

3^d Sunday of Advent

December 13th, 2015

11:00 a.m.

PRELUDE *Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus* arr. Broughton

WORDS OF WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

GATHERING AROUND THE WORD

INTROIT *Light The Advent Candle*

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE *Nathan LeBlanc & Annie Simpson*

+CALL TO WORSHIP

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

All: **And also with you.**

One: Come, let us hear of the hope we have in Jesus.

All: **Let us see the Light God promises in the midst of our darkness.**

One: Let us hear again the promise of peace through the One who lived Shalom among all people.

All: **Let us see the Light God promises in the midst of our darkness.**

One: Let us prepare for a new advent of love among us.

All: **As we worship together, let us embrace the advent of hope, peace, and love.**

+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

+PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God of strength and might, we proclaim that you are near, yet we continue to live as if you were far away, holding onto the things of this world and refusing to share what we have with those whom we deem unworthy. We do not see the world as you see it, choosing instead to live with blinders on, ignoring the needs of those around us and the plight of those who suffer. You lifted up the lowly and fed the hungry, yet we continue to promote ourselves and seek to guarantee our own welfare. Forgive us, Lord, for living as if you had never walked among us and for denying your power in the world. In your tender mercy, do not scatter us in our pride and do not send us away empty. Teach us to embrace your way with us, your will for us, and your Spirit in us, for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Lord, in whose name we pray. Amen.

+ASSURANCE OF GOD'S LOVE

+RESPONSE *O Come, Let Us Adore Him*

We'll give him all the glory, we'll give him all the glory
We'll give him all the glory, 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 5 thru 3rd grade may go to Worship Our Way (W.O.W.) while children in 4th grade and older are invited to worship with their families.

COMMISSIONING OF STEPHEN MINISTERS

Presentation of Stephen Ministers to be Commissioned

Vows of the Ministers, Congregation & Pastor

Prayer of Commissioning

Charge & Blessing

+HYMN *People, Look East* #12

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

PROCLAIMING THE WORD

HEBREW BIBLE READING 1 Samuel 2:2-8 p. 227 OT
This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

ANTHEM *Room In My Heart For You* Elliot/Lee/Wagner

GOSPEL READING Luke 1:39-55 p. 49 NT
This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

THE WORD PROCLAIMED Tim Reynolds

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

OFFERING OUR LIVES TO GOD

Offertory *They'll Know We Are Christians* trad.

+Response *In the Bleak Midwinter* #36, v. 3

What can I give him, poor as I am?

If I were a shepherd I would bring a lamb

If I were a wise man, I would do my part

Yet what I can I give him: Give my heart

+Prayer of Dedication

+AFFIRMATION OF FAITH *from* The Confession of 1967

Our reconciliation to God through Jesus Christ makes it plain that enslaving poverty in a world of abundance is an intolerable violation of God's good creation. Because Jesus identified himself with the needy and exploited, the cause of the world's poor is the cause of his disciples. The church cannot condone poverty, whether it is the product of unjust social structures, exploitation of the defenseless, lack of national resources, absence of technological understanding, or rapid expansion of populations. The church calls every person to use their abilities, possessions, and the fruits of technology as gifts entrusted by God for the maintenance of the family and the advancement of the common welfare. It encourages those forces in human society that raise hopes for better conditions and provide people with opportunities for a decent living.

+HYMN *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* #9

+BENEDICTION AND RESPONSE *Peace To You All*

+POSTLUDE *Overture from Messiah* Handel

+THOSE WHO ARE ABLE PLEASE STAND

WORSHIP AND CELEBRATION

Elders: **Matt Crum & Joey Lamie**

THIS MORNING...

- the liturgist is Richard Cano
- the acolytes are Jamie Lee and Lila Godfrey
- the bell ringer is Charlotte Moran
- the Big W.O.W. leaders are Joey & Bridget Lamie
- the Little W.O.W. leaders are Jeff & Liz Edelman
- the nursery volunteers are Connie Bundy
- the sound board tech is Dennis Bailey

OUR ADVENT SERMON SERIES is based on Charles Dickens' beloved tale, *A Christmas Carol*. The series is called *The Ghosts of Christmas* and seeks to discover what this classic Christmas story has to say to us about the meaning of Christmas as we examine the ghosts that appear to Ebenezer Scrooge.

UPCOMING SERMON TEXTS AND TOPICS:

Dec 13	Luke 1:39-55	<i>The Ghosts of Christmas: The Ghosts of Christmas Present</i>
Dec 20	2 Timothy 1:6-7	<i>The Ghosts of Christmas: The Ghosts of Christmases Yet to Come</i>
Dec 24	2 Cor. 5:16-18	<i>The Ghosts of Christmas: A New Creation</i>
Dec 27	TBD	Rev. David Gilbert, guest preacher

SPENCER MILLER CONCERT SERIES FEATURING *Fire in the Kitchen* playing a unique blend of Appalachian /Old Time/ Folk and Celtic music will be TODAY at 3:00 p.m. Concerts are free for all area students of all ages and \$10 for the general public.

THERE WILL BE A CONGREGATIONAL MEETING on **Sunday, December 20th** following worship for the purpose of electing elders to the Session Class of 2018.

WE ARE IN NEED OF A VOLUNTEER to run the sound board on the 1st Sunday of each month. If you are interested, please contact Pastor Tim or Rick Ratliff.

