



J.O.Y. ANNOUNCES "PEACE"

HIGHLANDS UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

SERVICE OF WORSHIP

Led by J.O.Y.

DECEMBER 10, 2017

2ND OF ADVENT

*"Prepare For Peace:
A Comforting Thought For An Advent Sunday"*

HIGHLANDS UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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"Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God."
Isaiah 40:1

Welcome to the 2nd Sunday of Advent. In Hope we add Peace to our worship today.

Music for The Time of Preparation today is "Prepare Ye The Way of the Lord" from the musical "Godspell."

Advent, a season of four Sundays, opens the church year. The observance of Advent originated in France during the 4th century. The word, Advent, consists of two Latin words: ad - venire, "To come to." Advent's message is that God in Christ is coming to the world. Advent is therefore a season of preparation for us, for nature, for the world as we celebrate Christ's coming and pray for Christ's return. "Come, Lord Jesus, Come!"

the Advent wreath, with its four candles representing Hope, Peace, Joy and Love serves to remind us of the coming into the world a light which will dispel the darkness. Each week in Advent we will welcome a different family to share the Advent wreath reading.

HIGHLANDS UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

A Celebration of Worship

December 10, 2017 – 2nd Sunday of Advent

"J.O.Y. Sunday"

"ENTER WITH REVERENCE TO WORSHIP GOD"

MUSIC AND TIME OF PREPARATION

(Enter reverently. Before the service, speak to God. During the service, let God speak to you. After the service, speak to one another.)

WELCOME TO WORSHIP AND SHARING LIFE IN THE CHURCH

PRELUDE & BRINGING THE LIGHT

CALL TO WORSHIP AND LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH

The Trombley Family

INTROIT

"Shine on Us, O God of Justice"

(Tune: Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence)

(Dr. Dave sings through 1 time, congregation joins on the second:)

**"Shine on us, O God of justice; Guide our path through gloom of night;
Bear within us Wisdom's glory; Come to us, O Christ the Light.
Guide us through these days of Advent,
'til your world returns to right."**

A READING FROM THE PROPHET ISAIAH 40: 1 - 11

This is the Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God. As we begin our journey to the light, we know that our lives have not always been lived in ways pleasing to God. Our shame has left us feeling distant from the One who is both Mother and Father to us all, the One in whose hands we are like clay. Yet even now, our longing for the One who tears open the heavens and comes down kindles like a fire in our soul. Even now as we wait, we dare to hope.

We who are pregnant with anticipation feel hope rise up within us. We know that "The Time Is Near" and so we light this first candle and name it Hope.

*ADVENT PRAYER

Our cry is one of longing, O God, for a restored relationship with you. As we enter the Season of Advent the longing is at its greatest. It can be hard to find you in our world, yet we believe you are here with us, renewing all that is broken. Come among us and, in flesh, abide with us, that we may witness your presence around us, and be filled with a new vision for your world. Amen.

*If comfortable, please stand

***HYMN OF ADVENT “Lord, We Long for Words of Comfort”**

(Tune: "God Whose Giving Knows No Ending")

**“Lord, we long for words of comfort, for a gentle, healing word —
That our suffering is ended, that our penalty is served.
For the sins of generations have compounded till our day;
God, the hope of all the nations, give us good news now, we pray!**

**Lord, we long for words of promise when we suffer for our sins,
When it seems that hate is endless, when it seems that trouble wins.
Can we see, in desert places, that there's hope for your new day?
Will we listen to a prophet showing us a better way?**

**May we look to John the Baptist, to the prophet you once sent,
For he calls us to be honest, and he calls us to repent.
May we turn our eyes to Jesus, to the one that John proclaimed.
May we see how love can heal us; may we trust in Jesus' name.**

**May we turn from what divides us, from the ways of hate and fear!
May your peace and justice guide us; may your love direct us here!
God, we pray that, in preparing, we'll find peace and challenge, too.
May we find a new direction as we wait to welcome you.”**

***PASSING THE PEACE**

May the peace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

AND ALSO WITH YOU.

