



Waiting for God in All the Wrong Places

ORDER OF WORSHIP

First Sunday of Advent

FAITH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

December 3, 2017

10:45 a.m.

WORDS OF WELCOME – Welcome to Faith Church; we are glad you are here.
Infant and childcare (through preschool) are provided all morning in the nursery, the second room on the right through the door by the pulpit. Children, through the age of 4, may proceed to the childcare room following the "Moment with Faith Kids" for the remainder of the service.
Worship Bags are available in the back pews of the sanctuary.

THE CHURCH GATHERS

Words of Welcome and Announcements

Rev. Christa Fuller Burns

Prelude Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence

arr. Mark Hayes
(b. 1953)

*Please stand if you are able.

(The congregation will read the words in bold.)

***Call to Worship**

Pat Nesbitt

One: It is in the watching, and in the waiting,

All: That we hear the promises made so long ago.

One: It is in the questions, and in the hoping,

All: That we give thanks every time we hear the glad news.

One: It is in the coming, and in the going,

All: That we welcome the One who is our Delight, our Joy.

***Hymn 83** Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

STUTT GART

Lighting the Advent Wreath

Adelaide Cooke, Robert Gardner
Marilyn Valentine, Randy Woodfield

One: The poet, Emily Dickinson, wrote: "Hope is the thing with feathers that perches in the soul." The psalmist declared: "I put my hope in You all day long." Hope is more than wishful thinking. Hope is the Spirit of God dwelling within us, reminding us we are never alone. Hope is our active commitment to be God's faithful people, whether we walk an easy path or face fiery trials. When we light the candle of Hope, we embrace God's presence among us, yesterday and today and always.

All: Whatever we face in life, we will put our hope in God.

Prayer of Confession

Pat Nesbitt

Patient God, we wait for you, and we admit that we often find it hard to wait. Sometimes, we let our rushed lives take over our waiting. Sometimes we decide that it is not the right place or the right time for you to appear. Sometimes we forget who we are, and we allow the world define us. Sometimes we worship expedience and superficial appearances. Forgive us and open our eyes to see you when you come to us. Amen.

Silence is observed.

Assurance of Pardon

Pat Nesbitt

Christ comes! In the word that forgives, Christ comes. At the end of the day, at the ultimate end, Christ Jesus lives and leads. God be praised!

1 While we are wait - ing, come;

while we are wait - ing, come.

Je - sus, our Lord, Em - man - u - el,

while we are wait - ing, come.

The musical score is written in 3/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It consists of four systems, each with a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment line (bass clef). The lyrics are: '1 While we are wait - ing, come; while we are wait - ing, come. Je - sus, our Lord, Em - man - u - el, while we are wait - ing, come.'

*The Peace of Christ

Pat Nesbitt

One: The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

All: **And also with you**

TO PROCLAIM AND EXPERIENCE GOD'S WORD

Moment with Faith Kids

Rev. Burns

Prayer for Illumination

Pat Nesbitt

Gracious God, keeper of the secrets of creation, visit us through the cry of need, the unforeseen stranger, and the unexpected guest, that we may be ready for the coming of Christ in the midst of life, at the end of life, and at the end of time. Amen.

Lesson: Daniel 3: 1, 8-30

Pat Nesbitt

One: This is the word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God. Amen.**

Sermon "Waiting for God in All the Wrong Places: Fiery Furnaces" Rev. Burns

***Hymn 87** Comfort, Comfort Now My People

GENEVAN

OFFERING

Offertory For You, O Lord, My Soul in Stillness Waits

Marty Haugen
(b. 1950)

For you, O Lord, my soul in stillness waits; truly my hope is in you.

O Lord of Light, our only hope of glory, your radiance shines in all who look to you; come, light the hearts of all in dark and shadow. O Spring of Joy, rain down upon our spirits; our thirsty hearts are yearning for your word; come, make us whole, be comfort to our hearts. O Root of Life, implant your seed within us, and in your advent, draw us all to you, our hope reborn in dying and in rising. O Key of Knowledge, guide us in our pilgrimage; we ever seek, yet unfulfilled remain; open to us the pathway of your peace. Come, let us bow before the God who made us; let every heart be opened to the Lord, for we are all the people of God's hand. Here we shall meet the Maker of the heavens, Creator of the mountains and the seas, Lord of the stars, and present to us now.

***Sung Response 75** We Give Thanks unto You

WE GIVE THANKS UNTO YOU

The musical score is written in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It consists of four systems of music. The first system is a single melodic line in treble clef with the lyrics: "1 We give thanks un - to you, O God of might,". The second system is a piano accompaniment with a treble clef line and a bass clef line, with lyrics: "for your love is nev - er end - ing;". The third system is another melodic line in treble clef with lyrics: "we give thanks un - to you, the God of gods,". The fourth system is a piano accompaniment with a treble clef line and a bass clef line, with lyrics: "for your love is nev - er end - ing.".

Offering Prayer

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Invitation

Rev. Burns

Thanksgiving Prayer

One: God is with us.

All: We are not alone.

One: Christ is present here.

All: The Spirit moves within us.

One: Let us give thanks to God,

All: In memory and in hope.

One: Blessings be to you, Creator God, Who in the beginning brought light and life to the world and who continues to bring it love and light everlasting.

All: Your song of wisdom echoes through the ages, your ancient promise still brings us hope.

