

CALL TO CONFESSION

God of mercy, God of baptism, thank you for calling to us this day. We praise you that you challenge us to show our faith in ministries of peace and justice, offering compassion to all in need. Open our hearts and minds today to hear your words of encouragement and challenge. Hear our prayer.

CONFESSION OF SIN

**O God, we are incredibly stubborn.
We resist your grace.
We refuse to see.
Your Light has come into the world
and your blessings have been poured upon us,
but we only see our own problems.
We do not see the problems others face daily.
Open our eyes to the needs of others.
Challenge us to reach out with care and compassion.
Pour your baptismal waters over us again,
cleansing us from our self-pity and arrogance.
Nourish and heal us so that we may joyfully serve you.
Wash away our jealousy, greed,
and all negative thoughts and behaviors
that stand in the way of our truly being
the people you have called us to be.
Once again, let us receive the blessings offered in creation,
in the birth and baptism of Jesus,
and in the ministry of the saints of light.**

SILENT PRAYERS

SUNG RESPONSE

**Then cleansed be every life from sin;
Make straight the way for God within,
And let us all our hearts prepare
For Christ to come and enter there.**

No. 10

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

*Like these waters, the love of God flows freely. Like these waters, the love of God cleanses and renews our souls. Rejoice, dear friends, this is the good news:
In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. Amen.*

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*CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE

No. 23

**Let the nations shout and sing, glory to their Savior bring;
All below and all above sing your praise with joy and love.
Gloria in excelsis Deo; gloria in excelsis Deo.**

*SHARING OF THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you. And also with you.

ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR THE CHURCH AND COMMUNITY

A TIME FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

GOD'S WORD TO US

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

GOSPEL LESSON Mark 1:1-8 (NT pg. 32)

ANTHEM *O Come, O Come Emmanuel* 13th century

EPISTLE LESSON 2 Peter 3:8-15a (NT pg. 224)

SERMON The Gift of Challenge Ken Henry

OUR RESPONSE TO GOD

AN AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

**We believe God challenges us to grow in our faith.
We believe God challenges us to not become too comfortable.
We believe God challenges us to seek the light of day
while others choose to dwell in darkness;
to speak the truth
while others play games with the truth;
to love our neighbors and care for the refugee
even if means risking what we have.
We believe God challenges us
to have more patience,
to wonder,
to ask questions,
to work for justice,
and to not lose heart.**

We believe God challenges us to challenge ourselves,
and to seek the peace of Christ wherever we go. Amen.

*HYMN *There's a Voice in the Wilderness* HS No. 2

PRAYER CONCERNS AND PRAYERS OF THE CONGREGATION
CONCLUDING WITH THE LORD'S PRAYER (Hymnal, p. 16)

THE OFFERING
OFFERTORY *E'en So, Lord Jesus, Quickly Come* Paul Manz

*PRESENTATION OF THE OFFERING No. 591
Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Christ, all people here below;
Praise Holy Spirit evermore;
Praise Triune God, whom we adore. Amen.

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

*HYMN *View the Present through the Promise* (see insert)

*THE CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

CLOSING VOLUNTARY *Freu dich sehr (Partita 11)* Georg Böhm



Westminster Presbyterian Church

Charlottesville, Virginia

SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY

Second Sunday of Advent
December 10, 2017

"If you aren't in over your head, how do you know how tall you are?"
—T. S. Eliot

PREPARING TO HEAR GOD'S WORD

OPENING VOLUNTARY *Freu dich sehr (Partitas 1-9)* Georg Böhm

*HYMN *Comfort, Comfort You My People* No. 3

LIGHTING OF THE SECOND CANDLE OF ADVENT
*As we light our Advent candle in this time of expectation,
we await the Word who will challenge us.*

We await the One who brings justice and righteousness.
Let us – with commitment – kindle the light of the Lord.
Light of the world, shine on us.

ADVENT SONG No. 6
**Come now, O God of love,
Make us one body.
Come, O Lord Jesus;
reconcile your people.**

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*Congregation may stand. #Latecomers seated.
Please turn off cell phones during the service.

SILENT PRAYER AND MEDITATION

*Dear God,
we thank you for
the power of your
light and that the
darkness cannot
overcome it.
For all who bear
witness to your
light, we give you
thanks. Help us to
speak the truth,
to show acts of
love, to have
understanding as
we relate to others,
to be kind and
gracious in our
homes, and to be
seekers for justice
in our society.
Make us more like
Jesus, and may his
light illuminate our
own darkness.
Amen.*