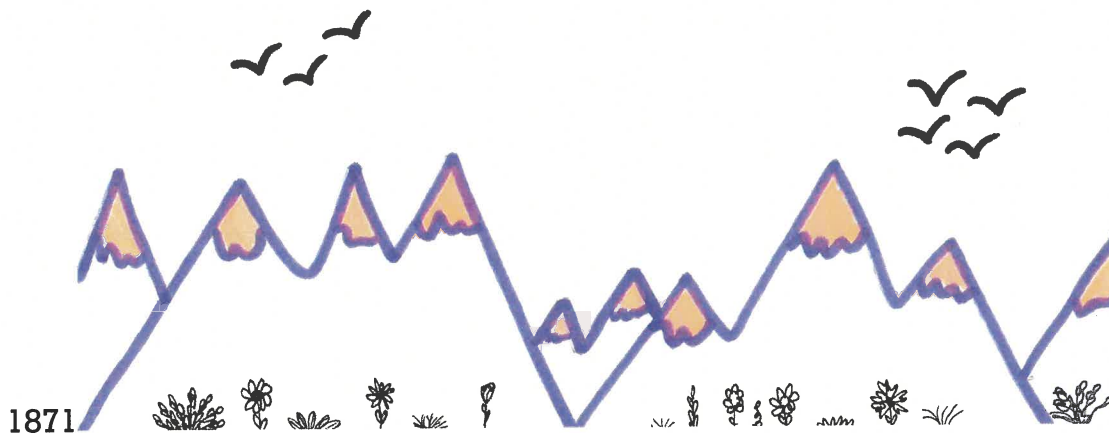


COMFORT, COMFORT

ISAIAH 40



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SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA

DECEMBER 10, 2023

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA

Second Sunday of Advent

December 10, 2023

A SERVICE FOR THE WORSHIP OF GOD WITH THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

(As we prepare to worship, please silence all mobile devices.)

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Esther Hethcox

PRELUDE

Gabriel's Oboe
Kent Foss, trumpet

Ennio Morricone
arr. Frédéric Quinet

INTROIT

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

Southern Harmony

*Come, thou long expected Jesus, born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us, let us find our rest in thee.
Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art;
dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart.*

*Born thy people to deliver, born a child and yet a King,
born to reign in us forever, now thy gracious kingdom bring.
By thine own eternal spirit rule in all our hearts alone;
by thine all sufficient merit, raise us to thy glorious throne.*

CALL TO WORSHIP

Taylor King and Mary Ashley Rose

AND LIGHTING OF THE SECOND ADVENT CANDLE

Leader: ... We join the psalmist in declaring:

People: I will listen to what God the Lord says;

Leader: God promises peace to God's people,
the Lord's faithful servants – but let them not turn to folly.

**People: Surely salvation is near those who fear God,
that divine glory may dwell in our land.**

**All (sung): O come, thou Wisdom from on high, who orderest all things mightily:
to us the path of knowledge show; and teach us in her ways to go.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.**

Leader: Love and faithfulness meet together;

People: righteousness and peace kiss each other.

Leader: Faithfulness springs forth from the earth,

People: and righteousness looks down from heaven.

Leader: The Lord will indeed give what is good, and our land will yield its harvest.

People: Righteousness goes before God and prepares the way for God's steps.

The candle of peace is lit.

*HYMN NO. 102

Savior of the Nations, Come

Num Komm, Der Heiden Heiland

*Those who are able, please stand.

***CONFESSION OF SIN**

John Weicher

Call to Prayer

Prayer of Confession (in unison)

God our Maker,

we confess that we are not ready to meet you.

You call us to repent,

but we turn away from you.

You wait patiently for us,

but we fail to watch and wait for you.

Forgive us, God of grace.

Embrace us with tender mercy

so that we may be at one with you.

when all your glory is revealed;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Silent Confession

Assurance of Pardon

***THE PEACE**

John Weicher

RESPONSE (sung)

Marion

The radiance of God's light beams joy into our days;

now filled with God's own peace and love, our hearts resound with praise.

Rejoice! Rejoice! God reigns! Let earth rejoice!

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Jane Williams

Leader: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Leader: Let us pray.

All: Holy God, our hope and strength,
by the power of your Spirit
prepare the way in our hearts
for the coming of your Word,
so that we may see the glorious signs
of your promise fulfilled;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

GOSPEL LESSON

Mark 1:1-8

(Pew Bible, NT page 34)

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God!

Jane Williams

HEBREW SCRIPTURE LESSON

Isaiah 40:1-11

(Pew Bible, OT page 667)

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God!

Mindy Douglas

SERMON

"Even Ground and Straight Paths"

Mindy Douglas

***HYMN NO. 92**

While We Are Waiting, Come

Waiting (Cason)

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM FOR VIVIAN ANN CRABTREE

John Weicher/Mindy Douglas

Words of Scripture

Introduction

Elder: On behalf of the Session, I present Vivian Ann Crabtree to receive the Sacrament of Baptism.

Questions to the Parents:

Pastor: Meredith and Taylor, do you desire that your child be baptized?
Do you reaffirm your faith in Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior?
Do you renounce evil and affirm your reliance on God's grace?
Relying on God's grace, do you promise to live the Christian faith
and to teach that faith to your child?

Parents: We do.

Questions to the Children:

Pastor: Do you promise to be a friend to Vivian?
If she gets lost, will you help her find the way?
If she falls down, will you help pick her up?
Will you share with her the stories of Jesus?

Children: Yes.

Question to the Congregation:

Elder: Do you, as members of the Church of Jesus Christ, promise to guide and nurture Vivian by word and deed, with love and prayer, encouraging her to know and follow Christ and to be a faithful member of Christ's church?

Congregation: We do.

