

Welcome / Announcements / Land Acknowledgement

Call to Worship / Advent Candles

**Voice 1:** The prophets call, and the psalmists sing to announce that God is love.

**Voice 2:** *“For the mountain may depart and the hills may be moved, but my steadfast love shall never depart from you...and my covenant of peace shall not be removed, says the Lord who has compassion on you.”* (Isaiah 54) *“Give thanks to the LORD, who is good...give thanks to the Lord of lords, whose steadfast love endures forever.”* (Psalm 136)

**Voice 1:** From the mystery of God’s love came our creation and we are nurtured daily by it. The power of God’s love is transformative; because we have received God’s love, we cannot remain the same. Love means seeking the best for others. Love is compassion for all creation. Love speaks the truth with kindness. Love is the way of seeing others as God sees them.

**Voice 2:** Holy are you, Source of all new life among us.

**All:** Jesus Christ is the love of God come into the world.

**Voice 2:** We join with all creation and lift our hearts in joyful praise.

**All:** We light this candle to burn for love.

□ *Hope is a star (verse 4)*

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PWS&D Message ~ *Puskar’s Journey to Health*

† Gathering Prayer / the Lord’s Prayer / Words of Hope

*...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, for ever. Amen*

□ *Lord, you were rich*

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† Prayer for Understanding (from Psalm 34)

**God of all the ages, the stories of this season are familiar, so send your Spirit to give us a fresh understanding of their significance. Make us attentive to Jesus, the living Word, and the gifts he brings into our midst. Amen**

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<sup>1</sup> The inspiration and much of the content for the Advent services is from “Sing a New Song: An Advent Devotional” from the PCC.

**Scripture: Isaiah 7: 10-16 [OT 636]**

Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz, saying, *Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven.*

But Ahaz said, *I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test.*

Then Isaiah said: "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel. He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted.

**Luke 1: 26-38 [NT 56]**

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, *"Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you."*

But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be.

The angel said to her, *"Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."*

Mary said to the angel, *"How can this be, since I am a virgin?"*

The angel said to her, *"The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God."*

Then Mary said, *"Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word."* Then the angel departed from her.

**Luke 2: 25-35 [NT 59]**

Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah.

Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying, *"Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel."*

And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him.

Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, *"This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed – and a sword will pierce your own soul too."*

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

□ *The snow lay on the ground*

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A Message with Questions about Waiting...

- **Talk about the experience and emotions you felt when a long-awaited prayer was answered.**
- **We talk about Jesus as “the light” and Simeon’s song says that Jesus is a *light for revelation to the Gentiles*. What does that mean for you? How has Christ brought light to your life?**
- **Has God ever brought a “Simeon” to confirm something in your life?**
- **Think about a promise from God that you’re still waiting to see come to fruition.**

□ *While we are waiting, come*

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Offering and Prayer

□ *Praise God from whom all blessings flow*

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**Heavenly Father, accept our gifts as part of preparing our hearts and lives for your coming once again. May our offerings be used to prepare the way for your coming into the world in love. Amen**

† Pastoral Prayers

□ *Come, thou long-expected Jesus*

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Blessing [based on Romans 16: 25-27]

□ ***We will go out with joy***