

# Service for the Lord's Day

Third Sunday of Advent

December 11, 2022



Westminster Presbyterian Church  
400 Rugby Road, Charlottesville, Virginia  
www.westminsterva.org · 434-293-3133

## Preparing to Hear God's Word

Prelude *Freu dich sehr, o liebe Seele* Guy Bovet/Gerald Near

◆ Hymn 87 **Comfort, Comfort Now My People** GENEVAN 42

◆ Lighting of the Third Candle of Advent (Joy) Faith Bedford and Elisabeth Scott  
*Today we light the candle of joy. May its light remind us of all the good news this season brings.*  
**May its light remind us of the many sources of joy in our lives,  
and may that joy not only draw us closer to one another, but closer to God. Amen.**

◆ Advent Song *Glory to God* hymnal no. 137

**He came down that we may have joy;  
He came down that we may have joy;  
He came down that we may have joy;  
Hallelujah forevermore.**

Call to Confession

Prayer of Confession

**God of mercy,  
a million times a day we have the opportunity to be gracious,  
to assume the best in others,  
to give the benefit of the doubt.  
A million times a day we could choose the better way,  
but so often we don't.  
Fear and greed creep in.  
Assumptions and insecurities take over.  
Comparison and critique dominate.  
Forgive us for forgetting that we are descendants of Joseph.  
Forgive us for forgetting that grace and mercy are in our blood.  
Forgive us for forgetting that we are enough.  
Give us the courage to love even bigger than before,  
and the wisdom to choose a better way.**

Silent Prayer

Sung Response

*Glory to God* hymnal no. 83

**Come, thou long-expected Jesus, born to set thy people free;  
From our fears and sins release us; let us find our rest in thee.**

## Assurance of Forgiveness

*Family of Faith, hear this good news: we who have chosen wrong are given a second chance.*

**We who have lost our way are welcomed into community.**

**We who feel alone, are seen, held, and known.**

*This is the good news of the gospel. No matter how many times we choose wrong or lose our way, God continues to be a God of second chances, community, and love.*

**Thanks be to God! Amen.**

## ◆ Congregational Response

**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.**

Welcome

## God's Word to Us

A Time with Children and Youth

Reading from the Hebrew Scriptures     Isaiah 35:1-10

OT p. 623  
Jane Penner

Anthem

*Jesus, Emmanuel*

K. Lee Scott

O come, the broken heart to mend, the troubled soul to cure;  
With treasures of your grace, come to the humble poor.

Our glad hosannas, Prince of Peace, your welcome shall proclaim;

And heaven's eternal arches ring with your beloved name.

He comes, the prisoners to release, in satan's bondage held;

Brass gates before him break, strong chains and shackles yield.

How glad the sound, the Savior comes! The Savior promised long;

Let every heart prepare a throne, and every voice a song.

Jesus, Emmanuel, come.

Gospel Lesson

Matthew 1:18-25

NT p. 1

Sermon

Just Ask Joseph

Jewell-Ann Parton

## Responding to God's Word

## ◆ Affirmation of Faith

**We believe in a God who offers second chances  
and does not hold grudges.**

**We believe in a God who opens the door to new life  
and leaves the porch light on for us when we get lost.**

**We believe in a God who believes in us—**

**believes that we can make a difference,**

**that we can choose grace over comparison,**

**love over hate,**

**peace over war.**

**And so we strive to live our lives in love.**

We strive to listen as Joseph listened,  
and to be the people that God calls us to be.  
It's all that easy, and it's all that hard.  
This we believe. Amen.

◆ Hymn 94

Now the Heavens Start to Whisper

JEFFERSON

Prayers of the Congregation and the Lord's Prayer

**Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name,  
thy kingdom 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.**

Offertory

*E'en So, Lord Jesus, Quickly Come*

Paul Manz

Peace be to you and grace from Him who freed us from our sins,  
Who loved us all and shed His blood that we might saved be.  
Sing Holy, Holy to our Lord, the Lord Almighty God,  
Who was and is and is to come; sing Holy, Holy, Lord!  
Rejoice in heaven, all ye that dwell therein,  
Rejoice on earth, ye saints below, for Christ is coming soon!  
E'en so Lord Jesus, quickly come, and night shall be no more;  
They need no light nor lamp nor sun, for Christ will be their All!

