

WE GATHER IN GOD'S NAME

Words to Ponder In Your Heart *John 1:4-5*, **Pew Bible, NT, Page 91**
What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

Words of Welcome and Introduction

Prelude “Soft, the Evening Shadows Fall” *by Timothy Dudley-Smith & John Carter - Choir*

Call to Worship

Leader: The world feels dark and cold.

People: We are afraid or angry, adrift, or anguished, or alone.

Leader: Do not leave us in the dark cold of night,

People: for we are in need of you.

Leader: The glitter of Christmas and the sound of cheer is everywhere

People: but the reality of every day is still so very hard.

Leader: What if you will not help us? What if the darkness wins?

People: You who called light into being, are you not also Lord of the darkness?

Leader: Tonight we gather, daring to wonder if God has come, is coming, will come in Jesus.

People: We would worship the One who took flesh and dwelt among us.

Leader: Tonight we gather to offer to God all that is within us.

People: Take our glimmers of faith and our shimmers of fear.

Leader: May we love you just as we are,

People: for you do love us. Come, let us worship God.

***Hymn #9** “O Come, O Come Emmanuel” *Veni Emmanuel*

Prayer of Confession

God, we come to you in this Christmas season, with pain growing inside us. As the nights have been growing longer, so has the darkness wrapped itself around our hearts. In this season of our longest nights, we offer to you the pain in our hearts, the traumas that some of us cannot put into words.

God, some of us come to you as the outsiders. We are the ones who seem to stand on the edges of any group. We find ourselves always looking in over someone else's shoulders, and when we try to move to the center, we feel as if we are getting elbowed out of the way.

God, some of us come as those grieving over what might have been. A death or a loss has changed this time of year. Once it was a special season for us too. But someone has died. Someone has left us. Someone has moved away. We have lost a job. We have lost a dream, a goal, a cause. We find ourselves adrift, alone, lost in a terrifying new world. This season reminds us of all that used to be, and cannot be any more.

God, some of us come to you as those who have been touched by illness or disease. We are frightened by the future. We are tired from the strain and stress. We are worn out looking for answers. We are weary of more tests. We are frightened, sad, and exhausted from trying to handle it all by ourselves.

God, some of us come to you as those who have been abused. We have been hurt, physically and emotionally. As children, as teenagers, as adults, we have had the trust we gave others violated. We have no confidence in ourselves; we cringe away from any threat.

The memories of what was, the fears of what may be, stifle us. All around us we hear the sounds of celebration, the music in the malls, the jingle of cash registers, the rustle of wrapping paper. But some of us feel we have nothing we can give, and some of us feel we have no one to give anything to. This is our longest night, Lord. Please be near us tonight. We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.

[Silence for Individual Reflection]

Assurance of Acceptance by God

Music: “In The Bleak Midwinter” *Cranham*

WE PROCLAIM GOD'S WORD

The Word – Psalm 42 – Rev. Karen Ware Jackson, Stephanie Lindley, Rev. Jim Rissmiller, Lois Bazhaw

Music: “Waiting, Wandering, Wondering” *by Ruth Elaine Schram - Choir*

The Word: *Lamentations 3:19-31*

Pondering The Word “Where is your God?” *Rev. Karen Ware Jackson*

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

Creating Luminarias

Use this time to pray, to ponder, to pour out your heart to God. We will be creating luminarias to place outside the church, or outside your home.

Use the paper bags to pour out your heart to God. Write the words that are in your heart. Write the names of loved ones who are not with us today. These simple bags will be our sack cloth.

The sand we place within them will be our ashes. Weighing us down. Holding us in place.

Within our sackcloth, nestled among the ashes, there is a light - a light that shines in the darkness, a light of peace, a light of hope, a light of love, a light to lead the way, or simply a light to mark your existence in this place.

Music: “Light of Peace” *by Joel Raney - Choir*

Advent Candle Lighting

Candle 1 - Hope - Jesus said, “come to me all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.” *Mt. 11:28*

Candle 2 - Peace - “As a mother comforts her nursing child, so I will comfort you,” says the Lord. *Is. 66:13*

Candle 3 - Joy - God said, “ am about to do a new thing; now it spring forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers into the desert.” *Is. 43:19*

Candle 4 - Love - For I am convinced that neigh death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us for the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.” *Rom. 8:38*

Hymn #5 “Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence” *Picardy*

Prayer

Holy God of Advent, you became weak so we would find strength in moments of heartbreak; you left the safety of heaven to wander the wilderness of the world, holding our hands when we feel hopeless; you set aside your glory to hold our pain so we might be healed, even when there seems to be no hope; you became one of us, so we would never be alone in any moment, in any circumstance.

So come now, Child of Bethlehem, to strengthen us in these days. May we feel your presence in a way we have never known, not just as one born in a stable long ago and far away, but as the One born in our hearts.

