

# People, Look East

Love, the

Guest

Rose

Bird

Star

Lord is on the way

105 People, Look East

1 Peo - ple, look east. The time is near of the  
2 Fur - rows, be glad. Though earth is bare, one more  
3 Birds, though you long have ceased to build, guard the  
4 Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim one more  
5 An - gels, an - nounce with shouts of mirth Christ who

crow - ing of the year. Make your house fair as you are  
seed is plant - ed there. Give up your strength the seed to  
nest that must be filled. E - ven the hour when wings are  
light the bowl shall brim, shin - ing be - yond the frost - y  
brings new life to earth. Set ev - ery peak and val - ley

Peo - ple, look  
a - ble; trim the hearth and set the ta - ble,  
nour - ish that in course the flower may flour - ish,  
Iro - zen God for fledg - ing time has cho - sen,  
weath - er, bright as sun and moon to gath - er,  
burn - ming with the word, the Lord is com - ing.

December 10, 2023

Second Sunday of Advent

10:30am

## GATHERING

Chimes

Lighting of the Advent Candles

Prelude

Opening Prayer

Call to Worship – based on Isaiah 40:1-11

“Comfort, comfort My people,” says your God.  
“With gentle words, tender and kind,  
Assure my people, this chosen band from long ago,  
that all the battles are over.”

**A voice is wailing, “In the wilderness, get it ready!  
Prepare the way; make it a straight shot.  
The Eternal One would have it so.**

Straighten the way in the wandering desert  
to make the crooked road wide and straight for our God.  
**Where there are steep valleys, treacherous descents,  
raise the highway; lift it up;  
bring down the dizzying heights.**

Fill in the potholes and gullies, the rough places.  
Iron out the shoulders flat and wide.

**The Lord will be, really be, among us.  
The radiant glory of the Lord will be revealed.**  
All flesh together will take it in. Believe it.  
None other than God, the Eternal, has spoken.

My soul cries out with a joyful shout that the God of my heart is great,  
and my spirit sings of the wondrous things that you bring to the ones who wait.  
You fixed your sight on your servant's plight, and my weakness you did not spurn,  
so from east to west shall my name be blest. Could the world be about to turn?

Refrain:

My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Let the fires of your justice burn.  
Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near, and the world is about to turn.

Though I am small, my God, my all, you work great things in me,  
and your mercy will last from the depths of the past to the end of the age to be.  
Your very name puts the proud to shame, and to those who would for you yearn,  
you will show your might, put the strong to flight, for the world is about to turn. (Refrain)

From the halls of power to the fortress tower, not a stone will be left on stone.  
Let the king beware for your justice tears every tyrant from his throne.  
The hungry poor shall weep no more, for the food they can never earn;  
there are tables spread; every mouth be fed, for the world is about to turn. (Refrain)

Though the nations rage from age to age, we remember who holds us fast:  
God's mercy must deliver us from the conqueror's crushing grasp.  
This saving word that our forebears heard is the promise which holds us bound,  
till the spear and rod can be crushed by God, who is turning the world around. (Refrain)

## CONFESSING

Call to Confession

Prayers of Confession

**O promised Christ:  
We are a world at war.  
Our peace depends on your coming.  
We are a sinful people.  
Our pardon depends on your coming.  
We are full of good intentions but weak at keeping promises;  
our only hope of doing God's good will  
is that you should come and help us do it.**

**Lord Jesus,  
Word made flesh,  
our world waits  
for your peace,  
for your pardon,  
and for your grace.  
Even so: come, Lord Jesus.**

**Hear our prayers ...**

Assurance of Forgiveness

Response to Forgiveness #113

*Angels We Have Heard on High*

Refrain

Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Affirmation of Faith – 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.**

\*Passing the Peace

Announcements and Invitations

Gathering of our Offerings

Offertory Music

*Waiting*

arr. Choplin

\*Response — Doxology #606 and 147

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him, all creatures here below; Alleluia! Alleluia!  
Praise God for all that love has done, Creator, Christ, and Spirit one! Alleluia! O Praise God! Alleluia!  
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, born is the King of Israel.

### LISTENING

\*Prayers of Thanksgiving and for Illumination

Scripture – Luke 2:1-6

Hymn #105 (remain seated)

*People, Look East*

People, look east. The time is near of the crowning of the year.  
Make your house fair as you are able; trim the hearth and set the table.  
People, look east and sing today: Love, the Guest, is on the way.

Furrows, be glad. Though earth is bare, one more seed is planted there.  
Give up your strength the seed to nourish, that in course the flower may flourish.  
People, look east and sing today: Love, the Rose, is on the way.

Birds, though you long have ceased to build, guard the nest that must be filled.  
Even the hour when wings are frozen God for fledging time has chosen.  
People, look east and sing today: Love, the Bird, is on the way.

Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim one more light the bowl shall brim,  
shining beyond the frosty weather, bright as sun and moon together.  
People, look east and sing today: Love, the Star, is on the way.

Angels, announce with shouts of mirth Christ who brings new life to earth.  
Set every peak and valley humming with the word, the Lord is coming.  
People, look east and sing today: Love, the Lord, is on the way.

Sermon – Love, the Guest, is on the way

### SHARING

\*Hymn #110

*Love Has Come*

Love has come: a light in the darkness! Love shines forth in the Bethlehem skies.  
See, all heaven has come to proclaim it; hear how their song of joy arises:  
Love! Love! Born unto you, a Savior! Love! Love! Glory to God on high.

