

# 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent

December 21<sup>st</sup>, 2014

11:00 a.m.

PRELUDE *Toccata on "Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus"* Long

## WORDS OF WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

### GATHERING AROUND THE WORD

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE *The Trivette Family*

INTROIT *Light The Advent Candle*

## +CALL TO WORSHIP

One: God so loved the world that he gave us his only Son.

All: We are able to love because God first loved us.

One: Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends.

All: We come before the Lord of Love to love the Lord – with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength.

+HYMN *People, Look East* #12, omit v. 3

## +PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God of Steadfast Love, we do not live as those who recognize your reign on earth, even though we are once again celebrating its arrival. We express anger and frustration much more often than love and care. We have more compassion for people we see on the evening news than we do for people living in our own community. We speak of love and peace on earth, but ignore the realities and needs of our brothers and sisters, both here and abroad. We earnestly repent, O Lord. Forgive our shortcomings. Pardon the things we have done – and the things we have left undone – that are contrary to your will. Give us the vision, the strength, and the will to *live* your love in the world. In Jesus' name, Amen.

## +ASSURANCE OF GOD'S LOVE

+RESPONSE *O Come, Let Us Adore Him*  
For he alone is worthy, for he alone is worthy,  
For he alone is worthy, Christ the Lord

## +PASSING OF THE PEACE

May the peace of Christ be with you. **And also with you.**

## TIME FOR YOUNG DISCIPLES

All children are invited to come forward for the Time for Young Disciples. Afterward, children ages 4 thru 3<sup>rd</sup> grade may go to Worship Our Way (W.O.W.) while children in 4<sup>th</sup> grade and older are invited to worship with their families.

+HYMN *Love Came Down at Christmas* WHITNEY  
Love came down at Christmas, Love all lovely, Love divine  
Love was born at Christmas; star and angels gave the sign

Worship we the Godhead, Love incarnate, Love divine  
Worship we our Jesus, but where-with for sacred sign

Love shall be our token; love be yours and love be mine  
Love to God and neighbor, love for plea and gift and sign

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

### PROCLAIMING THE WORD

HEBREW BIBLE READING Isaiah 40:1-5 p. 626 OT  
This is the Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

ANTHEM *Is There Room In My Heart For A King?* Stewart/Hayes

GOSPEL READING Mark 6:14-29 p. 35 NT  
This is the Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

THE WORD PROCLAIMED Tim Reynolds

### RESPONDING TO THE WORD

+AFFIRMATION OF FAITH from *The Confession of 1967*  
God's sovereign love is a mystery beyond the reach of our minds. Human thought ascribes to God superlatives of power, wisdom, and goodness. But God reveals his love in Jesus Christ by showing power in the form of a servant, wisdom in the folly of the cross, and goodness in receiving sinful people. The power of God's love in Christ to transform the world discloses that the Redeemer is the Lord and Creator who made all things to serve the purpose of his love.

## OFFERING OUR LIVES TO GOD

Offertory *Love Came Down At Christmas* Rosetti  
+Doxology *Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow* #592  
+Prayer of Dedication

+HYMN *Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn* REJOICE, REJOICE  
Awake! Awake and greet the new morn, for angels herald its dawning  
Sing out your joy, for soon he is born. Behold! the Child of our longing  
Come as a baby weak and poor, to bring all hearts together  
He opens wide the heavenly door and lives now inside us forever

To us, to all in sorrow and fear, Emmanuel comes a-singing  
His humble song is quiet and near, yet fills the earth with its ringing  
Music to heal the broken soul and hymns of loving-kindness  
The thunder of his anthems roll to shatter all hatred and blindness

In darkest night his coming shall be, when all the world is despairing  
As morning light so quiet and free, so warm and gentle and caring  
Then shall the mute break forth in song, the lame shall leap in wonder  
The weak be raised above the strong, and weapons be broken asunder

Rejoice, rejoice, take heart in the night though dark the winter and cheerless  
The rising sun shall crown you with light, be strong and loving and fearless  
Love be our song and love our prayer and love our endless story  
May God fill every day we share and bring us at last into glory

+BENEDICTION AND RESPONSE *The Grace Of Our Lord*

+POSTLUDE *People, Look East* Wood

+THOSE WHO ARE ABLE PLEASE STAND

## WORSHIP AND CELEBRATION Elders: Randa McCall & Danny Wilson

### THIS

- the liturgist is Fred Holt
- the acolytes are Kaylie Cornelius and Madison Counts
- the bell ringer is Milo Leidig
- the W.O.W. leaders are Joey & Bridget Lamie
- the nursery volunteers are Georgia Crews and Trent & Rachel Bales
- the sound board tech is Rick Ratliff

**VISITORS:** We are delighted to have you with us this morning and hope you feel at home. Please let us know a bit about you by filling in your information in the Friendship Register. **A Nursery is available** for infants and children through age 4. If you need directions an usher can assist you.

**HEARING DEVICES** are available for the hearing impaired from an usher.

**WE ARE CURRENTLY IN A YEAR-LONG SERMON SERIES** on the *Gospel of Mark*. Mark says this is the story of God's Son and it is Good News. Each hearer of Mark's story must determine what his/her own response will be to this Good News.