(At this time you are invited to share a sign of peace: a hug, a handshake, a kiss...)

***CHORAL RESPONSE “People Look East”**

**“People, look east. The time is near Of the crowning of the year.
Make your house fair as you are able, Trim the hearth and set the table.
People, look east and sing today:
Love the guest is on the way**

"SEEK FORGIVENESS AND SHARE GOD'S GIFTS"

***CONFESSION AND PARDON (Responsive)**

So many talking, so much noise - how do we hear God's words? So many people, such crowded days - how do we see the One coming to us? Let us confess how the distractions of our lives keep us from knowing, and living, the true meaning of this season. Please join me, as we pray saying,

Forgive us, Alive God,
that in the music in the stores and the jingles in the air,
we do not hear the songs of the angels;
that in the hustle and bustle of every day and every one,
**we do not see the child standing alone in tears,
the family struggling for existence,
the outcasts pushed further away from hope;**
that in the pitches over the airwaves and online,

Our 'Hymn of Advent' is "Lord, We Long for Words of Comfort" which is written for the day by Carol Winfrey Gillette. It calls to mine our desire to be made aware of God's care for us as an Advent theme.

In our final 'gathering act' we "Pass the Peace" as an act of caring, welcome, and mutual love. In any language, the love of God is translated into peace as we join hands and hearts together. We are re-gathered as a worshiping community with the first verse of the Advent Hymn, "People Look East"

Corporate Confession:
In the Presbyterian and Reformed Tradition, we do not offer individual confession save for that which we offer in our silent prayers. Our prayer today reminds us that we are not simply individuals but citizens of the world seeking the kingdom of God. Our prayer and the "Assurance of Forgiveness" echo themes present in our Epistle lesson for the day.

“The Proclamation of God’s Word” is central in the life of the worshipping community. This ‘proclamation’ includes the reading of scripture, the sharing of an anthem or musical expression of the day’s theme, the Time With The Young Church and the preaching of the Word.

We are very glad to have our Highlands Precious Gifts Pre-School singer sharing “Happy Birthday, Jesus” with us. Thanks for being with us HPGP.

Our LOGOS choir will share “Advent Celebration.” Thanks to the children and their wonderful leaders for a great Advent song!

Our “Hymn of Response” is one of a very few in our Hymnal which refers to John the Baptist and the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan.

**we do not find the peace, the hope, the joy,
all the gifts you offer to your children.**

Pour out your tender mercy upon us, God of blessings,
and finish what you have started in us.

**As we share in your grace, may we also share in the
work of the gospel of peace, of hope,
of reconciliation begun in The birth of Jesus,
our Brother, our Savior. Amen.**

**Lord, Have Mercy Upon Us,
Christ Have Mercy Upon Us,
Lord Have Mercy Upon Us.”**

***ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

Like a warm shawl, God drapes tender mercy around our souls;
like the moon on a winter night, God's Light breaks through our
shadows, showing us the path to life.

**The street of peace, the avenue of hope, the path of grace,
the road to service - hand in hand, we walk the ways of our
God. Amen.**

“THE PROCLAMATION OF GOD’S WORD”

***THE GOSPEL FOR THE DAY**

***Mark: 1:1-8**

(NT: p.)

SPECIAL MUSIC

“Happy Birthday, Jesus”
Highlands Precious Gifts Singers

SPECIAL MUSIC

"Advent Celebration”
Logos Choir

TIME WITH THE YOUNG CHURCH "Peace"

INTERLUDE

(All children, ages 4 through 2nd grade are invited to attend “Children’s Church” after “A Time with the Young Church.” Their leader will meet them in the back of the sanctuary, They may be picked up after worship in the Family Life Center, room #207.)