◆ Presentation of the Offering

GTG 607

**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 Thanksgiving

**We give you thanks and praise, O God, that you have built us up in faith and bound us  
together in love from generation to generation. By your grace, may all that we do show  
the glory of your name and proclaim your joy throughout the world, through Jesus  
Christ our Lord. Amen.**

◆ Hymn 134

Joy to the World

ANTIOCH

◆ Charge and Benediction

◆ Passing of the Peace

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

Postlude

*Noël étranger*

Louis-Claude Daquin

◆ Please stand, as you are able

*The flowers today are given in loving memory of Judi North, by Ruthie Buck.*

## What's Happening at Westminster

### **Sunday, December 11**

*Third Sunday of Advent*

9:30 a.m. Church School

11 a.m. Worship Service in the Sanctuary

12:30 p.m. Session Meeting in the Library

3:15 p.m. Lessons and Carols Rehearsal in the Sanctuary

5 p.m. Lessons and Carols in the Sanctuary,

followed by a potluck supper and carol sing in the Fellowship Hall

### **Thursday, December 15**

7 p.m. Adult Choir Rehearsal

### **Sunday, December 18**

*Fourth Sunday of Advent*

9:30 a.m. Last Sunday of Church School

11 a.m. Worship in the Sanctuary

12:15 p.m. Deacons Meeting in the Upper Lounge

3 p.m. Caroling, meet in the Gathering Place

## Westminster Staff

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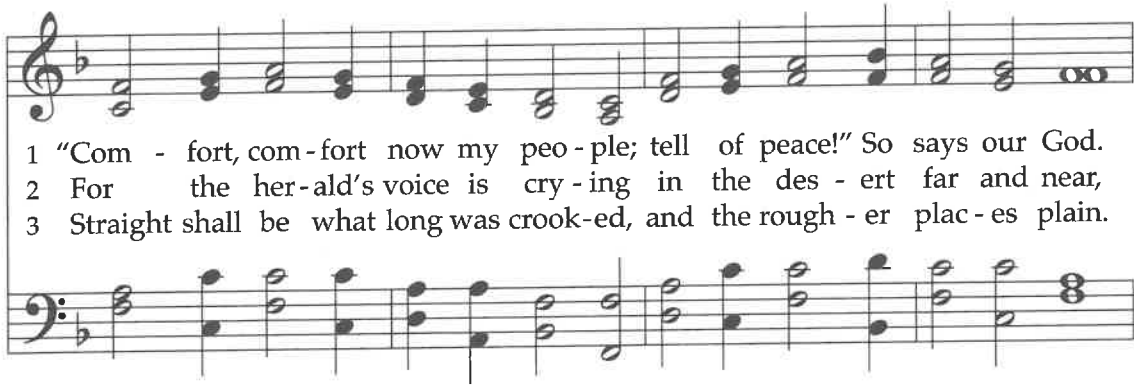
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This Advent season features images and liturgy from the series  
*From Generation to Generation* by A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org.

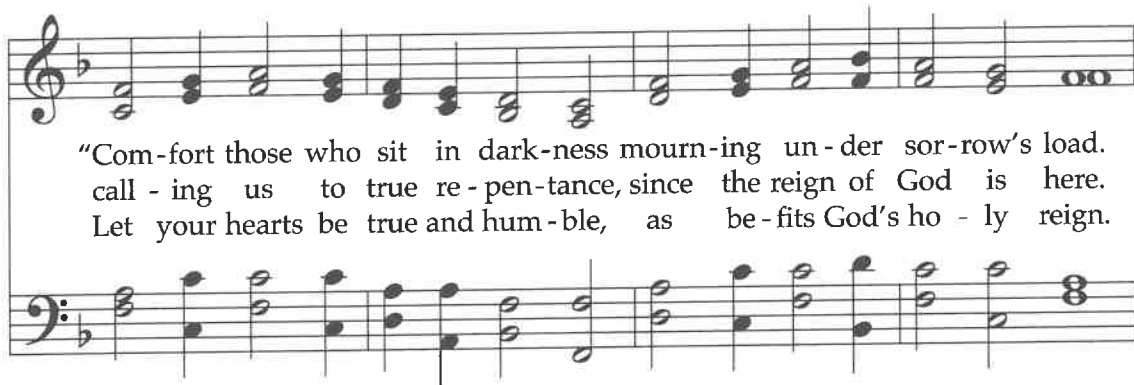
Welcome to the Westminster community. Make sure you're signed up for our eNews, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram accounts, @westminsterville. Visit [www.westminsterva.org](http://www.westminsterva.org). To give, scan the QR code to the right.