*Profession of Faith (*in unison*) *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.**

Thanksgiving over the Water

Baptism

Anointing

Introduction

Presentation of Baptismal Quilt

Ashley Swavely

Hymn No. 486 (*verse 1*)

Child of Blessing, Child of Promise

Kingdom

***Child of blessing, child of promise, baptized with the Spirit's sign,
with this water God has sealed you unto love and grace divine.***

DEDICATION OF OFFERINGS

Invitation to Give

John Weicher

Offertory Solo

Every Valley Shall Be Exalted (from *Messiah*)

G.F. Handel

Dan Huff, soloist

Every valley shall be exalted

And every mountain and hill made low

The crooked straight

And the rough places plain. – Isaiah 40:4-5

*Doxology (Hymn No. 108, verse 6)

Divinum Mysterium

Christ, to thee with God the Father, and, O Holy Ghost, to thee

Hymn and chant and high thanksgiving, and unwearied praises be

Honor, glory, and dominion, and eternal victory, evermore and evermore!

NEW MEMBERS SERVICE OF WELCOME

Mindy Douglas/Esther Hethcox

Words of Welcome and Introduction

Reaffirmation of Faith

Prayer

JOYS AND CONCERNS

Esther Hethcox

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.

*HYMN NO. 87

Comfort, Comfort Now My People

Genevan 42

*CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

Mindy Douglas

*POSTLUDE

Gigue on "Joy to the World"

arr. Sondra K. Tucker



Welcome! Let us know you have joined us for worship by scanning this QR code. First Presbyterian Church welcomes all who worship with us. We honor and celebrate the human diversity and unity that God gives us in Christ. We welcome individuals of every age, race, nationality, gender identity, ability, sexual orientation, and economic circumstance to participate fully in the life of the church.

So that you may know who is sitting nearby, please sign the *Friendship Pad*, pass it along the pew, and then return it to the starting point, noting the names of those sitting near you.

Today we celebrate the Sacrament of Baptism for Vivian Ann Crabtree, child of Meredith and Taylor Crabtree and sibling to older brothers Jude and Sam.

Music Notes: We are pleased to welcome back our friend and trumpet player **Kent Foss**. Kent moved to New Hampshire one year ago but has returned to play with the NC Symphony and to join us here at FPC. Thanks also to **Gordon Campbell** and **Dan Huff** for providing music leadership this morning while Kathy attends her nephew's wedding this weekend in Virginia.

Welcome New Members: Jim Adams and Dennis Hill were received into membership by the Session this morning.

Jim Adams was born in Missouri and raised in Tennessee. He is retired (travel and pharmaceutical industries) and currently teaches English as a Second Language (ESL) at Durham Tech. Jim is a graduate of Vanderbilt and Duke universities and enjoys spending time with friends, traveling, American Sign Language, yoga, and politics. He joins FPC by reaffirmation of faith.

Dennis Hill was born in Kannapolis, NC. He is an ordained minister and retired pastor, having served locally at Mount Carmel Baptist Church in Chapel Hill. He is a graduate of Mars Hill College, the NC School of Pastoral Care, and Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. Dennis enjoys watercolor painting, writing, get-togethers with friends, and politics. He joins FPC by reaffirmation of faith.

The *sanctuary table* upon which the Advent Wreath sits was made by **George Danser** and is given to the church by him and his wife, **Jean Cary**. George has drawn design features from our communion table and used oak removed from the sanctuary during our renovation and from a tree in their backyard that Jean saw get hit by lightning some years ago.

Advent paraments: In 2012, First Presbyterian Church commissioned internationally known fiber-artist Laurie Wohl to design and create two paraments to be hung from the pulpit and lectern during Lent and Advent. The Advent text on the pulpit parament, in Hebrew and English, is from Isaiah 12:3: "With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation." The Advent text on the lectern parament is from Luke 1:78-79: "The dawn from on high will break upon us to give light to guide our feet into the way of peace." We are grateful that the bequest of Anne 'St. Clair' Williams made it possible to enhance our sanctuary with these beautiful works of art.

Hearing Assistance Receivers are available from the ushers. Before you leave the sanctuary, please turn off the receiver and place it in the specially marked receptacle by the door or return it to the audio/video console at the rear of the sanctuary. Receivers are sanitized after each use.

Childcare: A staffed nursery and children's playroom are available on the second floor of the education building during worship. **Activity bags** are available in the foyer for children. Please return bags to the foyer at the end of worship.

Restroom locations: to the left and right as you exit the rear of the sanctuary; on the second floor of the education building; and on the first and second floors of the church house. There is an infant changing table in the restroom area located to the left as you exit the rear of the sanctuary.

Today's worship texts are taken from *Book of Common Worship* and *Call to Worship* (Lectionary Aides for 2014-2015, Year B).

These Days devotional books for January-March 2024 have arrived. Free copies are available from the tables in the foyer and narthex.

A Call for Ushers: If you are interested in serving as head usher or being on-call for ushering duties, especially on the first and second Sundays of the month, please contact Esther Hethcox (e.hethcox@firstpres-durham.org or 540-316-1548). Instructions are available.



Sunday, December 17

Third Sunday of Advent

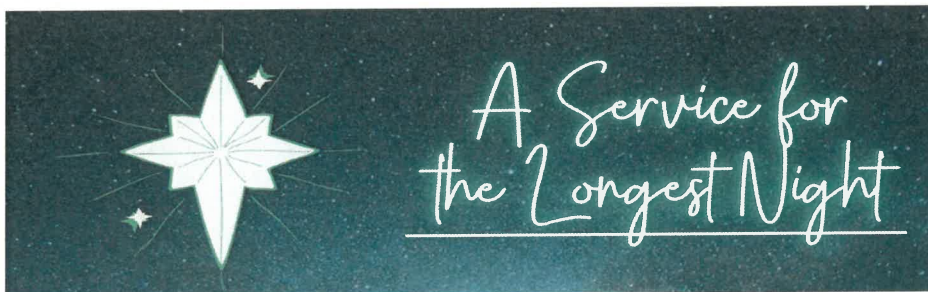
Faith Formation Classes

(all ages, multiple classrooms, 9:45-10:45 a.m.)