SERMON “Prepare For Peace: A Comforting Thought For An Advent Sunday”

***HYMN OF RESPONSE NO. 10 “On Jordan’s Banks”**

(Tune: O Waly Waly)

- 1. On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry, Announces that the Lord is nigh;
Awake and hearken, for he brings, Glad tidings of the King of kings!**
- 2. Then cleansed be every life from sin; Make straight the way for God
within, And let us all our hearts prepare, For Christ to come and enter
there.**

3. We hail You as our Savior, Lord, Our refuge, and our great reward;
O let Your face upon us shine, And fill the world with love divine.

4. All praise to You, eternal Son, Whose advent has our freedom won,
Whom with the Father we adore, And Holy Spirit, evermore.

***AN ADVENT AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (Unison)**

We believe in God, creator and lover of the earth, origin and destiny of us all.

We believe in Jesus the Christ—

**God coming to us in the fragile promise of a baby yet unborn—
who emerges as the herald of hope, God's laughter in the face of
despair. Plunged into death and hell, he broke free the captives,
and is leading the way to the land of promise where justice and
peace will flourish.**

We believe in the Holy Spirit,

**who implants the seed of truth, brings us to birth as the body of
Christ, and empowers us to confront and transform all that is
corrupt, degrading and deceitful. We believe in the coming reign
of God.**

Announced by the Baptist,

**it has drawn near to us in Jesus, and will be consummated
in the glorious marriage of earth and heaven, when all who have
passed through the world's deep sorrow will be raised from the
waters, robed in righteousness, and gathered into the joyous
fulfillment of God's desire.**

For the coming of that day on this day, we work and pray:

Come, Lord Jesus, Come!

BEING THE CHURCH IN MISSION, PRAYER AND GIVING

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE (Responsive)

In the hushed anticipation of your coming, O Lord, lead us with joy in the light
of your glory; that we might be ready for you, and eager to pray.

Come Lord Jesus, and hear our prayer.

O God, help your church take off the garment of sorrow and affliction and put
on forever the beauty of your glory.

Come Lord Jesus, and hear our prayer.

In your time, O Lord, gather all your children from the nations of the world,
from the west and the east; that your peace would be manifest in every
corner of the earth.

Come Lord Jesus, and hear our prayer.

We pray for the sick, the suffering, and those in distress of any kind; that they
might rejoice that God has remembered them.

Come Lord Jesus, and hear our prayer.

Your great works of redemption, O God, span the ages. We pray for those
who rejoice this week that they might walk safely in the glory of God.

Come Lord Jesus, and hear our prayer.

We 'say what we believe' as another corporate act in the Presbyterian Church. Today we share a 'responsive' declaration of faith as part of our response to the Word as it is preached and heard that is especially mindful of this Advent season. It was written by Nathan Nettleton, and posted on his [Laughingbird](#) website.

The "Prayers of the People" are intended to draw us closer to God, to one another, and to all of God's children in the world. We offer God praise, we give God thanks, we lift up our brothers and sisters and finally we pray for ourselves.

The "Morning Offering" is another way that we respond to God in thanks for God's Word, Jesus Christ, and for the multitude of God's blessings in our living. (If you give 'electronically' we thank you and encourage you to place one of the 'cards' in the plate as a symbol of that giving.)

Today's Offertory is a hymn, "There's A Voice In the Wilderness Calling," that will be shared by our J.O.Y. Choir.

The 'Benediction' offers the final 'good words' said over God's people as they continue to worship in their living day by day.

Thanks to J.O.Y. for leading worship today!

Please join us 'across the way' in the Dining Hall for a time of Fellowship.

In the fullness of time, O God, you sent your son, to be born of our sister Mary. And his name was Emmanuel: God With Us. We thank you for your presence with us, and we pray that you might be always present with those whom we love but see no longer,

Come Lord Jesus, and hear our prayer.

O Christ, hear our prayers; and when you come among the nations for the forgiveness of sins, may we, your Church, be ready to meet you and find our home in you. Come Lord Jesus. **Amen.**

OFFERTORY INVITATION

Those who sow in tears, will reap with shouts of joy. With JOY let us make our offerings for all that God has done and for the promise of the One to come.

