

First Presbyterian Church Hastings, Nebraska

Jesus Christ, Head of the Church

Members of the Congregation, Ministers

Rev. Charles M. Webster, Transitional Pastor

Organist: Ashley Ehrich

Chancel & Calvin/Westminster Bell Director: Byron Jensen

Candle Lighters: William and Susan Oliver,

Eleanor, Laura Kate, & Meredith

Lay Reader: Melissa Webster

December 20, 2015, 10:30 a.m.

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

"Today's scripture lessons focus on the anticipation and surprise of the Advent season. The reading from *Micah* reveals that the small town of Bethlehem will be the birthplace of a faithful and righteous ruler. *Luke* tells the story of Mary and Elizabeth, both of whom come to know the surprising ways of God. Elizabeth, long barren, conceives John the Baptist, as foretold by the angel Gabriel. Mary visits Elizabeth after her own encounter with Gabriel and the news of her unexpected pregnancy, and the women rejoice and marvel at the mysterious work of God." – C.M.W.

GATHERING

**Indicates those who are able, please stand.*

VOLUNTARY

Now is Born the Divine Christ Child

arr. Kevin McChesney

Calvin-Westminster Ringers

(The voluntary is an opportunity to worship God: a time of prayer, meditation, reflection and expectation.)

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Psalm 47:1-2; 92:1; 34:3

Clap your hands, all you people; raise a joyful shout to God.

For the Most High is awesome and king over all the earth.

How good it is to give thanks, to sing in honor of the Lord

Let us exalt God's name together.

*HYMN No 105

People, Look East

BESANCON

LIGHTING OF THE FOURTH ADVENT CANDLE

Isaiah 2:4; 11:6; 35:1; 7:14b

We light these candles as a sign of the coming light of Christ. Advent means coming.

We are preparing ourselves for the days when the nations shall beat their swords into plowshares,

and their spears into pruning hooks;

nation shall not lift up sword against nation,

neither shall they learn war anymore.

The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid,

The calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them.

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom;

like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing.

The Lord will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son,

and shall name him Immanuel (God is with us).

Let us walk in the light of the Lord.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Loving God, for all the times and all the ways we have resisted your rule in our lives,

Lord, have mercy upon us.

For seeking our salvation through lesser things; for standing in the pride of our own power; for insisting on our own tired, broken ways instead of embracing your new life.

Christ, have mercy upon us.

For our narrow vision of your expansive love; for our stinginess with your extravagant grace.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Loving God, free us from our sin.

Lead us in your new way of living, that we may follow the way of Jesus Christ.

(silence for personal prayer and reflection)

KYRIE - HYMN No. 578

O Lord, Have Mercy

ORE POIRIAJU VEREKO

DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

*RESPONSE OF PRAISE No. 583 *Glory to God*

CUEQUITA

Glory to God, glory to God, glory in the highest!

Glory to God, glory to God, alleluia, alleluia!

Gloria, Gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, Gloria, alleluia, alleluia!

*WELCOME and RITUAL of FRIENDSHIP

THE WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Eternal God, as Mary waited for the birth of your Son, so we wait to hear your word; bring us through the birth pangs of this present age, to see with her, our great salvation in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

FIRST READING – *Micah 5:2-5a*

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The Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God.

ANTHEM

“Sing We Now of Christmas”

Chancel Ringers

The Gospel of the Lord

Praise to you O, Christ.

*HYMN No 101

No Wind at the Window

COLUMCILLE

SERMON

Sacred Conversations

Rev. Charles M. Webster

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

from a *Declaration of Faith*

Jesus, the long expected Savior came into the world as a child, descended from David, conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of Mary, a virgin. He lived as a Jew among Jews. He announced to his people the coming of God's kingdom of justice and peace on earth. We affirm that Jesus was born of woman as is every child, yet born of God's power as was no other child. In the person and work of Jesus, God himself and a human life are united but not confused, distinguished but not separated. The coming of Jesus was itself the coming of God's promised rule. Through his birth, life, death, and resurrection, he brings about the relationship between God and humanity that God always intended.

THE RESPONSE

CONCERNS and CELEBRATIONS

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

MOMENT FOR MISSION – PNC

OFFERING (*All loose coins in the offering plate will go to PCUSA Hunger Fund.*)

Offertory	<i>Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus</i>	arr. Lee J. Afdahl
	Chancel Ringers	

*OFFERTORY RESPONSE

HYMN No. 144	<i>In the Bleak Midwinter (stanza 4)</i>	CRANHAM
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<i>What can I give him, poor as I am? If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb; if I were a Wiseman, I should do my part; yet what I can I give him: give my heart.</i>	
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SENDING

*HYMN No 123

It Came Upon the Midnight Clear

CAROL

*CHARGE and BLESSING

*POSTLUDE

Infant Holy, Infant Lowly

Keith Chapman

<i>Next Sunday, December 27th</i>	
<i>First Sunday in Christmastide</i>	

8:30 Celebrate Service: Ruth Nielsen, speaker

10:30 Traditional Service: Adam White,
ELCA campus pastor at UN-L, guest preacher

Announcements:

The radio broadcast is given in memory of Don and Wuanita Butler by family and friends.

Today's service may be seen on Channel 181 Tuesday, 1:00 p.m., or Sunday at 9:00 a.m.

For those living at Good Samaritan Village the service will be broadcast on Channel 3 on Sunday at 12:00 noon and on Tuesday at 9:00 a.m.

Greeters: Pam Lay, Don & Pam Canady

Ushers: Craig Balnicke, Andrew Barrows, Jim & Linda Donohue, Susie Graham, & George Howard, captain.

Youth Ushers: Courtney Junker, Nyanhial Duang

Acolytes: Claire Schwarz, Jonah Snell

Nursery: Leah Ratzlaff

Mr & Mrs. Elmer Heeren's daughter-in-law, Julie Heeren, died Weds., Dec. 9. Julie was 56, married to Ed, and resided in Hastings. Services will be held at a later date.

Join us for **Christmas Eve Services and Communion**, Thurs., Dec. 24. 5:30 p.m. Christmas Eve Family Service and 7:30 p.m. Christmas Eve Service – Communion (Taize service will not be held).

Christmas Joy Offerings (CJO) collected on Christmas Eve will be remitted to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and divided equally between the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions and racial ethnic schools and colleges of the PC(USA). Your support offers help to our extended church community for our church workers and their families in need, our ministry, and the program's mission of faith, hope, love, and caring.

No Wednesday Night Live on Dec. 23 & 30.

No Sunday School (for all ages) on Dec. 27 & Jan. 3.

The 7:00 a.m. Wednesday morning Bible study will NOT meet Dec. 23 or Dec. 30. Meetings will resume in the Parlor on Jan. 6, led by Don Canady.

Sunday, Dec. 27: Ruth Nielsen will be guest speaker at 8:30 a.m. Celebrate Service, and Adam White will be guest speaker at 10:30 a.m. Traditional Service.

A big thank you from the office staff (including Carlos) for the treats, cards, kind words and other gifts. Your thoughtfulness is dearly appreciated!

This Week ----- December 20 – December 26

Tues, Dec 22 11:15 Staff Meeting

Weds, Dec 23 NO WEDNESDAY NIGHT LIVE

Thurs, Dec 24 5:30 Family Service
 7:30 Traditional Service with Communion

Fri, Dec 25 OFFICE CLOSED – MERRY CHRISTMAS!