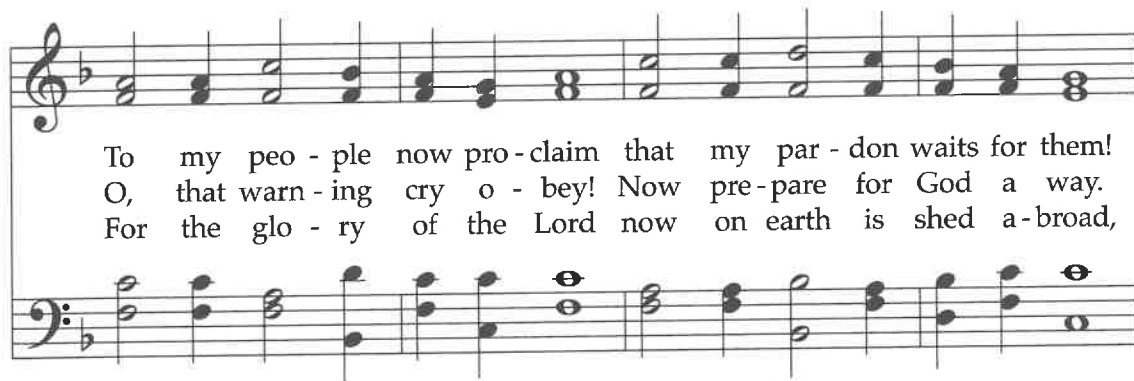
# Comfort, Comfort Now My People 87



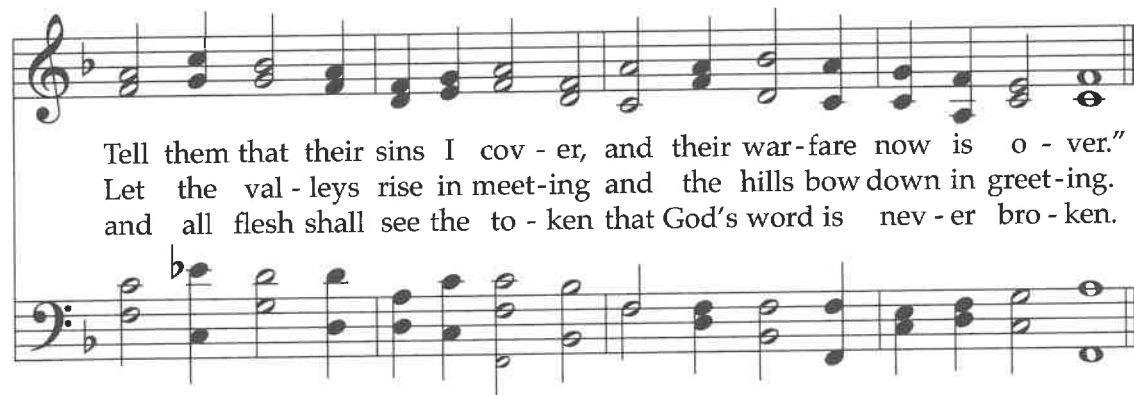
1 "Com - fort, com - fort now my peo - ple; tell of peace!" So says our God.  
 2 For the her - ald's voice is cry - ing in the des - ert far and near,  
 3 Straight shall be what long was crook - ed, and the rough - er plac - es plain.



"Com - fort those who sit in dark - ness mourn - ing un - der sor - row's load.  
 call - ing us to true re - pen - tance, since the reign of God is here.  
 Let your hearts be true and hum - ble, as be - fits God's ho - ly reign.



To my peo - ple now pro - claim that my par - don waits for them!  
 O, that warn - ing cry o - bey! Now pre - pare for God a way.  
 For the glo - ry of the Lord now on earth is shed a - broad,



Tell them that their sins I cov - er, and their war - fare now is o - ver."  
 Let the val - leys rise in meet - ing and the hills bow down in greet - ing.  
 and all flesh shall see the to - ken that God's word is nev - er bro - ken.

This 17th-century German paraphrase of Isaiah 40:1-5 was one of the texts translated as part of the 19th-century British interest in German religious poetry. It is set here to one of the most popular Genevan Psalter tunes, probably derived from an earlier French folksong.

# 94 Now the Heavens Start to Whisper

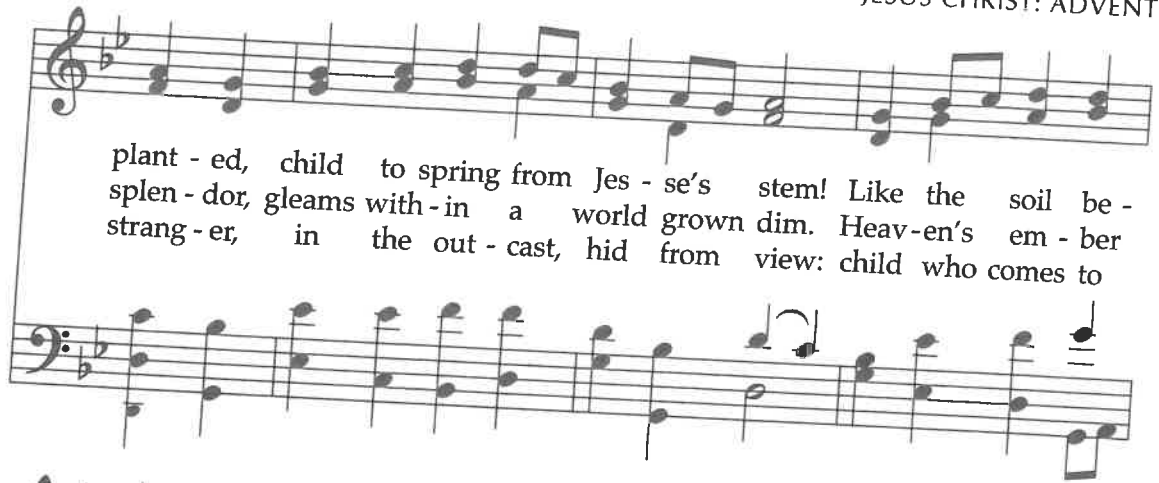
1 Now the heav - ens start to whis - per, as the veil is  
 2 Heav - y clouds that block the moon - light now be - gin to  
 3 Christ, e - ter - nal Sun of jus - tice, Christ, the rose of