A Service of Lessons & Carols (sanctuary, 11:00 a.m.)

Children's Christmas Pageant (sanctuary, 5:00 p.m. (rehearsal) / 5:30 p.m. (performance))

All-Church Potluck (Watts-Hill Hall, 6:00 p.m.) **followed by a Carols Sing-Along**



Thursday, December 21

Worship with prayers, hymns, and moments of silence
(sanctuary, 5:30 p.m.)



Sunday, December 24

Fourth Sunday of Advent

No faith formation classes for children and youth

Worship (sanctuary, 11:00 a.m.)

The Christmas Joy and Hunger for Change offerings will be received.



Christmas Eve Worship

Holy Communion and Candlelight Service

(sanctuary, 5:00 p.m.)

~ Joys and Concerns ~

Good News: First Presbyterian Church had a successful shopping day at Bull City Fair Trade on November 19th. The total spent by those who chose to have 10% of their purchases donated to the FPC Walk-in Ministry was \$2,409.18, so rounding up, the amount given to the church to help those in crisis is \$241. Thanks to everyone who shopped and made this donation possible.

Birth Announcement: Congratulations to *Mercy Ndambiri Curlett* on the birth of a grandchild. *Shiloh* was born to *Sonia Ndambiri* and *Shelton Gill* on November 8th.

Congratulations to Carl Rist who took the oath of office this week and began serving on the Durham City Council.

Condolences: The love and concern of the congregation are extended to:

- *Wilson & Pam Gunn and family* on the death of their grandson, *Jacob Hodge*. Jacob's memorial service was held December 7th in Martinsville, VA.
- *Jennifer Creadick and family* on the sudden death of her twin brother, *Jeff Cook*. Jennifer now lives in Minnesota. Expressions of sympathy can be sent to her at 2619 Ulysses St. NE, Minneapolis, MN 55418.
- *Kappy & Perry Black and family* on the death of Kappy's sister, *Maria Carr Harrell* on December 3rd. Maria was the daughter of longtime FPC members *Al & Katherine Carr* and grew up in this church.

Concerns:

- *Beth Brockman*, following her arrest (with 17 others) at the US Mission to the United Nations where they demanded that the U.S. sign the *Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons*.
- *Doug Butler*, recovering at home from surgery.
- *Franzi Rokoske*, recovering from surgery.
- *Emily Wilson*, daughter-in-law of Jean & Chuck Wilson, is recovering from surgery.
- *Robert Lewis, Jr.*, son of Robert (Bob) Lewis, Sr., recovering from surgery.
- *Spencer Reaves*, who worships regularly with FPC, is recovering from surgery.

Susan Cyr

Paul Cornsweet

Kerry Holbrook

Lee House

Ann Huff

Jenni James

Mitzi Leshner-Thomas

Alfred Tisdale

Care Communities

Croasdaile Pavilion: *Dub Gulley*

Durham Ridge Assisted Living: *Phillip Herndon*

Hillcrest Convalescent: *Julian Boswell, Maxie Honeycutt, Carol Wills, Jim Wolfe*

