

SLATE RIDGE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

December 3, 2023 11:00am

First Sunday of Advent

Rev. Jack V. Carlson

PRELUDE

“And the Glory of the Lord”

Handel

ANNOUNCEMENTS

***RINGING OF THE TOWER BELL**

***INTROIT “Prepare!”**

Peterson

“Prepare, prepare, prepare, prepare

Prepare, the King is coming.

Prepare, prepare, prepare, prepare

Prepare, the King is coming soon.”

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

Leader: This is the season of holy waiting.

**People: We wait for the One who will tear open the
heavens and come down to save us.**

**Leader: We watch for the day when God’s name will be
made known among the nations.**

**People: We wait in the shadows for the Light of the
World to appear.**

Leader: Come let us walk in the light of God!

**People: Let us worship the God who comes to us in
Jesus Christ our Lord.**

***OPENING PRAYER**

(ALL)

Almighty God, as we begin this season of Advent, remind us again that in the midst of our darkness You are bringing us peace, to calm our anxious spirits and hectic lives. Turn our hearts again toward You. Make us ready to receive Your Son our Savior. Slow our pace, and give us the blessing of feeling Your peace in our spirits. For we ask this in Jesus' precious Name. AMEN.

***OPENING HYMN – #23**

“O Come, O Come Emmanuel”

Please be seated.

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

L: The Scriptures testify: “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

P: Let us call on the name of the Lord and receive the gift of forgiveness and life everlasting.

L: Let us together confess our sins before God, first in silence, and then in unison. *Pause for silent prayer.*

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

(ALL)

Loving and gracious God, we confess before You and one another our sins, in thought, word, and deed. Forgive us for the times in our lives when we disdained the help of Your loving Spirit, and sought to rely on ourselves alone. Forgive us for the times when we have dismissed the testimony of the Spirit in our neighbors, simply because they are different. Forgive us for the times we ourselves took credit for

the work of the Holy Spirit, instead of acknowledging You as the source of all good things. As the Psalmist prayed, “Put a new and a right spirit within us,” even Your own Holy Spirit, that we may once again be placed in a new and right relationship with You.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

L: The Scriptures testify: “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

P: We too have called on the name of the Lord, seeking God’s mercy and forgiveness.

L: In this season of Advent we are reassured: God’s love is flowing, the Spirit is here among us! I tell you in the name of the One who is and is to come, we are forgiven.

P: Alleluia, Amen!

***THE GLORIA PATRI #812**

SCRIPTURE READING

Isaiah 64:1-9, Pages 1161-1162

1 Corinthians 1: 3-9 , Pages 1771-1772

CHORAL ANTHEM

“Prepare!”

Peterson

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

Week One: Hope.

Please turn to bulletin insert.

SERMON “Of Grace and Gratitude”

***PROFESSION OF FAITH**

hymnal, back cover

***HYMN #11, insert**

“O Lord, How Shall I Meet You”

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Invitation to the Table

Words of Institution

Great Thanksgiving and the Lord’s Prayer

Breaking of the Bread

Communion

Sharing of Joys and Concerns

Prayer after Communion

SHARING OF JOYS AND CONCERNS

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE LORD’S PRAYER

RESPONSE TO PRAYERS - #641

“Hear Our Prayer, O Lord”

**PRESENTATION OF OUR GIFTS AND
OFFERINGS**

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

“Eternal Rose”

Lantz/Grier

***DOXOLOGY**

***OFFERING PRAYER**

***CLOSING HYMN #20, insert**

“Watchman, Tell Us of the Night”

***CHARGE AND BLESSING**

***BENEDICTION RESPONSE**

“Amen, Amen”

*** POSTLUDE**

“March to Bethlehem”

Sergisson

*Please stand if you are able.

ADVENT READING

HOPE

L: In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth,
and set lights in the sky – sun and moon and stars.

By these stars, our ancestors charted their journeys.

By these stars, they knew God was with them.

**P: Today we light one candle to bring the fire of the stars
down from heaven to earth, to nestle among the greens.**

L: We name this candle Hope.

**P: We too are on a journey, and we do not always know the
way.**

But we chart our path by the star of hope.

Even when better days seem very far away

and the weight of the world seems to crush your promises,

we set our face steadily towards the light.

L: Listen now to the prayer of an ancient poet:

“For God alone my soul waits in silence,

For my hope is from him.

God alone is my rock and my salvation,
my fortress; I shall not be shaken.

On God rests my deliverance and my honor;
my mighty rock, my refuge is in God.

Trust in him at all times, O people;

pour out your heart before him;

God is a refuge for us.” (Psalm 67:5-8)

ALL:

Jesus, as we search for signs of hope this week,

Help us to *become* the signs of hope that others are searching for. As these candles are but a glimpse of the light of the heavens, help us to be a glimpse of heaven’s hope. Amen.

BIO – THE REV. JOHN V. CARLSON

The Rev. John V. “Jack” Carlson retired from active ministry in the PCUSA in January 2016. Prior to his retirement, he served for 13 years as Pastor at Highland Presbyterian Church, in Harford County, MD. Before that he served churches in Lockport, NY, and Hyattsville, MD, and was a pastoral counselor for more than 20 years in the Washington DC area. After serving a term as Moderator of the Presbytery of Baltimore, in September of 2017 he was elected Stated Clerk of the Presbytery; he retired from that post in 2020. He has published three books: *The Spiritual Dimensions of Self-Esteem*, *The Spiritual Power of Communication*, and *The Disciple's Song*, a poetic rendering of the

Gospel of Mark. Jack is married to Lynn McCormick Carlson and has three grown children and five grandchildren. In his retirement, he spends time with his grandchildren, oil painting, travel, and golf.