We Bring Our Offerings Gladly!

OFFERTORY "There's A Voice In The Wilderness Crying"

J.O.Y. CHOIR

1 There's a voice in the wilderness crying, a call from the ways untrod: Prepare in the desert a highway, a highway for our God! The valleys shall be exalted, the lofty hills brought low; make straight all the crooked places where the God, our God, may go!

2 O Jerusalem, herald good tidings, ascend to the heights and sing! Proclaim to a desolate people the coming of their king. Like flow'rs of the field we perish, like grass our works decay; the pow'r and the pomp of nations shall pass like a dream away.

3 But the word of our Savior is faithful, the arm of our God is strong, who stands in the midst of the nations and soon will right the wrong. Lord, feed your flock like a shepherd, the lambs so gently hold; in pastures of peace now lead them, and bring them to your fold.

***OFFERTORY PRAYER & RESPONSE (Unison)**

"We bring these gifts to you, O God. May they help to proclaim good news, bring justice and liberty and healing where they are needed, and comfort to those who mourn. And to these same ends we dedicate our lives also. In the name of Jesus, Amen."

**(Sung) "Glory be to God the Father, Glory be to Christ the Son,
Glory to the Holy Spirit, Glory to the three in one.**

**Here we offer to you gladly all the gifts that you impart,
As we glory in your presence giving from a grateful heart."**

***CHARGE AND BLESSING (responsive)**

By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us,
to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death,

to guide our feet into the way of peace.

**We go from here to prepare the way of the Lord in our lives,
in our homes and in our world.**

***HYMN OF PARTING NO. 30 "Of The Father's Love Begotten"**

***BENEDICTION**

***POSTLUDE**

*** - Those who are comfortable will please stand**



HIGHLANDS' HIGHLIGHTS This Week at Highlands Week of December 10, – December 16, 2017



This Week's Calendar of Events:

Today:	9:00 a.m. 10:00 a.m.	Sunday School Worship Service / JOY Sunday/ HPGP Sings Quilting and Sewing Group
Tuesday:	9:00 a.m. 7:00 p.m.	Advent Study
Wednesday:	10:00 a.m. 4:00 p.m. 7:15 p.m.	Wellness (Yoga at 10 and Adult Logos at 11) Logos continues its 25 th year at Highlands Adult Choir Rehearsal
Thursday:	7:30 p.m.	Adult Handbell Rehearsal

“WELCOME ONE ANOTHER, AS CHRIST WELCOMES US!”

HIGHLANDS UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH WELCOMES YOU! We are so glad that you are here and worshipping with us this morning. We are privileged to have you with us and would invite you to a time of Fellowship in our Dining Hall after worship. Please do us a favor by signing the Friendship Register and mark appropriate boxes. There are also visitor cards in the pew racks. **FIRST TIME VISITORS – WE HAVE SOMETHING FOR YOU!** Thanks!

MEMBERSHIP AT HIGHLANDS is open to all who believe in Jesus Christ as Lord of their lives and who wish to join in the worship and ministry of this church. The pastor or any member of the Session would be more than happy to discuss this with you.

A NURSERY IS PROVIDED IN THE FAMILY LIFE building for those who wish to have their children cared for during worship. Parents receive a 'silent pager' for peace of mind and will be paged in case of any need. Highlands takes great care in caring for your children.