Family and Friends of the Congregation

Bob Betley, friend of Susan Cyr

John Keller, son of Tom & Margaret Keller

Gabe Lamazares, assoc. rector, St. Philip's EC

Edwin Orphys, cousin of Kerry Holbrook

Joe Quirk, friend of Mindy Douglas

Calvin Rogers, friend of Steve Rimmer

John C. Weicher, father of John Weicher

Kim Cummings, father of Drew Cummings

Brian Knowles, son of Sheila & Sam Miglarese

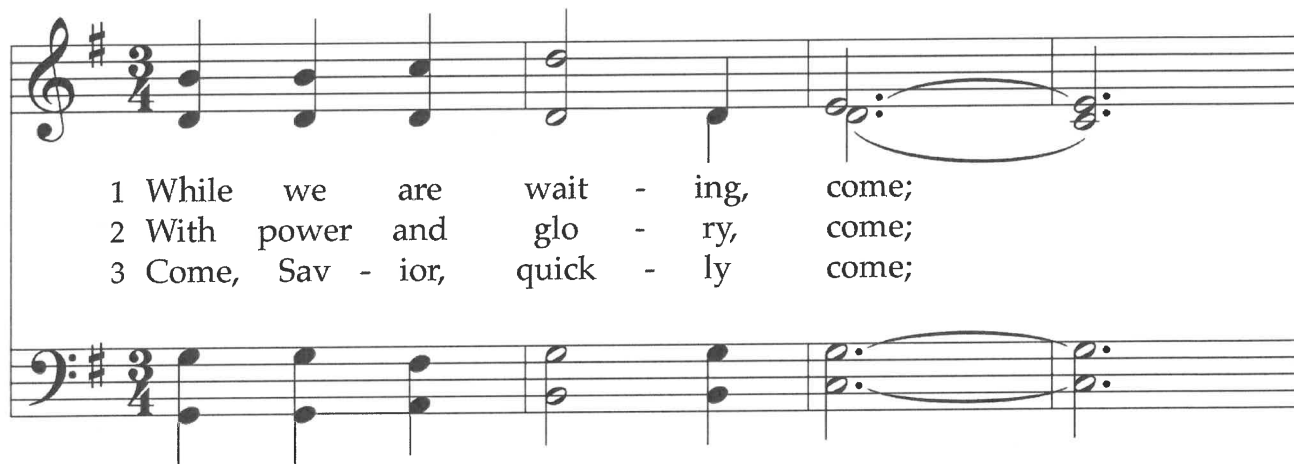
Keith Nivens, uncle of Mindy Douglas

Alan Petersburg, brother-in-law of Jenni James

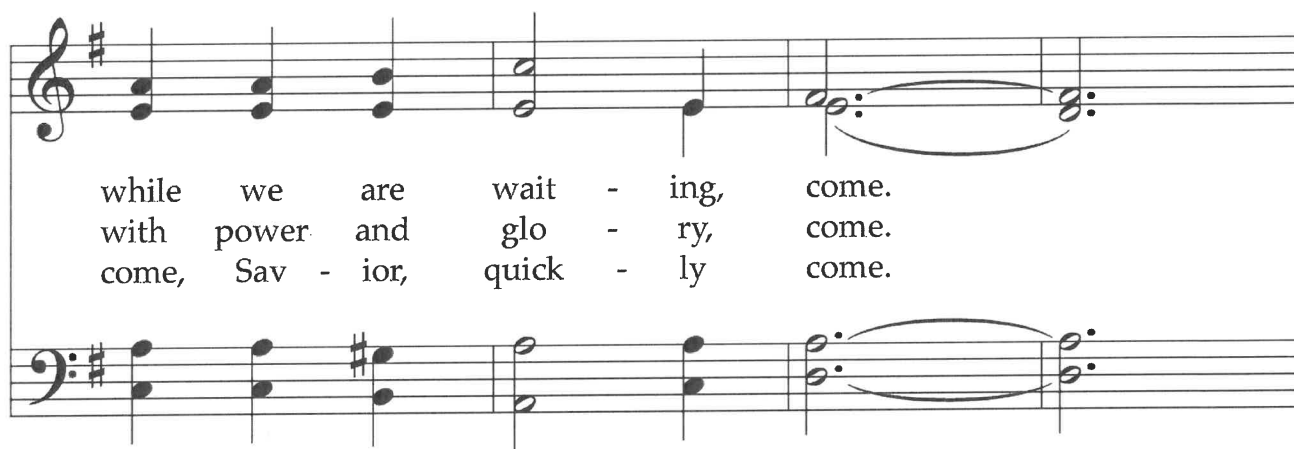
Doug Rimmer, brother of Steve Rimmer

Jim Vacca, father of Jamie Chambliss

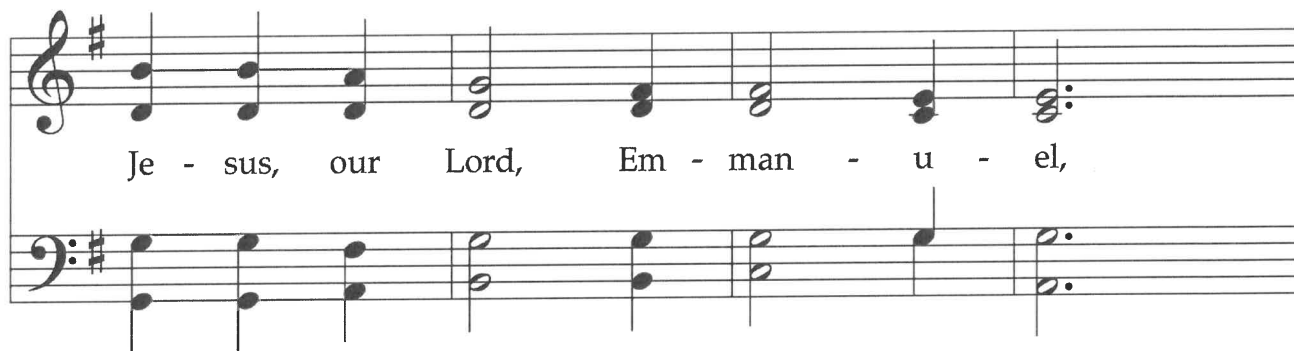
92 While We Are Waiting, Come



1 While we are wait - ing, come;
2 With power and glo - ry, come;
3 Come, Sav - ior, quick - ly come;



while we are wait - ing, come.
with power and glo - ry, come.
come, Sav - ior, quick - ly come.

