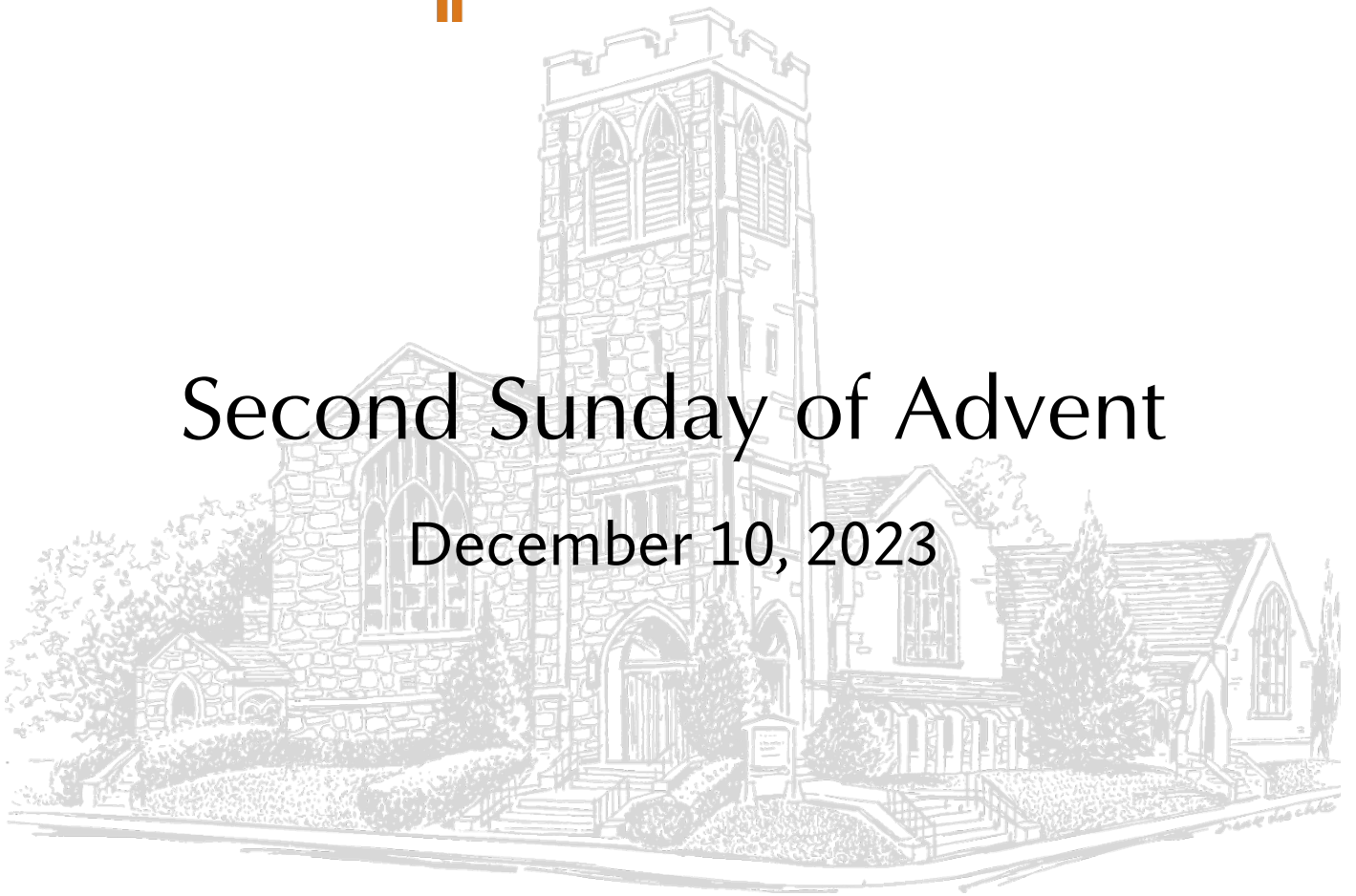




# WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

## Second Sunday of Advent

December 10, 2023



**Westminster Presbyterian Church extends an enthusiastic welcome**, in Christ's name, to all who worship here or join us in fellowship. Our church family seeks to embody God's boundless love by embracing, liberating and empowering people – whoever they are and wherever they may be on their faith journeys – to realize the transforming power of Christ in our congregation, community, and the world beyond.