CHILDREN'S CHURCH FOR AGES 3 THROUGH 1ST grade is in the Family Life building after "A Time with the Young Church," except on Communion Sundays. A nursery is provided for infants through two years of age in the Family Life Center. Worship folders for young Highlands' worshippers can be found at the usher's stand. PARENTS please help your children with their worship experience. **WE LOVE OUR CHILDREN AT HIGHLANDS** and want to keep them safe! Please help us with this goal by ensuring that **all children are supervised by an adult while on the playground at all times.**

DEVICES ARE AVAILABLE FOR THOSE IN NEED OF HEARING ASSISTANCE AT THE USHER'S STAND.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

WELCOME ONE ANOTHER... AS CHRIST HAS WELCOMED YOU! TODAY IS THE SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT and we hear the cry of the Baptist echoing the cry of the Prophet Isaiah, "Prepare The way of the Lord." The theme of the 2nd Sunday in Advent is "peace" and J.O.Y., our Logos choirs, and the Highlands Precious Gifts Singers will help us prepare a way in our hearts to hear the promise of peace. **We welcome the Precious Gifts families to our worship today!**

OUR ALTERNATIVE GIFT MARKET CONTINUES TODAY! Does Aunt Joyce really need another bottle of Eau de Parfum? Does Uncle Donnie really want a tie that lights up? Does Micah's Backpack and Family Promise and other local missions need support? Are there 30 children in Haiti whose lives are sustainable with our help? Maybe it would honor Aunt Joyce or Uncle Donnie to be the recipient of a card that says, "Family Promise or Micah's Backpack or a child (or more) in Haiti is cared for in YOUR honor!" Alternative gifts mean impactful giving! We NEED sponsors for 30 children in Haiti at \$25.00 per month (\$300.00 for the year.) Dr. Dave and Susan are sponsoring three. We had ___ to sign up on Sunday. That leaves only _____. PLEASE help a child in Haiti. Alternative Gifts are set up in the Dining Hall. You may also consider year end gifts to HUPC for paying down debts and general needs. Thanks!

DR. DAVE INVITES YOU TO JOIN OUR ANNUAL ADVENT STUDY on Tuesday evening at 7 p.m. This should be a fun study that will mix Advent scripture lessons with an enduring story of Christmas, "A Christmas Carol" by Dickens. It is called "The Redemption of Scrooge." We'll watch clips and discuss the story as it relates to Advent. Please join us as we greet the "Ghost of Christmas Present."

WELLNESS IS ON WEDNESDAY: Our program begins with seated yoga at 10:00 a.m. and Adult LOGOS follows around 11:00 am. Seated yoga can easily be adapted to anyone's physical interest and we are looking forward to John Smith's usual presentation making Bible study amusing and informative.

WE'RE CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF LOGOS AT HUPC!! We're having a great time at LOGOS! All of our children and you are invited so please bring your children, grandchildren, friends and neighbors to join us. Our theme this week is "God's Gifts" so you are invited to bring a 'white gift' to wrap.

NEXT SUNDAY MORNING you are reminded to bring 'White Gifts' for our annual birthday party for Baby Jesus during Sunday School. **ON CHRISTMAS EVE WE WILL WORSHIP AT:** 10 a.m., 5, 8 and 11 p.m. On Christmas Day you are invited for Christmas Cinnamon Buns and Fellowship at 10 a.m.

HIGHLANDS STRONG. I think everyone would agree that Highland's is "Strong" because of our industrious and dedicated staff. Accordingly, your Session has approved a "Love Offering" for the three Christmas Eve Services as token of our appreciation. So, in this season of giving, prayerfully consider this opportunity to say, "Thank You".

FAMILY PROMISE NEWS -The final Family Promise family of 2017 will move into their new home on December 1. This means that Highlands **will not** be hosting guests the week of December 17. As soon as the 2018 rotation is finalized we will let you know our weeks for next year. **MORE NEWS...**Family Promise's "Wheels on the Bus" campaign was a huge success! A new bus will be purchased and there are funds for transportation needs in 2018. Thanks so much for your support of this very important mission.

Eat more chicken! FUNDRAISER OPPORTUNITY. The Preschool is having its annual fundraising opportunity with the Chick-fil-A 2018 Calendar. Thank you for your support to the Church Preschool and the children we serve. We appreciate it – Michele!