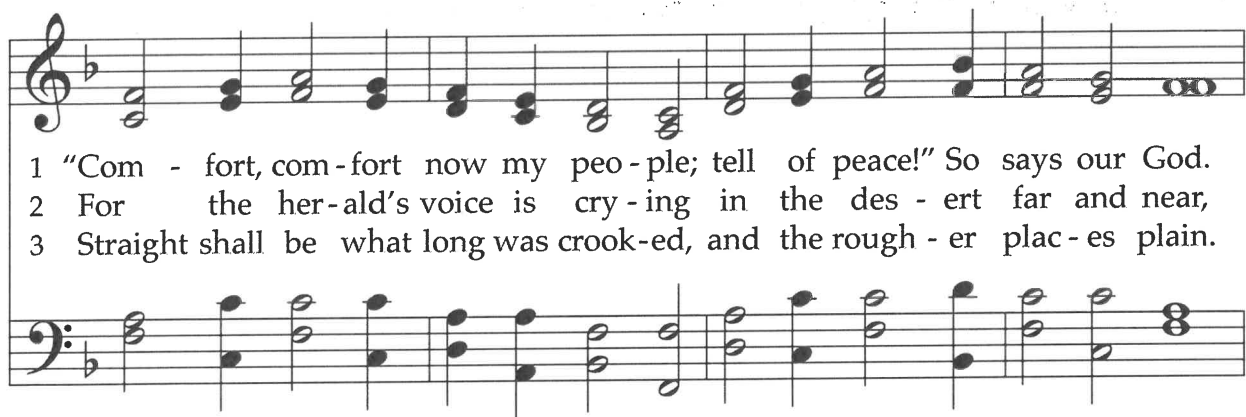


Je - sus, our Lord, Em - man - u - el,

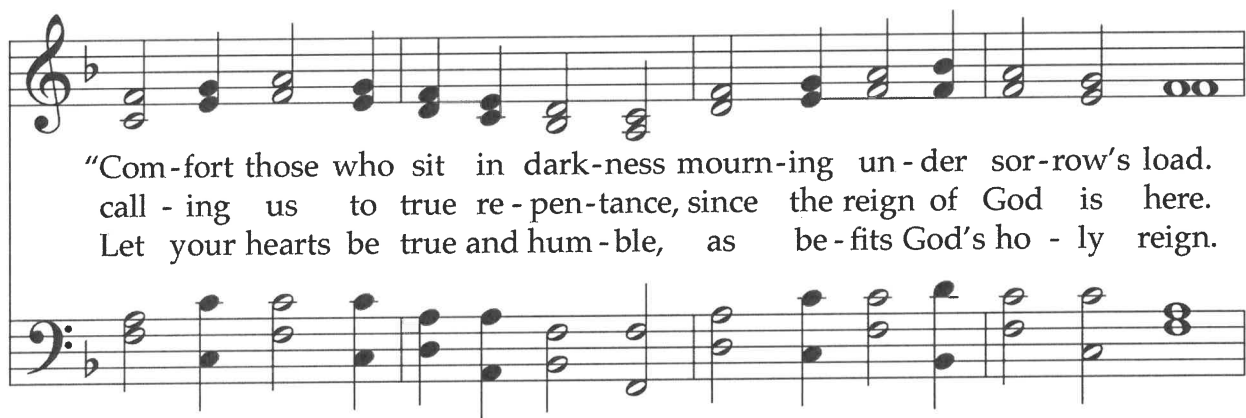


while we are wait - ing, come.

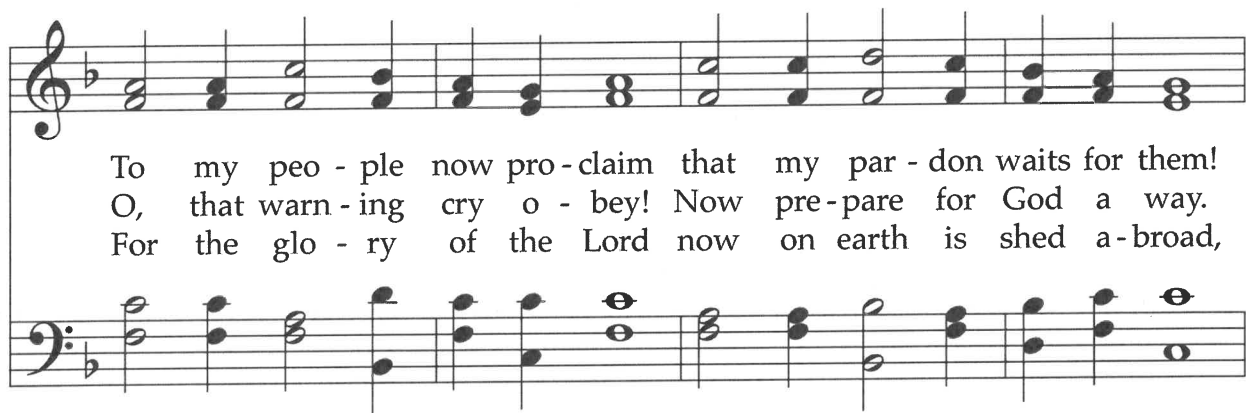
Comfort, Comfort Now My People 87



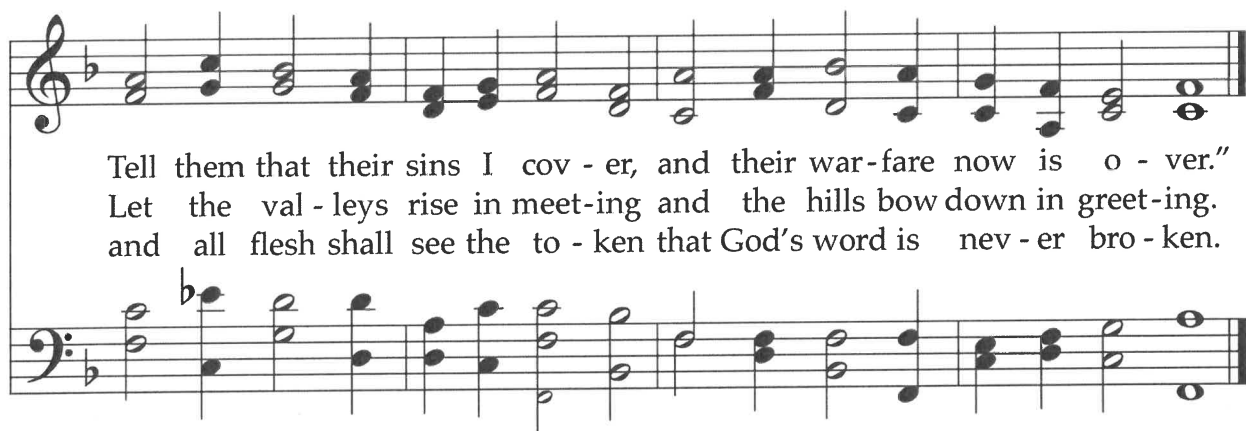
1 "Com - fort, com - fort now my peo - ple; tell of peace!" So says our God.
2 For the her - ald's voice is cry - ing in the des - ert far and near,
3 Straight shall be what long was crook - ed, and the rough - er plac - es plain.



"Com - fort those who sit in dark - ness mourn - ing un - der sor - row's load.
call - ing us to true re - pen - tance, since the reign of God is here.
Let your hearts be true and hum - ble, as be - fits God's ho - ly reign.