You have promised to go before us: into our brokenness, into hospital rooms, into empty houses, into graveyards, into our future held by God, and you are here, even now, waiting for each of us: to serve us, to hold us, to comfort us, to heal us, to live in us, now and forever. Amen

Following the Word into the World

Charge and Benediction – Luminaria Creation and Placement

** Please rise in body or spirit*

Acknowledgements

Call to Worship by Katie Kinnison, Prayer of Confession by Rev. Jim Rissmiller, Prayer ©Thom M Shuman from Candles & Conifers, published by Wild Goose Publications, Iona Community, Fourth Floor, Savor House, 140 Sauchiehall St, Glasgow G2 3DH, UK.

INFORMATION AND PRAYER LISTS

Adult Sunday School meets at 9:30 a.m. each Sunday in the Parlor. This week we are continuing our study of ‘The Work of the People,’ a video based series featuring some of the great theologians and thinkers of our time!

Worship Enrichment for children and youth is coming soon! We encourage our young people to learn about God and our community through the act of worship. These enrichment experiences will allow the children to learn more about the different parts of worship and enable them to participate and understand more. **Please talk to our Pastor Karen if you wish to be involved!** We need worship buddies and mentors to learn alongside our young people.

Do you want to know more about the new life happening at Faith?

“Like” us on Facebook! We post pictures, music, questions, pastor’s blogs, and lots of other great stuff on this page!

Sign up for our weekly email update! Give us your email on the friendship pad, or contact faithpresgsonc@gmail.com to get on the list. You can unsubscribe at any time.

Check out our website www.faihpresgso.org – for more information about who we are and what we believe, as well as weekly updates of bulletins and monthly newsletters

Grab a newsletter! You can pick up a current copy of the newsletter on the table in the narthex and can see previous copies on our website.

Join us for our monthly brunch! Every month on the **4th Sunday**, we head down to the fellowship hall after worship for yummy food and good conversation.

Calendar for December 21-28

Today:	9:30 A.M.	Sunday School
	10:30 A.M.	Coffee and Conversation
	11:00 A.M.	Worship, Meeting to Elect Officers
	6:00 P.M.	<i>Longest Night Service for Healing and Wholeness</i>
Tuesday:	9:30 A.M.	Congregational Nurse
	10:00 A.M.	Chair Exercise
Wednesday:	5:00 P.M.	Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
Thursday:	8:00 P.M.	Narcotics Anonymous
Friday:	8:00 P.M.	Narcotics Anonymous
Sunday:	9:30 A.M.	Sunday School
	10:30 A.M.	Coffee and Conversation
	11:00 A.M.	Worship, Pennies for Hunger

SALEM PRESBYTERY CHURCH PRAYER LIST

Sedgefield Church, Greensboro
Grace Church, Winston-Salem

FAITH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH PRAYER LIST:

Lindsey Brown’s Aunt	Marge Mack
Priscilla Christiansen	Pat Magnuson
Kevin Cook’s Family	Andy Moye
Fran Cuthbertson	Larry Murren
Bonnie Evans	Garth Payne
‘Cile Gorman	Georgia Renfrow
Pat Greeson	Beth Weikel (Daughter of
Helen Hall	Jim and Betty Rissmiller)
Harold Henderson	
Bob Huffine’s Family	

Please be in touch with the office regarding any additions or corrections to the Prayer List. You may call (336.292.5150) or e-mail (faithpresgsonc@gmail.com).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Theology on Tap will NOT MEET Monday, December 29th. It will NEXT MEET on Monday, January 5th at the home of Tim and Laura Maher (4208 Shoal Creek Dr), The reading is Maya Angelou’s “I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings” chapters 30-32. Come even if you haven’t read the book!
- Theology on Tap will begin a new text on Monday, February 2nd. The book is the New Revised Edition of Marjorie Thompson’s “Soul Feast.” You are encouraged to buy it now to ensure you have received it in time to participate.

Pastoral Team

Rev. Karen Ware Jackson, Pastor
Rev. Jim Rissmiller, Parish Associate
Stephanie Lindley, Music Director
Lois Bazhaw, RN, Congregational Nurse
Beverly Lucas, Office Administrator

WELCOME TO FAITH PRESBYTERIAN



**The Longest Night,
A Service for Healing and Wholeness**

We embrace multigenerational worship and welcome the giggles, questions, tears, and even shouts that enliven our oh-so-orderly service. We do have a **professionally staffed nursery** available for babies and toddlers, but we encourage our youngest members to learn with and from us throughout the worship service.

There is a **family worship space** available for children and adults at the front of the sanctuary. **Are you curious about all the fun the kids are having up front?** Feel free to join our young people in their interactive worship activities! These experiences are great for active learners of all ages, and our children and their parents appreciate your engagement and support.

We want to be a true family of faith and that means celebrating the gifts, questions, and talents of each of our members from young in age to young at heart!

December 21st, 2014
6:00 P.M.

Service for the Lord’s Day
4th Sunday of Advent

6309 W. Friendly Ave. ♦ Greensboro, North Carolina 27410 ♦
336.292.5704 ♦ faithpresgsonc@gmail.com ♦ www.faihpresgso.org ♦
Twitter @faihpresgso
www.facebook.com/faihpresgso