OTHER ITEMS OF IMPORTANCE

THE THOUGHTFUL CHRISTIAN CLASS will study "Scientology" next Sunday, December 17th. Please join us for this lively discussion.

HIGHLAND'S BABY SHOWER: Matthew 25:40 – just as you did it to one of the least of these... you did it to me. Thanks to all of you who answered your call to discipleship with your generous contributions to the Highlands Baby Shower. This ministry shows care and support to many new mothers and babies of our community via your contributions of new baby clothes, blankets and more. You are a blessing. Highlands Mission Committee – for more information contact Susan Lee at 887-4661.

ARLINGTON COMMUNITY SERVICES: ACS needs the following items: toothpaste, powdered milk, canned milk, canned pasta, pasta sauce, canned meat, canned tomatoes, canned potatoes, peanut butter, jelly- HUPC's specialty, and toilet tissue. Fourteen jars of jelly were collected this week. Every grocery order going out of ACS has a jar of HUPC jelly. **Don't forget your jelly next Sunday!**

UPDATE FROM YOUR MISSION COMMITTEE. We need 15 more 16 X 26-inch hand towels, individual toothbrushes and fingernail clippers in order to have another "batch" of kits ready to go. Thanks for your help!

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED LOVE AND SUPPORT FOR THE CHILDREN OF HAITI. Please make sure your payments are marked "HAITI CHILDREN" to ensure the money goes into the right account.

PRAYER CONCERNS AND TODAY'S SERVICE –

SPECIAL AND ONGOING PRAYERS: PLEASE INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING IN YOUR PRAYERS THIS WEEK:

IN THE HOSPITAL THIS WEEK: Kit Fink and Richard Marsh (both have been released)

OUR FRIENDS IN CARE FACILITIES: *At Brookdale Southside:* (9601 Southbrook Dr., Jax, FL 32256); *Hank Green(N-122); At Clare Bridge* Louise Keen; *At the Atrium (9960 Atrium Way, 32225):* Boyd and Doreen Harris (#528) , Doris Ruby (#219) and Kit Fink who is in Rehab. *Others:* Fay Sweeney (# E10 A) at Cypress Village, 4600 Middleton Park Circle East , Jacksonville, FL 32224).

AT HOME: Don Hall, Kit Fink, Jo and Hoagy Carmichael, Nancy Hoot, Kinzey & Betty Reeves, Patty Strader, Marilyn Reed, JoAn Ewing, Bruce and Annette Marley, Gwen Brown, Barbara Ash and Carolyn Starkweather.

FAMILY AND FRIENDS: Debbie Douget's dad, Don Seay, Justin Marley (Bruce and Annette's grandson), Kenneth Moon (Barbara's son), Lenwood Lee (Dr. Dave's father), Ashley Parsons (DCE at Orange Park PC), Ed Mallard.

IN THE MILITARY: Jacob Loerop (Jacob.Loerop@CVN68.navy.mil, IT3 Jacob Loerop CVN 68 USS Nimitz Unit 100103 Box 1771 FPO AP 96620. Amelia Powell (amelia.powell@cvw7.navy.mil) AT2 Powell, Amelia N., VAQ-140, Unit 200107 Box 142, FPO AP 96601.

PRAYER BEARS: Prayer Bears and Caring Critters are available in the Fellowship Hall after each service.

MEMBER CARE: Bev Connell is our **Prayer Ministry Coordinator**. Bev's number is **(904) 868-9659**. Her email address is bevconn2016@gmail.com. Please contact Bev with your prayer request. As always, prayer requests can be made as well by calling the church office, completing the gray slips in the church pews, using the church website (hupcjax.org under "Contact Us") or by notifying your Shepherd.

FAMILIES WE ARE PRAYING FOR THIS WEEK: Dr. Dave and Susan Lee, John and Vicky Lennon and Annie Lietzow.

OUR VOLUNTEERS THIS MORNING ARE: Greeters: Mark and Michelle Todd. Children's Church Leader: David Bauerlein.