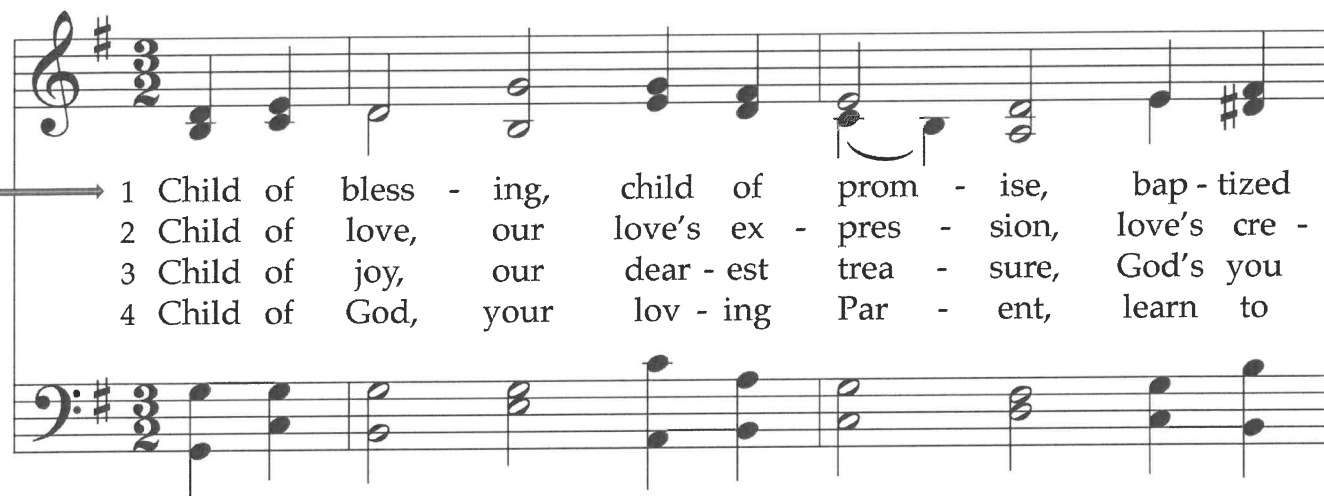


To my peo - ple now pro - claim that my par - don waits for them!
O, that warn - ing cry o - bey! Now pre - pare for God a way.
For the glo - ry of the Lord now on earth is shed a - broad,

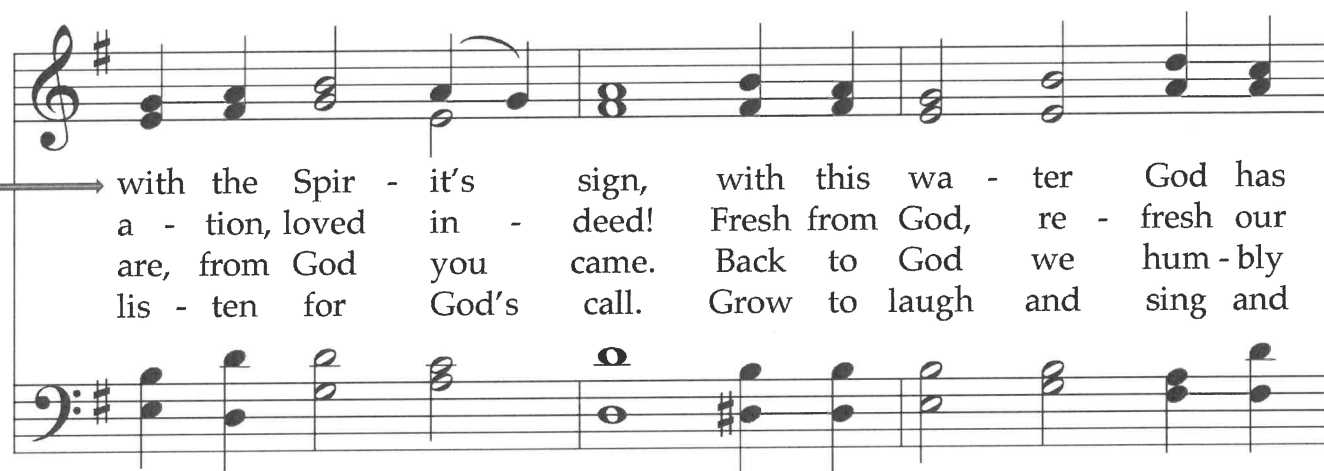


Tell them that their sins I cov - er, and their war - fare now is o - ver."
Let the val - leys rise in meet - ing and the hills bow down in greet - ing.
and all flesh shall see the to - ken that God's word is nev - er bro - ken.

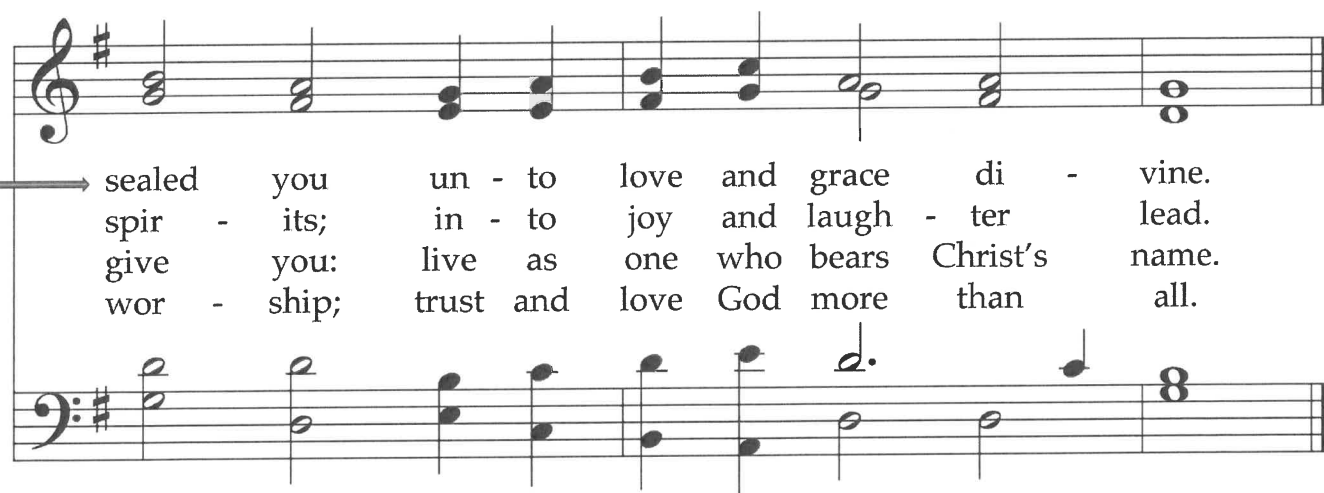
486 Child of Blessing, Child of Promise



1 Child of bless - ing, child of prom - ise, bap - tized
2 Child of love, our love's ex - pres - sion, love's cre -
3 Child of joy, our dear - est trea - sure, God's you
4 Child of God, your lov - ing Par - ent, learn to



with the Spir - it's sign, with this wa - ter God has
a - tion, loved in - deed! Fresh from God, re - fresh our
are, from God you came. Back to God we hum - bly
lis - ten for God's call. Grow to laugh and sing and



sealed you un - to love and grace di - vine.
spir - its; in - to joy and laugh - ter lead.
give you: live as one who bears Christ's name.
wor - ship; trust and love God more than all.

