will be glad to help you.

**Worship programs for children** include: *Godly Play* for younger children (age 4 - grade 1) during the 8:30 & 10:30 a.m. services; *The Worship Bridge* for older children (grades 2-5) at the 10:30 a.m. service.

**Worship folders and crayons for children** are at the ushers' table in The Commons. Please return the crayons as you leave. *White bulletins* for children ages three to six; *Gray bulletins* for children ages seven to twelve.

## If you are new to First Church

**Please sign our Ritual of Friendship**, the red pad in the pew.

**Communion** is served on the first Sunday of each month.

**Disabled persons entrance** is through the Main Entrance in the rear of the building.

**We invite you to stop by Coffee Hour** after the 10:30 a.m. worship service for conversation and fellowship in Lyle Buck Hall.

**We invite you to become a member** of First Church. Please speak with Morton or Sue or call the church office to set a time to meet.

## First Church Cares

**To notify pastoral staff** of personal concerns, illness, hospitalization; to pass along a prayer request; to request a Stephen Minister; or to arrange homebound Communion, contact Ruth Bell or Pastor Morton.

## The First Presbyterian Church of Howard County



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*Ministers: All members of the congregation*

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The Rev. Ruth Bell, Parish Visitor

[rbell@firstpreshc.org](mailto:rbell@firstpreshc.org)

The Rev. T. Webster Brenner, Parish Associate

The Rev. Stephen Mann, Parish Associate

We are an Earth Care Congregation ☩ We are a Stephen Ministry Church

*Inspirit Counseling Services* at First Presbyterian Church

Meredith Barger 410-433-8861 x104 | John Michalczyk 410-433-8861 x115