

*HYMN #91 (vv. 1, 2, & 4) "God Reigns! Earth Rejoices!"
 (Noël Nouvelet)—Medieval French Carol

— We Are Sent in Christ's Name —

***BENEDICTION**

Be people of joy.
 Share joy by seeing the good in each other.
 Share joy by remembering good times and hoping for good times to come.
 Share joy by praying for our world.
 As you go out into the wonder of God's creation, share joy, peace, and hope with those you meet. **Amen.**

***POSTLUDE "Joy to the World"**

—Music by George Frideric Händel (1685-1759); Arranged by Nicholas Palmer
Featuring the StoweHaven String Quartet

Cover Image: Ron DiCianni, "Simeon's Moment"

For those desiring childcare, the nursery is available during the service for children five years of age and younger. In addition, there is a "family room" available at the back of the sanctuary.

If you have a prayer request, please fill out a prayer request form (found in the friendship register) and place it in the offering plate. We will include your request in the bulletin for a month, unless you request for us to leave it in longer.

STAFF

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Helen Pribesh, Parish Cook		
Barbara Watson, Housekeeper		

Our pastor since 2010, Dr. Craig Wansink received his Ph.D. in New Testament from Yale University, after having graduated from seminary in Chicago, and having studied at universities in Japan, Jordan, Germany, and Israel. Since 1993 he has been a Professor of Religious Studies at Virginia Wesleyan University, where he also serves as the Joan P. and Macon F. Brock, Jr. Director of the Center for the Study of Religious Freedom. Craig is married to Nancy Chapman, and his two children—Katrina and Teddy—are college students.

Rev. Catherine Hart Monroe, our Covenant Associate Pastor for Discipleship & Spiritual Formation, received her M.Div. from Union Presbyterian Seminary. Catherine also serves as the chaplain for University Presbyterian Ministries at Old Dominion University. She and her husband, Chuck, live in Norfolk with their three children, Whitley, Hart, and Alden.

Isaac Thomas, our Pastor of Music, Outreach, and Technology, joined the SPC staff in 2014. He received his education at John Brown University and The University of Texas at Arlington. He is a published composer and has served as conductor for contemporary Christian recording artists Twila Paris and Fernando Ortega. He is a graduate of Dubuque Theological Seminary via the Commissioned Lay Pastor program. Additionally, he completed a six-week piano course through The Juilliard School under the instruction of Dr. Michael Shinn, Chair of Keyboard Studies.

The First Christmas Carols

"Joy, Jeopardy, and the Song of Simeon"

Second Presbyterian Church, December 16, 2018



— We Gather in God's Name —

GATHERING MUSIC "What Child is This"

— Traditional English Carol; Setting by Michael W. Smith; Arranged by Isaac Thomas
Isaac Thomas, piano

WELCOME

***THE PEACE OF CHRIST**

The peace of Christ be with you all.
And also with you.
 Greet your neighbor with the peace of Christ.

Whether we are old or young, whether we are first-time or longtime worshipers, whether we come full of doubts or confidence, joy, or sorrow, in this place we all are family, because of what Jesus did for us on the cross. Welcome!

As you leave Second, live each day by leaving a meaningful legacy for your life: be rich toward God.

RINGING THE CHIMES

BIRTHDAY AND ANNIVERSARY BLESSINGS

PRELUDE “And the Glory of the Lord” (from *Messiah*)

—Music by George Frideric Händel (1685-1759); Arranged by Wayne Fritchie

Featuring the StoweHaven String Quartet: Caroline Little, Violin; Peggy Watson - Violin; Shirley Luu Smith - Viola; Rebecca Gilmore - Cello

OPENING PRAYER

Eternal God, fill us with joyful expectation. Make us ready for the message that prepares the way, so with joy we may eagerly await the kingdom of your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLES The Stampfli Family

Today we light the first, second, and third candles of the Advent wreath. Each candle has a meaning. The first candle is hope, the second candle is peace, and the third candle is joy.