Of the Father's Love Begotten 108



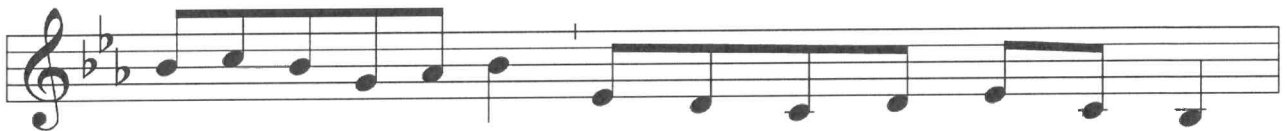
1 Of the Fa-ther's love be - got - ten, ere the worlds be - gan
 2 By his Word was all cre - at - ed; he com-mand-ed; it
 3 O, that birth for - ev - er bless - ed when the Vir - gin, full
 4 This is he whom seers in old time chant-ed of with one
 5 O ye heights of heaven, a - dore him. An - gel hosts, his prais -
 6 Christ, to thee with God the Fa - ther, and, O Ho - ly Ghost,



to be, he is Al - pha and O - me - ga; he the
 was done: heaven and earth and depths of o - cean, u - ni -
 of grace, by the Ho - ly Ghost con - ceiv - ing, bore the
 ac - cord, whom the voic - es of the proph - ets prom-ised
 es sing. Powers, do - min - ions, bow be - fore him, and ex -
 to thee, hymn and chant and high thanks-giv - ing and un -



source, the end - ing he, of the things that are, that
 verse of three in one, all that sees the moon's soft
 Sav - ior of our race, and the babe, the world's Re -
 in their faith - ful word. Now he shines, the long - ex -
 tol our God and King. Let no tongue on earth be
 wea - ried prais - es be. Hon - or, glo - ry, and do -



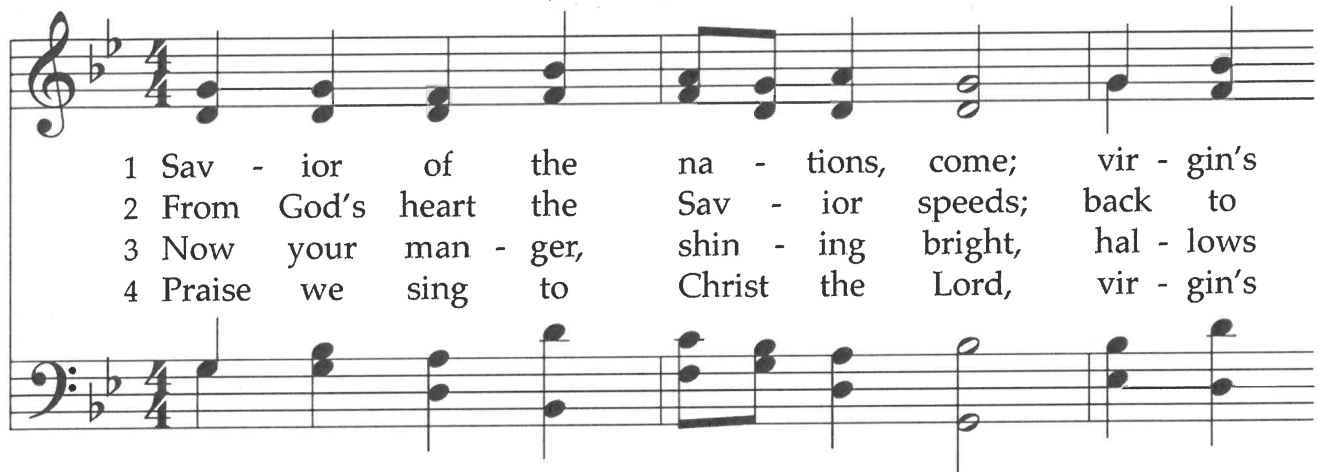
have been, and that fu - ture years shall see,
 shin - ing, all that breathes be - neath the sun,
 deem - er, first re - vealed his sa - cred face,
 pect - ed. Let cre - a - tion praise its Lord,
 si - lent; ev - ery voice in con - cert ring,
 min - ion, and e - ter - nal vic - to - ry,



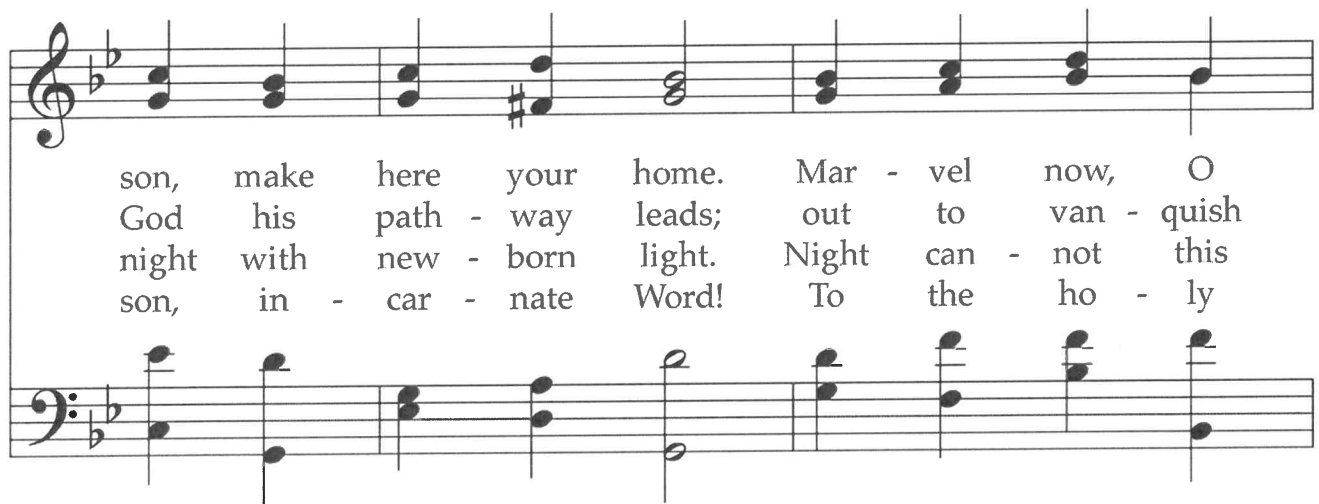
ev - er - more and ev - er - more! A - men.

