

INVITATION TO THE MINISTRY OF GIVING

OFFERTORY "Some Children See Him"
Monica Andrea Coutin-Baxter, soloist

Burt/Hutson

DOXOLOGY

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him all creatures here below;
Praise Him above ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

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.

BEARING THE WORD INTO THE WORLD

*HYMN OF SENDING #223 "Star-Child"

*CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

*CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE #166 "Wait for the Lord" (sing 3x)
**Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.
Wait for the Lord: be strong, take heart!**

*POSTLUDE "Mary Did You Know"

Mark Lowry and Buddy Greene



**Advent candle liturgy and hymn were written by Martha Spong and used with her permission.

WELCOME VISITOR! Welcome, guests! Thank you for joining us in worship today. We invite everyone to sign the Friendship Pad, and our first-time visitors to also fill out the blue card found in the pew. If you have any questions or wish to become a member of our congregation, don't hesitate to ask a neighbor on the pew or the pastor. We are honored by your presence here today, and hope to welcome you back next week!

Rev. Betsy Turner, Interim Pastor
Tom Francis, Custodian Emeritus
Linda Hodges, Office Manager

Ward Gailey, Music Director
Gena Ridgeway, Accompanist
Nursery: Suzie Wharton and Allie Dunn

Stockbridge Presbyterian Church

Fourth Sunday of Advent
December 22, 2019
11:00 a.m.



*"Look, the young woman shall conceive and bear a son,
and they shall call him Emmanuel, which means 'God is with us.'"*
-Matthew 1:23

PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

(Please silence and refrain from using all electronic devices.)

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

*SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

One: The peace of Christ be with you.

All: **And also with you.**

PRELUDE "Zagalillo"

Coutin-Baxter Trio

PRESENTATION OF THE WORD

Beadle: Jason Howard

Please use this time for silent meditation and preparation for worship. Prayer cards are in the pew rack in front of you for submission to church prayer list.

GATHERING AROUND THE WORD

*Those who are able, please stand.

CONGREGATIONAL INTROIT #154 "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" (verse 3)

**O come, Thou Wisdom from on high, and order all things, far and nigh;
To us the path of knowledge show, and cause us in love's ways to go.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.**

*CALL TO WORSHIP (written by Cheryl Lawrie)

Liturgist: Jason Howard

One: It doesn't matter whether or not you can have faith; whether or not you are cynical or despairing, hope-filled or hope-less: what matters to God is simply that you are here.

All: **We are in the time of Advent, in preparation for Christmas.**

One: Advent reminds us that if God is to be born again in the most ordinary parts of our world and our lives that we need prepare for it.

All: **We need to make the space in our lives where love might be born.**

One: Welcome to this tiny corner of a harsh and dark world.

All: **Together, let us practice being ready in the faith that Christ will come.**

*HYMN OF PRAISE #185 "Hark, the Herald Angels Sing"

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE **

Gerald & Diana Taylor

One: This is the fourth Sunday of Advent. The time draws near, the light grows, Christ is coming! With great expectation, we join Christians around the world in this holy season of watching, waiting, and hoping for the God's greatest gift of love, Jesus Christ.

All: **Throughout this season, we have gathered at this round wreath. Its circle shape is a symbol of God's unending love, which has no beginning and no end.**

One: The prophet Isaiah shared a word with the lonely world. We will not be left alone. God will give us a sign.

All: **A young woman will have a baby.**

One: He will be named Emmanuel, which means "God with us."

All: **His life and his words will show us how to follow God and choose what is good.**

One: As we wait faithfully for God's time, we light the candles of Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love.

All: **In God's time of love, we will learn to love each other.**

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (unison)

O God, we are so easily distracted. We go out of our way to see the beautiful twinkling Christmas lights, but we fail to watch for the light of the world that came long ago through the birth of a child. We hurry to finish our Christmas shopping, frantically seeking that perfect gift, but we have forgotten to be still and treasure the true gift we have been given in the birth of a savior. Christ who comes, hear us now as we confess in silence the particular ways we need your grace...

[silence]

Spirit of love, forgive our angry tempers. Overlook our impatience. Teach us to see signs of salvation in our midst. Slow us down, and help us to get ready, truly ready, for Christmas. In the name of the long-expected one, Jesus our Lord, we pray. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

One: Hear the message spoken through the prophets of old, through the visions and dreams of the faithful: In Christ, the God of grace and peace is with us, granting us forgiveness and showing us perfect love.

All: **In him, we are a forgiven and beloved people! God is with us – thanks be!**

*GLORIA PATRI

GLORIA

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen, Amen.

PROCLAIMING AND ENACTING THE WORD

CHILDREN'S SERMON

Monica Coutin-Baxter

ANTHEM "There's a Song in the Air" Harrington

Children's Choir

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

FIRST READING Isaiah 7:10-16

Page 598, Pew Bible

One: The Word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

SECOND READING Matthew 1:18-25

Page 1, Pew Bible

One: The Word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON Child of Love, God-With-Us

Rev. Betsy Turner

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH: The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth; And in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.