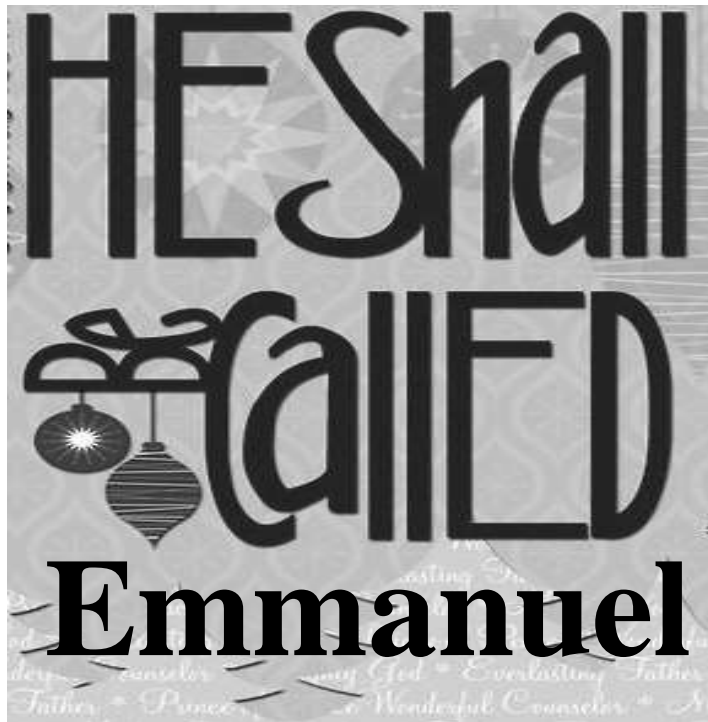


WELCOME TO...

The Presbyterian Church of  
Saint David  
December 16, 2012

Early Morning Service in the Season of Advent



**Introduction to Theme:** Over the four Sundays of Advent this year we have focussed on the following four themes:

- Seeing beyond the horizon of humanity (Luke 21:25-36)
- John the Baptist: prepare the way of the Lord (Luke 3:1-6)
- Responding to prophetic voices (Luke 3:7-18)
- The child of promise (Luke 1:39-45)

**Gathering:**

*God comes! So don't let go of all the reasons to rejoice. We will sing a song of Advent to the One who fills our lives with joy.*

*God comes! So don't stop lifting your prayers with thanksgiving. We will sing a song of Advent, to the One who hears our words and silence.*

*God comes! So don't stop giving your hearts to God. We will sing a song of Advent to the One who graces us with a joy we cannot begin to understand.*

Hymn: JOY to the World

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**Zephaniah 3:14-20** Sing aloud, O daughter Zion; shout, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter Jerusalem! The LORD has taken away the judgments against you, he has turned away your enemies. The king of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst; you shall fear disaster no more. On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem: Do not fear, O Zion; do not let your hands grow weak. The LORD, your God, is in your midst, a warrior who gives victory; he will rejoice over you with gladness, he will renew you in his love; he will exult over you with loud singing as on a day of festival.

Prayer of Confession: *With joy draw waters from the well of salvation! Forgiveness is real! Trust it and share it; forgive as you have been forgiven. Jesus said: "There is joy in heaven over one sinner who repents."* Truly, God is our salvation we shall trust and not be afraid! *The peace of our Saviour Jesus Christ be with you all. And also with you (we continue in prayer)*

**Luke 3:7-18** John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor'; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire." And the crowds asked him, "What then should we do?" In reply he said to them, "Whoever has two coats

must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise." Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, "Teacher, what should we do?" He said to them, "Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you." Soldiers also asked him, "And we, what should we do?" He said to them, "Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages." As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, John answered all of them by saying, "I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

**Continuing the Conversation:** 'Tis the season – the season of giving. How is this Lucan passage with its call to 'bear fruit worth of repentance' a call for us to change our attitudes and lives?

Hymn: I come with JOY (vs. 1-2) 530

*As streets fill with shoppers bright lights and tempting offers  
Christmas songs and children's laughter you lead us along a  
different path. To a desert river and a Prophetic voice  
A call to repentance A call to service A call to immerse  
ourselves in living water that will never run dry A call to  
prepare a way in our own lives For the Saviour of the world  
to enter in. To know the touch of tender mercy and rest in  
your forgiving love. For your faithful prophets and your Living  
Word we give you thanks. Amen*

**Invitation:** The Lord has prepared for all people a feast of rich food, a banquet of fine wines. God will wipe away the tears from every cheek. May the Lord of our joy be always with you.

**This is the Lord who invites us: we come, the table is set,  
everything is ready. We come to the feast. Happy are those  
who are invited to the supper of the Lamb!**

Hymn: I come with JOY (vs. 3) 530

Prayer of Thanksgiving: *Rejoice in the Lord always  
Shout out his name. For God is with us. Our God is with us  
The God of our salvation in whom alone we trust.*

**Rejoice in the Lord always Shout out his name** (we continue in prayer) *Gracious God, remembering now his work of redemption, and offering to you this sacrifice of thanksgiving, we celebrate his death and resurrection, as we await the day of his coming. By your word and Spirit, O God, sanctify these your own gifts of bread and wine, that the bread which we break may be to us communion in the body of Christ, and the cup of blessing which we bless may be communion in the blood of Christ Come, holy Spirit, come.*

Hymn: I come with JOY (vs. 4-5) 530

## Communion

### Prayer following communion

*Gracious God, you have fill us with the good things of creation, feeding us body and spirit. My heart has been filled with joy and my tongue with rejoicing. Let my spirit glorify the Lord, and my soul rejoice in God my Saviour.*

Hymn: Shout for JOY 557

Go now and rejoice in the Lord always.  
Do not be afraid or worried about anything,  
but in everything trust God and pray.  
Bear fruits worthy of repentance,  
sharing what you have and being gentle with all.

