



THIRD SUNDAY OF  
**ADVENT**

THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF BLAIRSVILLE

*"a community of believers, called by God, led by the Holy Spirit  
to know Christ and to make Christ known"*

Rev. Timothy R. Monroe

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Pastor Emeritus - Rev. Dr. Roger D. Petersen

THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF BLAIRSVILLE

December 13, 2015 ~ 11:00 AM

**THE ORDER OF SERVICE**

Words of Greeting Barb Brown, Liturgist

Leader: The Lord be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

Sharing of Opportunities, Joys and Concerns

**PREPARATION FOR THE WORD OF GOD**

Prelude Marilyn Neal, Organist

Lighting of the Candles Willow Weimer, Acolyte

Introit # 45 *"Mighty Is Our God"*

***Mighty is our God, mighty is our King;***

***Mighty is our Lord, Ruler of everything.***

***Glory to our God, glory to our King;***

***Glory to our Lord, Ruler of everything.***

***His name is higher, higher than any other name;***

***His power is greater, for he has created everything.***

***Ruler of everything.***

Call to Worship (*Isaiah 12:2-6*)

Leader: Surely God is my salvation; I will trust,  
and will not be afraid,

**People: for the Lord God is my strength and my might;  
he has become my salvation.**

Leader: With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.  
And you will say on that day:

**People: Give thanks to the Lord, call on his name;  
make known his deeds among the nations;  
proclaim that his name is exalted.**

Leader: Sing praises to the Lord, for he has done gloriously;  
let this be known in all the earth.

**People: Shout aloud and sing for joy, O royal Zion,  
for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.**

\*Hymn # 59 *"Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee"*

\*Prayer of Confession

**Eternal God, we confess that we resist your holy realm. You deliver us from judgment but we continue to judge one another. You seek to restore our lives but we fail to bear good fruit. Forgive us, God of grace. Baptize us with Spirit and fire so that we may be ready to meet you when you come again in glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord.**

\*Assurance of Forgiveness

\*Gloria Patri

*O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,  
that mourns in lonely exile here, until the Son of God appear.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.*

Lighting of the Advent Candle Erica Ash & Ellen Williams

*A candle is burning, a candle of joy.  
A candle to welcome brave Mary's new boy.  
Our hearts fill with wonder, and eyes light and glow  
as joy brightens winter like sunshine on snow.*

\*Sharing of the Peace

\*Time with the Younger Saints

### DECLARATION OF THE WORD OF GOD

Old Testament Lesson Zephaniah 3:14-20 (pg. 877 of OT)  
Anthem "Keep the Watch, People of Zion"  
Chancel Choir - Cindy Borbonus, Director  
Gospel Lesson Luke 3:7-18 (pg. 60 of NT)  
Sermon Rev. Timothy R. Monroe

### RESPONSE TO THE WORD OF GOD

\*Affirmation of Faith

**I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.** *(Apostles' Creed)*

\*Hymn # 423 "Surely It Is God Who Saves Me"

Prayers of the People & the Lord's Prayer ("...debts...and debtors")

Choral Amen

Ministry of Giving in Response to the Word

Offertory

\*Doxology

\*Prayer of Dedication

\*Hymn # 191 "It Came Upon a Midnight Clear"

\*Benediction

\*Choral Response

\*Postlude

(\*All who are able, please stand.)

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PLEASE JOIN us in the ritual of friendship by signing the attendance pads that are at one end of each of the pews. If you are here for the first time, we would appreciate it if you would give us your local telephone number. Please help yourself to a church brochure, a *Welcome Packet* or a copy of our newsletter, *Uplift*. These are available at the back of the church. We thank you for joining your voice to ours in sacred worship.

THE WORSHIP ASSISTANTS for this morning's service are Liturgist, Barb Brown; Advent Readers, Erica Ash & Ellen Williams; Ushers, Brylea Borbonus, Hannah & Olivia Eckenroad and Willow Weimer; Greeters, Erica Ash & Ellen Williams; Projection, Shakira McKinney; Audio, Jaison McKinney; Organist, Marilyn Neal; and Director of Music, Cindy Borbonus.

THE BEAUTIFUL POINSETTIAS in the sanctuary this morning are given in memory and honor of loved ones by many in the congregation. Please see the bulletin insert. A special thank you to Naomi Sigafos and the deacons for their work in arranging to have the flowers for the Christmas celebration!

THE 2016 FLOWER CHART is hanging in the hallway outside the office. Take time to sign-up for your choice of dates in the New Year. Arrangements are placed in the sanctuary during the Sunday worship service and a dedication is printed in the bulletin. Arrangements are \$20 payable to the Board of Deacons.

THE DEACONS will check blood pressures following worship today. If you would like to have your numbers checked, please see Kim McKinney or Beverly Lindsey.

OFFICER TRAINING will be held for new and oncoming elders and deacons today following worship in Fellowship Hall.

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL BOOKLETS can be picked up at the back of the sanctuary. This year's devotional is entitled, "The Jesse Tree" by Debra Grant. It includes a daily devotion for personal growth each day of Advent. Please take one and share one with a friend.

THE PRAYER CHAIN is coordinated by the Adult Sunday School Class. If you have a prayer request or know of someone's need for prayer, please contact Shirley McLaughlin.

THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH will sponsor a vaccination clinic at the Blairsville Community Center December 16 from 9:30 – 11:30 a.m. You are eligible for vaccines at low or no cost if you are underinsured or uninsured. Please call the PA Dept. of Health at 724-357-2995 for more information or to schedule an appointment.

OUR BELL CHOIR rehearsals are Wednesday evenings at 6:00 p.m. We still need ringers for our lower octaves. We would love to have you join us. No experience necessary, we'll train you. If you have questions or are interested in ringing, please see Vicky Westley, director or a bell choir member.

CHOIR REHEARSALS are held Wednesday evenings at 7:00 p.m. New voices are always appreciated. We will be rehearsing special music for the holidays on Wednesdays at 7:45 p.m. If you are interested in participating during this time, we would love to have you. For more information, please see Cindy Borbonus or come to rehearsals Wednesdays. You're always welcome.

THE EVANGELISM COMMITTEE is asking all families in the congregation to donate at least 4 dozen cookies, candies, or holiday treats (no cupcakes, cakes, or pies) for our Annual Holiday Cookie Sale to be held Saturday, December 19<sup>th</sup>, 8:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Please invite your fellow bakers, family, friends, co-workers, groups or organizations to participate. All baked goods may be dropped off in a disposable container on Friday, December 18<sup>th</sup>, 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. If you have any questions contact Erica Ash or the church office. A sign-up sheet will be placed in the back of the sanctuary. Please let us know what kind of cookie you will be donating so we don't have too many duplicates!

THE CONGREGATION AND COMMUNITY are invited to purchase delicious holiday treats for gift giving, holiday parties, etc. Who has time to bake dozens of different cookies? No need, just make your best cookies and shop for the rest! Cookies are \$7.00/pound and all proceeds benefit the Pathway Homeless Shelter.

CHRISTMAS IS IN THE AIR and many voices have been busy rehearsing for this year's Christmas Cantata entitled, "The Silence and the Sound" by Heather Sorenson. The Christmas choir will present the cantata during the worship hour Sunday, December 20<sup>th</sup>.

EARLY CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP will begin at 7:00 p.m. as the Sunday school children present "The Christmas Story told Through the Eyes of a Child." The service will also include candlelight and the sacrament of communion. A traditional candlelight and communion service will be held at 11:00 p.m. All are welcome to worship with us.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS...there will not be Sunday School classes Sunday, December 27<sup>th</sup>. Classes will resume January 3<sup>rd</sup> at 9:45 a.m.

#### **MISSION MOMENT - *Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary***

A wise mentor once told me that God is often slow . . . but never late. I have found this to be truer nowhere more than in my own life. Perhaps one of the most important ways God has shaped me over time (that is, acted slowly) is through the communities of faith that have surrounded me along the way. While my first two years at Austin Seminary were great, they included challenge—deaths and cancer diagnoses in my family, among other things. I became very disheartened and frustrated; I had felt called to seminary but now couldn't focus on my studies—or anything else. One day, I approached several women and asked if they would be interested in gathering regularly. This community has carried me through to this day—and I look forward to my future graduation and ordination, when they will rejoice with me. After my first two years at Austin, I took a break to serve as a PC(USA) Young Adult Volunteer in Guatemala. Missing my core group back home, I struggled with the emotional stress of my work with children and older adults living in poverty. But, remembering the impact of my community back at

seminary, I reached out to my fellow YAVs. That year, as we struggled and rejoiced with each other, we were reminded of how overwhelmingly present the Holy Spirit is when two or three are gathered. I am thankful for the PC(USA), I am thankful for my community at Austin Seminary, I am thankful for my fellow YAVs, and I am thankful that God is often slow . . . but never late!

—Kristi Click, Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, MDiv '14

## REGULAR WORSHIP CALENDAR

<b>Today</b>	9:45 a.m.	Sunday School Classes	
	10:30 a.m.	Choir Rehearsal	
	11:00 a.m.	Worship <i>3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent</i>	
	12:00 p.m.	Blood Pressure checks	
	12:15 p.m.	Officer Training	
	2:00 p.m.	Fellowship Hall reserved	
	<b>Monday</b>	6:30 p.m.	Boy Scouts meet in Fellowship Hall
<b>Tuesday</b>	6:30 p.m.	Session Meeting in Fellowship Hall	
<b>Wednesday</b>	9:00-12:00 p.m.	Grannies meet in Fellowship Hall	
	6:00 p.m.	Bell Choir rehearsal	
	6:30 p.m.	Fellowship Hall reserved	
	7:00 p.m.	Choir rehearsal	
	7:45 p.m.	Cantata rehearsal	
<b>Friday</b>	3:00 p.m.	Stitching Group Fellowship Hall reserved Sanctuary reserved	
	<b>Saturday</b>	8:00-10:30 a.m.	Holiday Cookie Sale in Fellowship Hall
		10:00 a.m.	Cantata rehearsal
3:00 p.m.		Sanctuary reserved	
<b>Sunday</b>	4:00 p.m.	Fellowship Hall reserved	
	9:45 a.m.	Sunday School Classes	
	10:30 a.m.	Choir Rehearsal	
	11:00 a.m.	Christmas Cantata <i>4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent</i>	