

Parkersburg Ministerial Association
Welcome Christmas 2018

Prelude

Welcome

Song: 245 **O Come, O Come, Emmanuel**

Greeting

The Attributes of Jesus as Illustrated in the Advent Wreath

The Wreath – Eternal

1st Candle – Hope

Leader: As our days grow shorter and our nights longer, we who are people of faith turn to the symbol of Advent candles, to proclaim our belief in the unquenchable light, Jesus Christ. In hopeful anticipation, we are preparing for the coming of the Prince of Peace. Let us listen to the Word in the prophet.

All: We open our hearts to the Word in the words. As we begin our journey, we long for the One who opened heaven and came down to kindle a fire in our soul.

Reading: Isaiah 64:1-9

Leader: We who wait with anticipation, feel hope rise within us. And so we light this first candle and name it HOPE.

Song: 285 **O Holy Night!**

2nd Candle – Peace

Leader: Advent calls us to prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ. All around us people prepare for parties, dinners and presents. These events could distract us from the real reason for our anticipation. On the other hand, they could prepare us; they could be the voice in the wilderness of materialism: “Prepare for what is really important.”

All: Rather than getting lost in the wilderness of distraction. We will listen to the voice that is calling our name. We will listen for the Word in the words.

Reading: Isaiah 40:3-5

Leader: We choose to be a peaceful presence in the midst of a frantic season. So today, we light the second candle as an act of preparation and call it PEACE.

Song: 267 **I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day**

3rd Candle – Joy

Leader: This season of preparation will go quickly. We light the third candle of the Advent ring to remind us that there is so much about which we rejoice.

All: In the midst of all the merriment, we are a people seeking pure joy, in the arms of the Anointed One who comes to bring it. Even as the night continues to lengthen, Light will brighten our darkness, so we listen for the Word.

Reading: Isaiah 61:1-3

Leader: For us, God has replaced our mourning with the oil of gladness. We light this third candle and name it JOY.

Song: 270 **Joy to the World!**

4th Candle – Love

Leader: Love’s memory is long. As we come to the symbols of Advent, we recall the many times we have been here before, with still so much to do and so much love left unexpressed. Scripture tells us of the promised Savior, fulfilled in the birth of Jesus. Love’s promise is often kept in unexpected ways.

All: God’s love endures forever. God’s love is the one we long for. Today we prepare for the greatest expression of love, so we listen to the Word in the words.

Reading: Isaiah 9:2-7

Leader: God’s love transforms the world and God’s promises are kept. So, as we light the fourth candle in eager expectation of

God's greatest promise fulfilled, what else can we do but name
this candle LOVE?

Song: 256 **Love Has Come!**

5th Candle – Christ

Leader: We have listened to the messages from the prophets. In their words we have caught glimpses of the light that is promised, now though the Advent ring is ablaze and all the candles of anticipation have been lit, still there is one last prophecy to hear.

All: With eyes wide open, ears attuned and hearts unguarded, we focus on the Advent candles one last time, longing to receive the Word within the words.

Leader: No longer do we seek light from another source; now the light burns in our hearts. We light the candle in the center of our Advent ring and our faith. We light it in the name of the One who is light and life. We name this light JESUS.

Song: 281 **What Child Is This?**

Prayer

Offering for the Clothes Closet

Scripture: **Luke 2:8-20** (pg. 1591)

Message: **HUMBLE BEGINNINGS**

Prayer

Song: 277 **Hark! the Herald Angels Sing**

Blessing

Song: 262 **Away in a Manger**

Postlude