

# REDEEMER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

An Evangelical Presbyterian Church  
www.rpcerie.org

## Sunday Morning Worship Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 24, 2017

Worship Theme: *“Our Advent season culminates today. We have prepared for Christ’s first arrival on earth, as well as anticipated His second. Both are great mysteries, which are God’s loving gifts to us.”*

Families with very young children please note that, if you wish to use it, we offer Nursery Care during our Worship Service in the Joyce Parlor.

**Gathering Music:** *Prepare the Royal Highway*..... arr. Cherwien  
Shirley W. Wilson, Organist

**Welcome and Announcements**..... Robert LeSuer

**Introduction to Today’s Worship**..... Susan Brooks

**Prelude:** *God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen*.....arr. Charter

**Call to Worship:** *(responsively)*..... Thomas Brooks

Liturgist: Let us prepare our hearts

Congregation: **as we await the coming of our Lord,**

Liturgist: Let us watch for the one who heard our cries

Congregation: **and shouldered the suffering of our world,**

Liturgist: Let us anticipate the coming of Christ’s eternal world

Congregation: **with wholeness, reconciliation and plenty for all.**

Liturgist: Let us wait in expectation for the day

Congregation: **when God’s glory is revealed in all its fullness.**

**\*Hymn No. 5:** *Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence*..... PICARDY

(...continued over...)

**Lighting of the Advent Wreath** ..... Marykay and James Stahl

Liturgist: In the previous three Sundays of Advent we have lit the candle for Hope, Peace and Joy. Today we light the fourth candle for Love. In lighting this candle let us be reminded of the love God has shown by sending his son, Jesus, to be our Savior and Redeemer.

Liturgist John 3:16 tells us that “God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.” Jesus is God’s perfect love in human form.

Liturgist: Once we have accepted His love, we must share His love, which is now within us, with one another. Jesus teaches us in John 13:34-35. “I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

Liturgist: Let us remember that God’s perfect love is found in Jesus.

**Congregation: Let us remember and live each day in the knowledge and understanding of what God and His love has done for us.**

**Prayers of Confession**..... Thomas Brooks

We will begin by praying silently, confessing our personal sins. Then, we will join in a unison prayer of corporate confession.

**Lord Jesus Christ, we confess our willingness to be loved, but also our reluctance to love. We confess our readiness to accept Your forgiving love, but also our refusal to forgive. We confess our eagerness to grasp Your offer of redeeming love, but also our resistance to follow You without question.**

**In this Advent time, forgive our failure to respond as we should. Come to us anew, and, by Your grace, assist us to receive You with joy, as the shepherds of long ago did;**

with gratitude, as Simeon did; with obedience, as Mary did; with love, just as You have loved us. Even so: come, Lord Jesus. Amen.

**Assurance of Pardon** (*unison*)..... Thomas Brooks

Comfort, comfort my people says our God. Our sins are pardoned. The penalty is paid. Thanks be to God.

—based on Isaiah 40:1-2

**\*Response Hymn:** *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*..... *VENI EMMANUEL*

O Come, thou rod of Jesse, free  
thine own from Satan's tyranny;  
From depths of hell thy people save,  
and give them vict'ry o'er the grave.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

**Moments of Thanksgiving and Praise**..... Thomas Brooks

**Prayers and Petitions of the**

**People, and The Lord's Prayer** (*debts/debtors*)..... Thomas Brooks

**Advent Scripture Reflections**..... Susan and Thomas Brooks

- 2 Samuel 7:1-11,16 .....God's Promise
- Luke 1:46b-55 .....Mary's Song
- Psalms 89:1-4,19-26 .....David's Gratitude
- Romans 16:25-27 .....Paul's Praise
- Luke 1:26-38 ..... Gabriel's Conversation

**Offering:** *Sing We Now of Christmas* ..... *arr. Cherwien*

**Prayer of Dedication for Our Offering** (*unison*) ..... Thomas Brooks

**Almighty God, we praise Your Holy name in our offering. You have blessed us with more than we need so we can help those in need, especially of the Gospel. We wish to honor You with our words, our deeds and our wealth and pray that You will be greatly honored as we have rededicated ourselves in the power of Jesus. Amen.**

(...continued over...)

**\*Hymn No. 1:** *Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus* .....*STUTTGART*

**\*Passing of the Peace** (*to one another*)..... Thomas Brooks

**\*Benediction** (*unison, spoken to each other*) ..... Thomas Brooks

**We praise You, O Christ, for coming to us—both as a baby born in Bethlehem long ago and in Your divine Presence with us during our worship. We thank You that You will be with us always—even to the end of the age. Go with us, then, throughout this week, that we may love You and serve You with gladness and singleness of heart. Amen.**

*At the conclusion of the Benediction, the Congregation is dismissed.*

**Postlude:** *Joy to the World*.....*arr. Held*

*\* Congregation please stand, if you are able to do so.*

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### After the Worship Service

If you wish to have a time of personal prayer for any needs in your life, please speak to Bob LeSuer, Jennifer Pontzer, or Dean Wilson and they will arrange for someone to meet with you today and pray with you.



**REDEEMER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**  
*An Evangelical Presbyterian Church*  
 Meeting at: St. Matthew's Lutheran Church  
 950 West 7th Street, Erie, PA  
**CHRISTMAS EVE — 5:00 P.M.**  
 —Lessons and Carols—  
 The simplicity of Scripture and Carols  
 tells the story of the coming  
 of the Lord Jesus Christ to redeem us all!