

4th Sunday of Advent

December 20th, 2015

11:00 a.m.

PRELUDE *Still, Still, Still* *Austrian Melody*

WORDS OF WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

GATHERING AROUND THE WORD

INTROIT *Light The Advent Candle*

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

+CALL TO WORSHIP *from* Isaiah 35

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

All: **And also with you.**

One: The wilderness shall be glad and the desert shall blossom.

All: **All people will see God's majesty and glory!**

One: You with weak hands, God will strengthen you! You who are fearful, take heart! For behold, God is coming to save the faithful.

All: **We shall obtain joy and gladness; sorrow and sighing shall flee away. Let us rejoice, for our God comes!**

+HYMN OF PRAISE *Joy to the World!* #40

+PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Lord, there are many roads that lay before us, numerous paths from which to choose; yet only one leads to life. We are so easily distracted, though, tempted by paths that seem to lead to good things – wealth, prosperity, health – and yet they never satisfy. Merciful God, we confess our penchant for choosing roads that lead to things that keep us from you. In your mercy, forgive us. Send us your Spirit to draw us back to you and to keep us on the path that leads to you. Give us a desire for the things that are of you, for the things that will bring us ultimate joy and for the things that will bring you great glory. Thank you for never leaving us behind when we wander. 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 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.

+HYMN OF PREPARATION *Once in Royal David's City* #49

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

PROCLAIMING THE WORD

GOSPEL READING Matthew 18:1-4 p. 17 NT

This is the Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

ANTHEM *Baby Boy* *Besig*

HEBREW BIBLE READING Isaiah 55:1-7 p. 645 OT

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 *Rise Up Shepherds and Follow* *Spiritual*

+Response *What Child Is This?* #53, v. 3

So bring Him incense, gold, and myrrh; Come, one and all, to own Him

The King of kings salvation brings; Let loving hearts enthrone Him

This, this is Christ the King, Whom shepherds guard and angels sing

Haste, haste to bring Him laud, the Babe, the Son of Mary!

+Prayer of Dedication

+AFFIRMATION OF FAITH *from* A Brief Statement of Faith

We trust in Jesus Christ, fully human, fully God. Jesus proclaimed the reign of God: preaching good news to the poor and release to the captives, teaching by word and deed and blessing the children, healing the sick and binding up the brokenhearted, eating with outcasts, forgiving sinners, and calling all to repent and believe the gospel. Unjustly condemned for blasphemy and sedition, Jesus was crucified, suffering the depths of human pain and giving his life for the sins of the world. God raised this Jesus from the dead, vindicating his sinless life, breaking the power of sin and evil, delivering us from death to life eternal. With believers in every time and place, we rejoice that nothing in life or in death can separate us from the Love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

+SENDING HYMN *As with Gladness Men of Old* #63

+BENEDICTION AND RESPONSE *A Parting Prayer*

+POSTLUDE *Joy To The World* *Handel*

+THOSE WHO ARE ABLE PLEASE STAND

THIS MORNING...

- the liturgist is Kate Shockley
- the acolytes are Madison Counts and Kaylie Cornelius
- the bell ringer is Emmie Allen
- the Big W.O.W. leaders are David and Emma Shockley
- the Little W.O.W. leaders are Melissa and Sarah Allen
- the nursery volunteers are Nissa Morrell
- the sound board tech is Jasper Leidig

WORSHIP AND CELEBRATION Elders: Matt Crum & Joey Lamie

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 20	Matt 18:1-4	<i>The Ghosts of Christmas: The Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come</i>
Dec 24	2 Cor. 5:16-18	<i>The Ghosts of Christmas: A New Creation</i>
Dec 27	1 Thess 2:1-12	Rev. David Gilbert, guest preacher
Jan 3	Acts 6:1-7	<i>Reformed Worship: The "Why" of Worship</i>

THERE WILL BE A CONGREGATIONAL MEETING immediately following worship TODAY 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 "Last of the Spirits" by Harry Furniss. It is from the 1910 publication of *A Christmas Carol* in *The Christmas Books: Charles Dickens Library Edition*.

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!

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.



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

THE JOY GIFT OFFERING RECEIVED TODAY will go to church workers needing financial assistance and our future racial ethnic leaders to equip them for all ministries of the Church or to assist with education at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges. Please place your donation in the bulletin envelope or write "Joy Offering" on your check memo line. Thanks for spreading joy to our PCUSA church workers this Advent Season.

OUR WEEK TO SERVE AT FAITH IN ACTION is December 27, 28, and 29. It will be closed on January 1. Please sign up in the narthex to help us pack food, carry boxes or work the desk!

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: Our Wednesday night bible study is on Christmas break. We will resume our study of the book of Daniel on Wednesday, January 6th at 6:00 p.m.

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 20th

10:00 a.m. Sunday School
11:00 a.m. Worship in the Sanctuary
12:05 p.m. Congregational Meeting

Tuesday, December 22nd

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

Thursday, December 24th

5:30 p.m. Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
8:00 p.m. AA in the Fellowship Hall

Friday, December 25th

10:00 a.m. Christmas Day Informal Worship Service

Sunday, December 27th

11:00 a.m. Worship in the Sanctuary

STEWARDSHIP MINISTRY
Elders: Danny Brown & John Legard

Stewardship & Attendance for December 13, 2015

Attendance: 171
Offering: \$22,604.00

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: Russell Justus

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

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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