ABOUT THE BULLETIN COVER ART: This week's bulletin cover is by John Leech and shows The Ghost of Christmas Present revealing Ignorance and Want ("The Shadows of Mankind") to Scrooge. It is from the original 1843 publication of *A Christmas Carol*.

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 5th Annual Christmas Day Informal Worship Service will be at 10:00 a.m. on December 25th. 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!

A GRAVESIDE SERVICE FOR POLLY JOHNSTON WILL BE HELD this coming Wednesday, December 16th at 2:00 p.m. at Mountain View Cemetery in Bristol, VA. Pastor Tim will be officiating.

PLEASE KEEP THE FAMILY OF HERMAN PINKERTON in your prayers. Dr. Pinkerton was a long time member of this congregation who passed away on Saturday, December 5th.

CONGREGATIONAL MINISTRY
Elders: Georgia Crews & Rachel Fowlkes

TODAY WE COMMISSION THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE to service as Stephen Ministers: Larry Ball, Jan Frazier, Toni Oliver, Isaac Short, and Beth Smith. These individuals have completed an extensive training program in their preparation for this caring ministry. They have studied and practiced skills in such areas as dealing with feelings, crisis intervention, asserting oneself with gentleness and firmness, and numerous other topics to prepare them to help people who are experiencing problems in their lives. We thank God for their gifts of caring and listening. Please keep these people in your prayers as they carry the love of Christ to their care receivers.

SERVICE AND OUTREACH
Elders: Alicia Arney, Kay Bunn & Mimi Hull

THE JOY GIFT OFFERING will be received **on December 20th**. With our congregation's help, church workers can receive financial assistance during their time of need and our future racial ethnic leaders are equipped for all ministries of the Church or educated at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges. Thanks in advance for spreading joy to our PCUSA church workers this Advent Season.

OUR ANNUAL MITTEN TREE is located in the Narthex until the week following Christmas. Contributions of warm hats, mittens and scarves will be taken to Faith in Action for distribution to needy families.

STEWARDSHIP MINISTRY
Elders: Danny Brown & John Legard

WHEELCHAIR NEEDED ~ if anyone has a foldaway wheelchair they would like to donate, the church would be pleased to accept.

SPIRITUAL FORMATION & DISCIPLESHIP
Elders: Danny Wilson & Kate Shockley

WEDNESDAY NIGHT BIBLE STUDY: We are currently studying the book of Daniel. We invite you to come explore this book with us on Wednesdays at 6:00 p.m. in the Church Parlor.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL ADVENT DEVOTIONALS ARE AVAILABLE on the table in the Narthex. This year's Advent Devotional was created specifically to be a companion piece to Pastor Tim's Advent sermon series, *The Ghosts of Christmas*. Written by members of our own congregation, it includes reflections on Christmases Past and Present, tips on how to celebrate a simpler and more meaningful Christmas, and a list of Worship & Service Opportunities available during the Advent season. We invite you to use these devotionals by yourself, with your family, or with your friends as a way to prepare yourself for the wonder that is Christmas.

EMPTY PILL BOTTLES ~ Thank you for your support with the Pill Bottle project for Malawi. We have mailed 600 bottles! This is an ongoing project so keep bringing your empty plastic pill bottles and placing them in the box in the Narthex.

THERE WILL BE NO Elementary / Middle School After School Activities until January 6th.

WE WILL NOT HAVE SUNDAY SCHOOL on December 27th due to Christmas holidays.

IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH

TODAY, Sunday, December 13th

10:00 a.m. Sunday School
11:00 a.m. Worship in the Sanctuary
3:00 p.m. Spencer Miller Concert – Fire in the Kitchen

Monday, December 14th

6:00 p.m. Session Meeting

Tuesday, December 15th

8:00 p.m. AA in Fellowship Hall
8:00 p.m. Al Anon next to Fellowship Hall

Wednesday, December 16th

6:00 p.m. Bible Study
7:30 p.m. Choir

Thursday, December 17th

7:00 a.m. Men's Bible Study, Shoney's
8:00 p.m. AA in the Fellowship Hall

Sunday, December 20th

10:00 a.m. Sunday School
11:00 a.m. Worship in the Sanctuary
12:00 p.m. Congregational Meeting

STEWARDSHIP MINISTRY
Elders: Danny Brown & John Legard

Stewardship & Attendance for December 6, 2015

Attendance: 162
Offering: \$20,468.00
Hunger: \$190.00

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

WE ASK FOR PRAYERS FOR OUR HOMEBOUND MEMBERS: Mazie Cook, Helen Napps, and Reed Cooke (Commonwealth Assisted Living), Hazel Warden (Abingdon Rehab) and Don Preston

WE ASK FOR PRAYERS FOR THESE NEW CONCERNS: Scotty McCoy (Penny McCallum's brother), Sammy Shuttle and family

WE ASK FOR PRAYERS FOR THESE CONTINUED CONCERNS: Charles Henninger, Richie Hooker, Sherrye May, Ernie & Mary Barr, Charlene Armstrong, Cathy Day, Rosemary Sweet and Jill Minnick

AND FOR THESE MEN AND WOMEN IN THE MILITARY: Joseph 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

A Stephen Ministry Congregation

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Office Hours: Monday thru Thursday, 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

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