**ABOUT THE BULLETIN COVER ART:** The bulletin cover art for Advent is a new series of Advent bulletin covers created by regional artist John Stuart, a Scottish Presbyterian pastor who lives and ministers in East Tennessee. He describes his work as "therapeutic" and a creative way to strengthen his spiritual connection to God. His work is created through a process known as the "digital glass" process, a recent discovery of his. For more information you can go to [www.stushieart.com](http://www.stushieart.com).

**CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE:** This year we will once again gather to worship God and celebrate the birth of Christ on Christmas Eve at 5:30 p.m. This is a family-friendly Communion, Carol and Candlelight Service and will last just over an hour. Bring your family, your friends, or some of both and celebrate the arrival of Christmas.

**CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICE:** Our 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Christmas Day Informal Worship Service will be at 10:00 a.m. on December 25<sup>th</sup>. This is a simple service in which we, as members of God's family, gather for about 45 minutes to celebrate the birthday of our brother and Savior, Jesus Christ. We will sing carols, hear a special Christmas story, and have hot apple cider and cookies. It is a "come-as-you-are" service, even if that means you come in your pajamas!

## SERVICE AND OUTREACH Elders: Alicia Arney & Kay Bunn

**OUR ANNUAL MITTEN TREE** located in the Narthex now through the week following Christmas, your contributions of warm hats, mittens and scarves will be taken to Faith in Action for distribution to needy families.

**THANKS TO ALL** who have worked and donated to Faith in Action during November and December thus far. Our church and preschool donated 373 canned food items and financial support to purchase over 1,100 food items. Last week, we provided 98.25 hours from 30 volunteers, who served 281 families equaling 807 individuals including 282 children. Thank you for YOUR continued faith in action during this Thanksgiving and Christmas season!

**THE SERVICE AND OUTREACH TEAM** extend an extra THANK-YOU to Dennis Bailey's parents' church in Chilhowie, VA who sent fifty hand-knit caps for our Mitten Tree. The caps normally are sent to St. Jude's Hospital in Memphis, TN, but the church couldn't get them there this year, and decided to share them with our ministry to Ecumenical Faith in Action. The Lord works in wondrous ways and we are thankful for their service and sharing with us.



**SERVICE AND OUTREACH**  
**Elders: Alicia Arney & Kay Bunn**

will be open to the public now through January 6<sup>th</sup>. Take your family and **VOTE** by placing a donation of canned goods under your favorite tree. Donations will go Ecumenical Faith in Action and the Animal Defense League. Please see bulletin board in Narthex for point scoring system. The "Bread for the Journey" Sunday School class would appreciate your **VOTE** for the Children's bedroom tree located upstairs. The After School Program children handmade the decorations! If you would prefer, donations may be brought to the church and someone will transport to museum, or you may make a monetary contribution by notating on memo line – **EFIA Fields Penn** and place in the offering plate. Monies received will be used to help our neighbors in need this CHRISTmas season.

**THE JOY GIFT OFFERING** helps provide financial assistance to current and former church workers and their families and also enables deserving students to attend Presbyterian-related racial ethnic colleges and schools. Rooted in a nearly 300-year old tradition, the Assistance Program embodies the connectional Church at its best. As the Assistance program relies on voluntary gifts, legacies, endowments, and the Joy Gift offering for funding, it provides a way for caring Presbyterians to support those who serve the Church during their times of need. This year Sinking Spring Presbyterian Church will recognize the Joy Gift offering today. Envelopes are included in your bulletin. Please give generously.

**CONGREGATIONAL MINISTRY**  
**Elders: Georgia Crews & Rachel Fowlkes**

**JAY AND PENNY MCCALLUM** would like to express their deep appreciation for all the beautiful cards and messages. Thank you for thinking of us and for all your prayers.

**HEARTFELT THANKS** to the more than 20 people who helped extend hospitality to approximately 120 guests who attended the post – Christmas Concert reception December 6<sup>th</sup>.

**DATE CHANGE FOR CONGREGATIONAL DISCUSSION FORUM!:** The Session realized at its meeting Monday that the previously announced date for the Congregational Discussion Forum conflicts with the next Spencer-Miller Concert Series concert. Accordingly, we have changed the date to **January 11<sup>th</sup>**. The time will still be **3:00 p.m.** Please make a note of this change. At this forum we will have some small group and some large group discussion regarding the PCUSA's proposed redefinition of marriage. This will be a time for dialogue, for listening, and for learning and we hope will be an opportunity for us to recognize that there are people of deep faith on both sides of the marriage issue, and to practice covenant community and unity by focusing on who unites us, rather than what divides us.

**SPIRITUAL FORMATION & DISCIPLESHIP**  
**Elders: Lucy Phillips & Baird Smith**

**WEDNESDAY NIGHT BIBLE STUDY:** There is no Wednesday night Bible study for the next two weeks due to the holidays. We will resume our study of *Kingdom Parables* on January 7<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m.

**IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH**

**TODAY, Sunday, December 21<sup>st</sup>**

10:00 a.m. Sunday School  
11:00 a.m. Worship in the Sanctuary

**Tuesday, December 23<sup>rd</sup>**

8:00 p.m. AA & Al-Anon in the Fellowship Hall

**Wednesday, December 24<sup>th</sup>**

5:30 p.m. Christmas Eve Service

**Thursday, December 25<sup>th</sup>**

10:00 a.m. Christmas Day Worship Service

**Sunday, December 28<sup>th</sup>**

10:00 a.m. Sunday School  
11:00 a.m. Worship in the Sanctuary

**STEWARDSHIP MINISTRY**  
**Elders: Fred Holt & John Legard**

**Stewardship & Attendance** for December 14 2014

Attendance: 207  
Offering: \$7,072.00

**CHURCH BULLETINS** are now available on our website! The link to view is <http://www.sinkingspring.org/worship.html#ws>.

**THE CHRISTMAS JOY GIFT OFFERING WILL BE RECEIVED TODAY**

WE ASK FOR PRAYERS FOR OUR HOMEBOUND MEMBERS: Mazie Cook, Helen Napps, Reed Cooke (Grand Court), June Atkins, Hazel Warden (Abingdon Rehab), Betty Hunter (Abingdon Rehab)

WE ASK FOR PRAYERS FOR THESE NEW CONCERNS: Eunice Blankenship

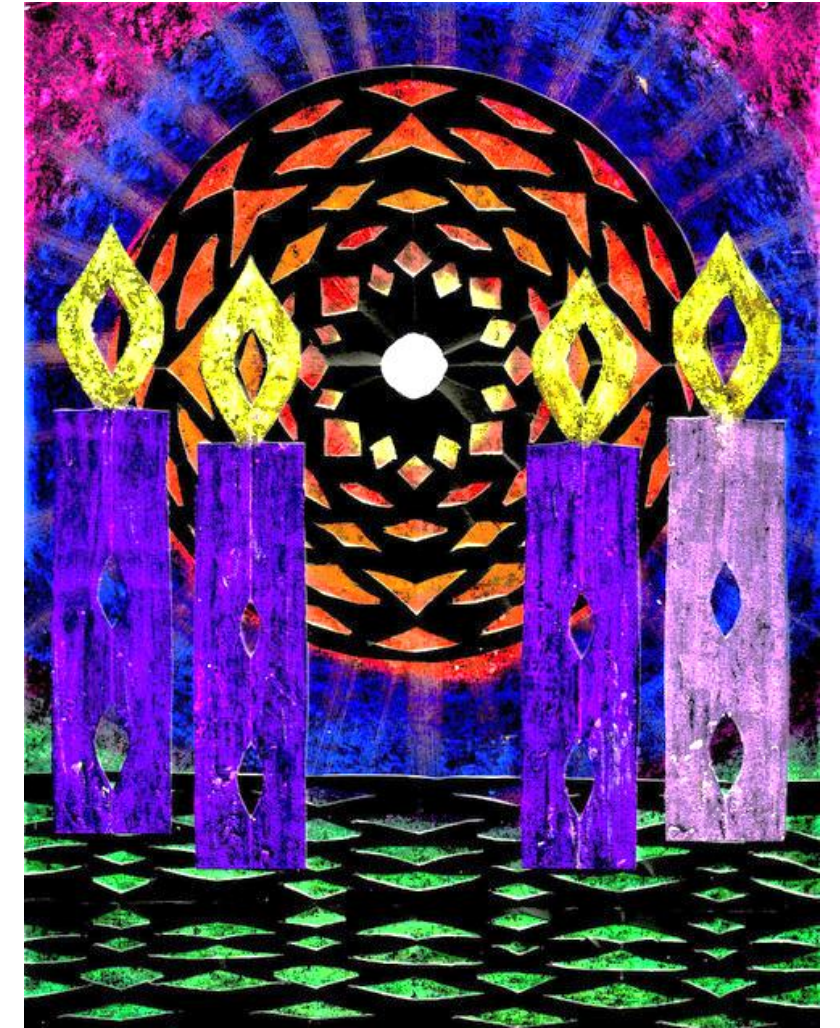
WE ASK FOR PRAYERS FOR THESE CONTINUED CONCERNS: David Henninger, Charles Henninger and Jay McCallum

AND FOR THESE MEN AND WOMEN IN THE MILITARY: Joseph McGraw, Nathan McGraw, Mark Widener, Walter Holcomb Jr., John Nowell II, John Nowell III and Dexter Bevis

\*Names remain on the prayer list for 4 weeks unless requested to keep them on longer

**Sinking Spring Presbyterian Church**  
**Organized 1772**

A Congregation of the Presbyterian Church (USA)



**SINKING SPRING PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**  
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**Ministers: Members & Friends of the Congregation**  
**Pastor:** Tim Reynolds [pastor@sinkingspring.org](mailto:pastor@sinkingspring.org)  
**Director of Music:** Arch Snyder [agstonsilcoach@gmail.com](mailto:agstonsilcoach@gmail.com)  
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**Preschool Director:** Gypsy Holt

**December 21, 2014**