Love is born! Come, share in the wonder. Love is God now asleep in the hay.  
See the glow in the eyes of his mother; what is the name her heart is saying?  
Love! Love! Love is the name she whispers. Love! Love! Jesus, Emmanuel.

Love has come and never will leave us! Love is life everlasting and free.  
Love is Jesus within and among us. Love is the peace our hearts are seeking.  
Love! Love! Love is the gift of Christmas. Love! Love! Praise to you, God on high!

Sacrament of Communion for all God's people

Invitation to the Table

Prayer of Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right for us to give thanks and praise...**

Lord's Prayer

**Our Father, Who art in Heaven, Hallowed by Thy name, Thy Kingdome 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.**

Sharing of the Bread and Cup

*All who desire the communion meal are invited to come forward to the table, receive a portion of bread from the pastor, take a cup from one of the elders, and return to the pew. We will share in the cup together once everyone has been served.*

Music during communion

Closing Unison Prayer

**God of grace, you renew us at your table with the bread of life.**

**May this food strengthen us in love  
and help us to serve you in each other.**

**We ask this in the name of Jesus, the Lord. Amen.**

**DEPARTING**

\*Charge and Benediction

\*Sung Response #377

*I Want to Walk as a Child of Light*

I want to walk as a child of the light. I want to follow Jesus.  
God set the stars to give light to the world. The star of my life is Jesus.  
In him there is no darkness at all. The night and the day are both alike.  
The Lamb is the light of the city of God. Shine in my heart, Lord Jesus.

Postlude



## Information & Announcements

### Welcome to our guests!

Whether you are sharing in the worship of God with us for the first time, visiting with family or friends, or returning for a visit to your home church, we welcome you today in the name of Jesus. Please share some contact information with us so we can follow up with you and make a place for you in our weekly fellowship. You may email our church office at [admin@northminstermacon.org](mailto:admin@northminstermacon.org).

### PRAYER CONCERNS

If you have a need or a request for prayer, please contact the church office.

Current Member Concerns: Ann R. Smith; Jane Prentice; Ann Hall; Jane Ebey; Kathy Wheeler; Frank & Evelyn Clark; Nancy Miles; Annette Hutto - Current Friends and Family Concerns: Margaret Yawn; Donna Carole Kitchens; Joel Jones; Nelda Crow; Sara Walcott; Laurie King (Diboll); John & Louise Sallstrom; Betty Shuford - Military Personnel Prayer List: Austin Riley; Joshua Sulkers; Isaac Falkenstine (Bonnie Diboll's grandson); James Watwood

### Sanctuary Flowers

Flowers this Sunday have been given to the glory of God by Pat McCall in celebration of the Advent Season.

### Sunday Study Continues

We will have our final Advent season study next Sunday, December 17<sup>th</sup>. Beginning January 7<sup>th</sup>, we will start three 6-week sessions of multi-generational Sunday studies! These sessions will be led by some of the amazing faculty of Mercer's Department of Religion. The first, Christian Ethics as faithful Innovation, will be led by Paul Lewis. The second series, Lent for Everyone, will be led by Brian Whitfield. The third series, Do Pharaohs Still Exist, will be led by Janell Johnson. We hope you will plan to come. We'll be gathering at 9:00 with a light continental breakfast. Child care will be provided for our youngest members, and we're hard at work on more plans for children and youth.

### Christmas Eve

Christmas Eve, we will have an abbreviated worship service in the morning at 10:30 and our annual Christmas Eve Candlelight service at 6:00<sup>PM</sup>. If you or someone you know would like transportation to and from the evening service, please let Jennifer know in the office. ([admin@northminstermacon.org](mailto:admin@northminstermacon.org))

### Christmas Joy Special Offering

Each year during the Advent and Christmas season, we turn our eyes to Bethlehem and celebrate the wondrous gift of Jesus Christ, our Savior. God has blessed the church with incredible leadership in every time and place, but those leaders often need to be supported by their communities as well. This Offering addresses the support needed by some of our leaders, including supporting leadership development for communities of color and providing support for Presbyterian church workers in their time of need. Donations can be made any time this month, and a special offering envelope will be provided with your December 17<sup>th</sup> bulletin.

### Christian Ethics as Faithful Innovation – Sunday Study

Paul Lewis will be leading our first six-weeks of Sunday Study beginning January 7<sup>th</sup>. Paul has been a professor in the School of Religion at Mercer since 2002 with a specialty in Theological Ethics. We'll share more biographical details later. If you would like a copy of the book that Paul will be using in this study, please indicate this on your blue response sheet and we will order them as a group. Each hard-copy book is \$18 and the ebook is \$9. The link to information about the book can be found at <https://www.helwys.com/sh-books/faithful-innovation>. The book is certainly not required for this study, but is simply being made available for those interested.

### NORTHMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Our calling at Northminster is to make disciples, to grow in faith together, and to serve others in Christ.

CONGREGATION: Ministers of the Good News; SESSION of Ruling Elders: Kari Alderman; Jeff Denny; Barbara Fatkin; Nita McCord; Jinny McDuffie; Ray Mosely; Michael Napier; Donna Shuford; Minor Vernon; Genny Whitaker

RALPH HAWKINS, Pastor and Teaching Elder PAUL EVANS, Parish Associate GUNNER CHANCEY, Director of Music  
KAREN JONES, Clerk of Session JENNIFER WHITEHEAD, Ministry Assistant

**Office hours this week:** Tuesday-Thursday 8am-3pm; Sunday 8am-1pm  
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