grow - ing thin. Earth from slum - ber wakes to lis - ten  
 drift a - way. Dia - mond bril - liance through the dark - ness  
 wis - dom's seed, come to bless with fire and fra - grance

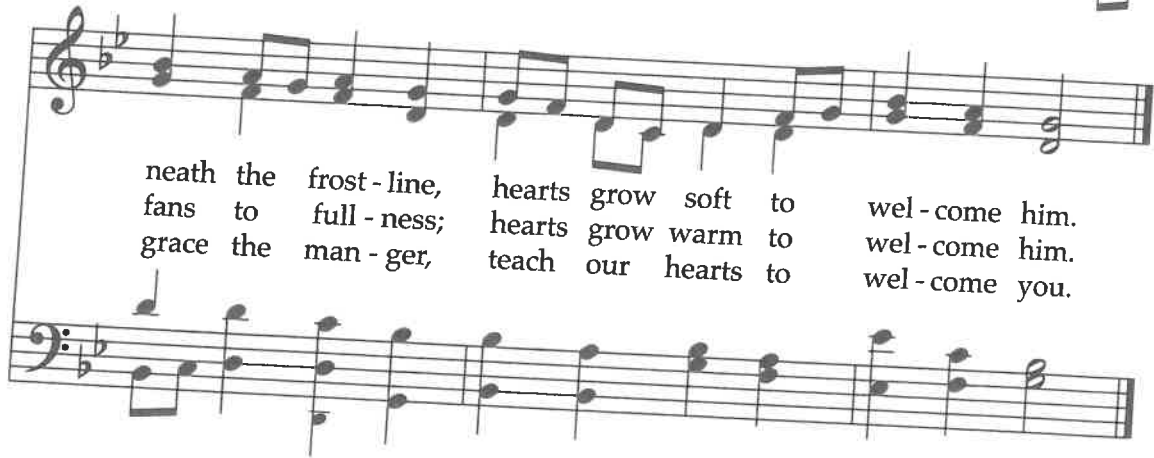
to the stir - ring, faint with - in: seed of prom - ise, deep - ly  
 shines the hope of com - ing day. Christ, the morn - ing star of  
 hours of yearn - ing, hurt, and need. In the lone - ly, in the

This Advent text artfully interweaves what is hidden and what is revealed, primarily in the coming of the long-awaited Messiah. But Christ himself taught us about another hidden truth, his presence in the "least of these" (Matthew 25:40, 45), whom we are also called to welcome.

JESUS CHRIST: ADVENT



plant - ed, child to spring from Jes - se's stem! Like the soil be -  
splen - dor, gleams with - in a world grown dim. Heav - en's em - ber  
strang - er, in the out - cast, hid from view: child who comes to



neath the frost - line, hearts grow soft to wel - come him.  
fans to full - ness; hearts grow warm to wel - come him.  
grace the man - ger, teach our hearts to wel - come you.

# 134

## Joy to the World

1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re - ceive  
 2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their songs  
 3 No more let sins and sor - rows grow, nor thorns in - fest  
 4 He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the na -

her king; let ev - ery heart pre - pare him room,  
 em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains  
 the ground; he comes to make his bless - ings flow  
 tions prove the glo - ries of his righ - teous - ness

and heaven and na - ture sing, and heaven and na - ture  
 re - peat the sound - ing joy, re - peat the sound - ing  
 far as the curse is found, far as the curse is  
 and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his  
 and heaven and na - ture sing,

and

sing, and heaven, and heaven and na - ture sing.  
 joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.  
 found, far as, far as the curse is found.  
 love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.

heaven and na - ture sing,

While Isaac Watts did not write this text strictly for Christmas use, he did purposely cast his paraphrase of Psalm 98:4-9 in Christian terms, titling it "The Messiah's coming and kingdom." So "the Lord" here is Jesus Christ, rather than the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.