“You will go out in joy and be led forth in peace; the mountains and hills will burst into song before you, and all the trees of the field will clap their hands.” (Isaiah 55:12)

Gracious God, you came to us in human flesh and you abide with us in the Holy Spirit. **Fill us with your joy, and help us shine as a light to the world. Through Jesus Christ, who makes our joy complete. Amen.**

*HYMN #92 “Joy to the World”

*CONFESSION OF SIN

Loving God, we are sorry for the times we have denied and ignored you by what we have said and done. Forgive us for being so busy with holiday preparations that we have forgotten to focus on what you call us to prepare for. Help us follow where you lead us as we wait for your coming. Amen.

*MUSICAL RESPONSE #88 (vs. 4, first 2 lines only) “O Little Town of Bethlehem”

—Words by Phillips Brooks; Music by Lewis H. Redner

*O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray.
Cast out our sin and enter in; be born in us today.*

*WORDS OF GRACE

Persistently, patiently, lovingly, God pours out grace and joy into our lives, heals our brokenness, and forgives our sin.

**Loved, we are sent to love. Forgiven, we are freed to forgive.
Offered grace, we can offer our gifts to everyone we meet.
Thanks be to God. Amen.**

— *We Hear the Word* —

TIME OF DISCOVERY “Prepare Ye”—Words: Isaiah 40; Music by Stephen Schwartz (from *Godspell*)

Prepare ye the way of the Lord, prepare ye the way of the Lord. (Repeat once)

CHORAL ANTHEM “How Great Our Joy”

—Traditional German Carol; Arranged and Orchestrated by Craig Courtney

Featuring the StoweHaven String Quartet

While by the sheep we watched at night, glad tidings brought an angel bright. How great our joy, how great our joy! There shall be born, so did he say, in Bethlehem a Child today. How great our joy, how great our joy! There shall a Child lie in a stall, this Child who shall redeem us all. This gift of God we'll cherish well, that ever joy our hearts shall fill. Praise we the Lord, praise we the Lord in heaven on high! Praise we the Lord, praise we the Lord! How great our joy! How great our joy!

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Luke 2:25-35

(page 59; large print, page 71-72)

SERMON

“Joy, Jeopardy, and the Song of Simeon”

—Dr. Craig Wansink

HYMN #66 “With Joy I Heard My Friends Exclaim”

—Sussex Carol; Arranged by Ralph Vaughn Williams (1872-1958)

— *We Respond to God's Word* —

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE 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

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING: THE SHARING OF OUR LIVES AND GIFTS

OFFERTORY “All is Well”— Music by Michael W. Smith; Arranged by Keith Christopher

Featuring the StoweHaven String Quartet

*THE DOXOLOGY (See Insert) “Doxology” (Tune to *The First Noël*)

—Words by Thomas Ken (adapted by Dean McIntyre); Music: Traditional English Carol

Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise God, all creatures here below.

Praise God above, ye heavenly host. Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Noel, noel, noel, noel, born is the King of Israel.

*ADVENT AFFIRMATION

Our only hope is Jesus Christ.

After we refused to live in the image of God,

**he was born of the virgin Mary, sharing our genes and our instincts,
entering our culture, speaking our language, fulfilling the law of God.**

Being united to Christ's humanity,

we know ourselves when we rest in him.

Come, Lord Jesus:

We are open to your Spirit.

We await your full presence.

Our world finds rest in you alone.

“Be merry, really merry. The life of a true Christian should be a perpetual jubilee, a prelude to the festivals of eternity.”

—Theophane Venard

“A man without hope makes an indifferent soldier; one without cheerfulness is worse than useless.”

—Lord Wolseley

“The test of your Christian character should be that you are a joy-bearing agent to the world.”

—Henry Ward Beecher

“Joy is a divine gift that does not leave us during times of illness, poverty, oppression, or persecution. It is present even when the world laughs or tortures, robs or maims, fights or kills. It is truly ecstatic, always moving us away from the house of fear into the house of love, and always proclaiming that death no longer has the final say, though its noise remains loud and its devastation visible.”

—Henri Nouwen