(after stanza 6)

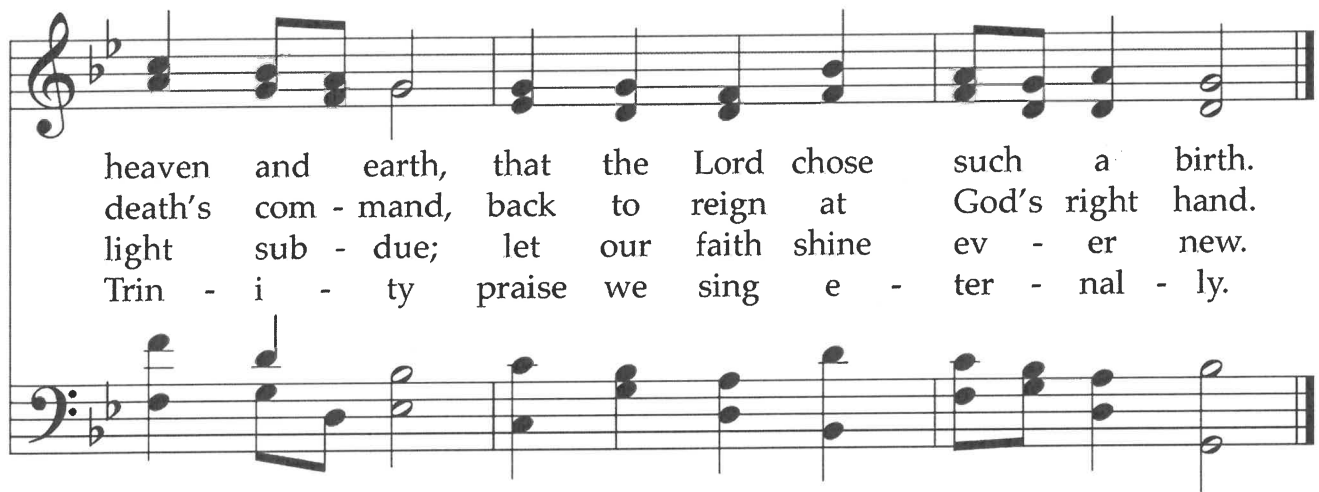
Savior of the Nations, Come 102



1 Sav - ior of the na - tions, come; vir - gin's
 2 From God's heart the Sav - ior speeds; back to
 3 Now your man - ger, shin - ing bright, hal - lows
 4 Praise we sing to Christ the Lord, vir - gin's



son, make here your home. Mar - vel now, O
 God his path - way leads; out to van - quish
 night with new - born light. Night can - not this
 son, in - car - nate Word! To the ho - ly



heaven and earth, that the Lord chose such a birth.
 death's com - mand, back to reign at God's right hand.
 light sub - due; let our faith shine ev - er new.
 Trin - i - ty praise we sing e - ter - nal - ly.

The Week at a Glance!

Later Today

5:00-7:00 PM Youth Group
5:30-7:00 PM The Somethings Artvent
8:00 PM MnMs Fellowship (via Zoom)

Monday, December 11

9:00 AM-12 Noon Walk-in Ministry Interviews
1:30 PM Worship Planning
6:00 PM Christian Education Committee
 Property Committee
6:30 PM Service & Mission Committee
7:00 PM Worship & the Arts Committee

Tuesday, December 12

4:30 PM Handbells rehearsal
6:00 PM Tutoring Sessions at Iglesia Emanuel
7:00 PM Personnel Committee

Wednesday, December 13

1:00 PM Program Staff Meeting
6:00 PM Stewardship Committee
 MS Girls Dinner (at Mellow Mushroom)
7:00 PM Chancel Choir

Thursday, December 14

9:00 AM-12 Noon Walk-in Ministry Interviews
6:00 PM Tutoring Sessions at Iglesia Emanuel

Friday, December 15

Saturday, December 16



Sunday, December 17 3rd Sunday of Advent

9:45-10:45 AM Faith Formation classes for all ages
11:00 AM Lessons and Carols
5:30 PM Children's Christmas Pageant (rehearsal at 5:00 PM)
6:00 PM All-Church Potluck and Carols Sing-Along

For more information about First Presbyterian Church, email the church office:
info@firstpres-durham.org or visit our website: <https://firstpres-durham.org>.

CHURCH STAFF

Tom Bloom, Business Administrator
Lenore Champion, Children's Ministry Director
Vernon Cooper, Sexton
Mindy Douglas, Pastor, Head of Staff
Susan Dunlap, Parish Associate
Omar Guess, Sunday Morning Sexton
Joseph Harvard, Pastor Emeritus



Amy Bowers Heit, Pastoral Associate
Sybil King, Administrative Assistant
Mitzi Leshner-Thomas, Associate Pastor (Medical Leave)
Valerie McMillian, Parish Administrator
Kathy Parkins, Minister of Music
John Weicher, Associate Pastor