One: Over the ages you have called people to embrace your hope and share your love. But even when they have closed their ears to the song, you did not stop singing, You sent prophets and messengers to your people, reminding them of the promised time of peace and justice that would surround the world.

All: They came in the midst of our despair and filled us with hope.

One: And then you came to a young woman named Mary and laid out the promise in a new way.

All: Promising her a son, who would be called Jesus. Promising her that in her son the world would be changed.

One: And now as we prepare for that child to be born, we echo the ancient cry:

All: O come, O come Emmanuel.

Sanctus

One: And we lift our voices, saying together:

All: O holy, holy, holy God, O God of time and space. All earth and sea and sky above bear witness to your Grace. Hosanna in the highest heaven, creation sings your praise. Blessed is the One who comes and bears Your name always.

Words of Institution

Rev. Burns

One: Yet even now, as we prepare to celebrate his birth, we remember the life that this baby will live.

All: We remember how he broke the bonds of human tradition; as he ate openly with the despised and the outcast of the world, he showed us all what the Banquet of Hope could be.

One: We remember one special meal that he ate with his closest friends.

All: Gathering them together in an upper room to share the story of liberation.

One: At the end of the meal, he took bread, blessed and broke it, then passed it to his friends, saying:

All: Take and eat. This bread is body of Life, broken by the world. Eat it in remembrance and in hope.

One: After that he took the cup, blessed it, and passed it to them saying:

All: This cup is the sign of the New Covenant. Whenever you drink it

remember me, for I shall not eat or drink again until the time of the heavenly banquet.

One: Remembering the birth of the child in the stable, we remember also his life, his death, and his resurrection.

All: We remember how he poured his love out on all he met and look forward to his return and the coming reign of peace, love, and justice.

All: Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again!

One: Pour out your Spirit on us gathered here. As we eat and drink, may we know your presence. As we eat and drink, may we be opened to the possibilities of your hope and power. May we be strengthened in our time of waiting for peace and justice so that we have the courage to make the Christmas promise a reality.

All: Amen.

One: The bread we break is the Bread of Life. The cup we share is the Cup of Promise. These are the gifts of God for the people of God.

All: Thanks be to God.

One: Come and eat – the table is ready.

Communion (by intinction)

Cubed bread is gluten-free. Please come to the front of the sanctuary via the center aisle, take the bread and dip it into the chalice, then partake and return to your seat by way of a side aisle.

Prayer

Rev. Burns

God of pregnant expectations, God of Christmas promise, God of child-like hope, we have eaten and drunk from your table. May your bread and wine fill us with hope in a world of despair. May we be bearers of hope as we wait for the day when the world will be changed. May this meal give a hunger for peace and justice in our community and around our world. Amen.

TO GO FORTH INTO THE WORLD TO SERVE IN CHRIST'S NAME

***Hymn 463** How Firm a Foundation

FOUNDATION

***Benediction**

Rev. Burns

One: God of the watching ones, the waiting ones, the slow and suffering ones, the angels in heaven, the child in the womb.

All: Give us your benediction, your good word for our souls, that we might rest and rise, in the kindness of your company. Amen.

*The service concludes with the following postlude.
Please maintain a worshipful silence.*

Postlude Exaltation

James Mansfield

LEADING WORSHIP TODAY

Rev. Christa Fuller Burns, *Pastor*
Marilyn Valentine, *Organist*
Pat Nesbitt, *Liturgist*
The Chancel Choir

FAITH FAMILY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sunday Adult Forum 9:15 a.m. – Woodmont Room
December 3, 10, & 17 The Magnificat
Presented by Randal Woodfield

Wednesday Bible Study: 11:00 a.m. – Woodbourne Room, all are welcome. Join us for lively discussion on the upcoming Sunday lesson. No preparation is required.

December 6 – Ezekiel 37: 1-14

December 13 – Isaiah 55:1-13

December 20 – John 1:1-18

Apartment-Warming Items Needed!

GEDCO has given us another opportunity to help three formerly homeless folks set up their new apartments through their Justice Housing program.

Needed are:

small furniture

cleaning products

new queen size sheets, pillowcases, towels, gently used blankets

There will be a laundry basket in the hallway outside the sanctuary to collect your donations. Thank you for your generosity and care.

Habitat Workday Habitat Chesapeake has announced Saturdays, December 9th and 16th volunteer work days. Please see Susan Minor or Natalie Wallace if you would like to help.

2017 Per Capita Is \$34.15 per Member

To date **members have paid only \$2,445.40** of the **\$5293 owed**. If you have not contributed, please do so now if you are able.

Per capita fees are the fees we, Faith Presbyterian, pay for each member of our church in order to support the mission of the wider church. Just as our civil taxes pay for roads and schools, we are part of a larger church that does a bigger mission than just our individual congregation, and that provides us services as a congregation of the Presbyterian Church (USA).

2018 Pledge

If you have not done so, please return pledge card today.

Encore Chorale *Saturday, December 9, 7:00 p.m.*

The combined Encore Choirs of Towson, Columbia and Anne Arundel Community College at Towson Presbyterian Church will present "Merry Let Your Spirit Be" free Holiday Concert.

Joys and Concerns may be written before the service in a special book in the narthex. The book will be brought to the minister before the prayer.

Please pray for our homebound members:

Betty Bunce

Esmie & Leon Stirling

Dot Weller

Christian Dunyoh

Nancy Stutzer

Mildred Miller

Betty Lou Tampieri

Faith Presbyterian Church's Ministry

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