

The Falls Village Congregational Church

December 18, 2022 10 a.m.

4th Sunday in Advent

The Reverend Richard W. Reifsnyder, Worship Leader

Welcome and Announcements

Ringing of the Bell

Prelude - *He Shall Feed His Flock* (from *The Messiah*) - G. F. Handel

THE CHURCH GATHERS TO PRAISE

Call to Worship (from Isaiah 40)

Prepare the way of the Lord!

Lift every valley, lift every voice.

Prepare the way of the Lord!

And all flesh shall see the salvation of our God.

Prayer for God’s Presence (Unison):

Gracious God, open our hearts and minds during this time of worship, that by your Spirit we might hear what you would have us to hear and be who you would have us to be, for the sake of Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh. Amen. .

Hymn #128 *“One Candle is Lit”*

Prayer of Confession (Unison)

Great God, as we behold the birth of Jesus again, we are mindful of how we have failed to receive the fullness of that gift. The story points us to your glory, yet we struggle to join in the song of praise and thanksgiving. We are distracted and confused, so focused on things that matter little that we overlook the good news of great joy that you have prepared. Tell us again that the Savior is born. Tell us again that we are forgiven. Tell us again that our lives can be abundant in faith, hope and love because of what you have given us in Jesus Christ. Amen.

Silent Confession

Assurance of Pardon

TO HEAR GOD’S WORD

Responsive Reading --“The Peaceful Realm,” p. 126

Gloria Patri

#35 in hymnal

Passing the Peace of Christ:

The Peace of Christ be with you

And also with you

Let us pass the peace

Lighting of the Advent Wreath Susan Kelsey, Christine Wallace

New Testament Reading: Matthew 1: 18-25 Rich Reifsnyder

Prayer

Sermon: “What’s in a Name?”

TO RESPOND IN FAITH

Musical Offertory – *Jesus, Oh, What a Wonderful Child* –
African-American Spiritual

Pastoral Prayer

The Lord’s Prayer

THE CHURCH DISPERSES TO SERVE

Hymn # 148 *“O Come All Ye Faithful”*

Benediction

Benediction Response

God be with you till we meet again

.....
You are invited to place your offerings as you leave in the plate at either entrance to the church.

Unison

1. Come sure - ly, Lord Je - sus, as dawn fol - lows night,
 2. Come quick - ly, sha - lom, teach us how to pre - pare
 3. Come, fes - tive - ly sing while a - wait - ing the birth,
 4. Come, wan - der where li - on and lamb gent - ly play,
 5. Come, lis - ten, the sounds of God - with - us ring clear,

1. our hearts long to greet you, as ros - es, the light.
 2. for a gift that com - pels us with jus - tice to care.
 3. join an - gels in danc - ing from heav - en to earth.
 4. where e - vil is ban - ished and faith takes the day,
 5. and signs of a cross in the dis - tance ap - pear.

1. Sal - va - tion, draw near us, our vi - sion en - gage.
 2. Our spir - its are rest - less till sin and war cease.
 3. Wave ban - ners of good news, lift high thank - ful praise.
 4. a babe in a man - ger to fool the world's eyes.
 5. The Word once made flesh, yet the Word ev - er near.

1. Come, O long - ex - pect - ed Je - sus, born to set your peo - ple free.
 2. Born your peo - ple to de - liv - er, born a child, and yet a king,

From our fears and sins re - lease us; Christ, in whom our rest shall be.
 born to reign in us for - ev - er, born your grac - ious realm to bring.

You, our strength and con - so - la - tion, come sal - va - tion to im - part;
 By your own e - ter - nal Spir - it rule in all our hearts a - lone;

dear de - sire of man - y a na - tion, joy of man - y a long - ing heart.
 by your all - suf - fi - cient mer - it raise us to your glo - rious throne.

4th Sunday in Advent – December 18, 2022
Lighting of Candle of Love

Today we relight the first three candles of the Advent Wreath -- the candles of HOPE, PEACE and JOY.

Now we light the fourth candle of Advent. This is the candle of LOVE. This is a time for thinking of others, and sharing with them. It is a time to love as God loved us by giving us the gift of his son. As God is love, let us be love also.

In the Book of Deuteronomy, we find these words:

"For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who is not partial and takes no bribe, who executes justice for the orphan and the widow, and who loves the strangers, providing them food and clothing. You shall also love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt." -- [Deuteronomy 10:17-19a](#)

Hymn #142, v. 4: People, Look East

Let us pray (unison):

O Lord, may we always remember to put you first and show your love as we follow in Christ's footsteps. As we prepare for our celebration of Jesus' birth, also fill our hearts with love for the poor, the neglected, the unlovely, that all may know your love and the one whom you have sent, your son, our Savior. Amen.

MATTHEW 1:18-25

18 Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah* took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. ²⁰But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, 'Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.' ²²All this took place to fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

²³ 'Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel', which means, 'God is with us.' ²⁴When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, ²⁵but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son;* and he named him Jesus.

O Come, All Ye Faithful

1. O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful, and tri - um - phant,
 2. Sing, choirs of an - gels, sing in ex - ul - ta - tion,
 3. Child, for us sin - ners poor and in the man - ger,
 4. Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born for our sal - va - tion,

O come ye, O come ye to Beth - le - hem;
 sing, all ye cit - i - zens of heaven a - bove!
 we would em - brace thee, with love and awe;
 Je - sus, to thee be all glo - ry given;

come and be - hold him, born the King of an - gels;
 Glo - ry to God, all glo - ry in the high - est;
 who would not love thee, lov - ing us so dear - ly?
 Word of the Fa - ther, now in flesh ap - pear - ing;

Descant
 3, 4. O come, O come,

Refrain
 O come, let us a - dore him, O come, let us a - dore him,