**A Covenant Network Congregation of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)**  
**An Earth Care Congregation of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)**  
**A Matthew 25 Church of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)**  
**A Stephen Ministry Congregation**

# TODAY AT WESTMINSTER

**8:45 – 12:15 p.m.**      **Nursery Care** for infants and toddlers in Preschool Suite D

**9:00 – 9:55 a.m.**      **Worship** in the Sanctuary

**Time with Our Children (approximately 9:15 a.m.)**

*The young and young-at-heart are invited to join the worship leader at the front of the sanctuary. Following the TIME WITH OUR CHILDREN, young ones through grade 5 may be escorted to Children's Programming or they are welcome to remain in worship.*

**Children's Programming (9:20 – 10:00 a.m.)**

- Preschool Sunday School: Ages 3 and 4 in the Preschool Suite Room C
- Joyful Noise Choir: Kindergarten–Grade 5 in the Youth Music Room

**10:00 – 10:45 a.m.**      **Holy Toast Café** in Walton Community Hall

*Enjoy free coffee, tea, and fellowship. Breakfast items are available for one dollar.*

**10:10 – 11:00 a.m.**      **Children and Youth Programming**

- Nursery Care: Age 4 and under in Preschool Suite D
- Kids Zone Sunday School: Kindergarten–Grade 5 in Classroom 1
- Middle School Zone: Grades 6–8 in Classroom 3
- High School: Grades 9–12
  - Confirmation Class in Ruth Christie Room
  - Small Groups in the Library (for already confirmed youth)

**Adult Education:**

- Experience the Pacific Crest Trail in Classroom 6  
(see announcement on page 6)
- Holiday Traditions in Classroom 3  
(see announcement on page 6)

**11:15 – 12:00 p.m.**      **Living Mosaics worship** in Rodney Chapel

**3:00 – 4:00 p.m.**      **WPC Christmas Concert** in the Sanctuary

**4:00 – 5:00 p.m.**      **Concert Reception** in Rodney Chapel and the Meeting Room

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FAITH!



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For descriptions of our programs for children and youth, visit [wpc.org/children-youth](http://wpc.org/children-youth).

**The Music:** Today's offertory anthem is a timely arrangement of C.H.H. Parry's classic hymn tune and offers a new perspective to the poignant prayer for peace written by Carl P. Daw Jr. The Isaiah prophecy echoes through the text with a longing for Christ's promised reign of peace when all the earth shall know the Lord. Please join us for our Christmas Choral Concert this afternoon at 3 p.m. A reception follows. More information can be found on p. 8.

**The sanctuary flowers** are given to the Glory of God and in loving memory of her brother, Kenny Budd, by Linda Watson and her family. Consider giving the flowers for Sunday worship to remember or honor loved ones or to celebrate an event. Please contact Linda Watson at (302) 571-6719 or [lwatson@ycst.com](mailto:lwatson@ycst.com).

**Westminster's Prayer Team** prays for the needs of our community. Please submit your prayer request to [wpcprayerlist@gmail.com](mailto:wpcprayerlist@gmail.com) or online at [wpc.org/care-support](http://wpc.org/care-support).

**You can make a contribution** to Westminster Presbyterian Church by visiting our website at [wpc.org](http://wpc.org) and clicking the "Donate" button or scan this QR code on your smart phone. → We accept donations by bank withdrawal, credit card, and debit card.



Visit [wpc.org/staff-leadership](http://wpc.org/staff-leadership) for a full listing of Westminster's staff and leadership.

# ORDER OF WORSHIP

~ Passages in **bold** print may be spoken by all. At the asterisk (\*) please stand in body or rise in spirit. ~

TOWER CHIME

Susan Spilecki

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

\*PASSING OF THE PEACE

PRELUDE

*Meditation on GREENSLEEVES*  
Ted Barr and Tony Thurman, four-hand piano

Joel Raney

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

Rich and Linda Williams

A voice cries out in the wilderness:  
"Prepare the way of the Lord."  
A choir sings in the silence,  
"Come, Emmanuel."  
Every valley shall be filled.  
Every heart shall be made whole,  
**for peace is stronger than turmoil,  
and peace will prevail.**

As we light our second Advent candle,  
**we pray for the holy peace of God.**  
Come now, O Child of Mary.  
**Come now, O Prince of Peace.**

\*HYMN NO. 87

*Comfort, Comfort Now My People*

GENEVAN 42

ADVENT PRAYER

**Loving God, in this time of preparation and planning,  
we thank you for the hope and peace you continuously offer us.  
Show us the creative power of hope.  
Teach us the peace that comes from justice.  
Prepare our hearts to be transformed  
and reveal your vision of peace  
that we may walk in the light of Christ. Amen.**

TIME WITH OUR CHILDREN (See "Today at Westminster" on page 2 for more information.)

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Mark 1:1-8

New Testament, page 30

\*HYMN NO. 86

*The People Who Walked in Darkness*  
v. 1: Choir  
vv. 2, 3, & 5: Sung by All

ISAIAH 9

OFFERING

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

*O Day of Peace that Dimly Shines*

C.H.H. Parry  
arr. Jantz A. Black

O day of peace that dimly shines  
through all our hopes and prayers and dreams,  
guide us to justice, truth, and love,  
delivered from our selfish schemes.  
May swords of hate fall from our hands,  
our hearts from envy find release,  
till by God's grace our warring world  
shall see Christ's promised reign of peace.

Then shall the wolf dwell with the lamb,  
nor shall the fierce devour the small;  
as beasts and cattle calmly graze,  
a little child shall lead them all.  
Then enemies shall learn to love,  
all creatures find their true accord;  
the hope of peace shall be fulfilled,  
for all the earth shall know the Lord.  
—Carl P. Daw Jr., 1982

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE LORD'S PRAYER

**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, forever. Amen.**

\*HYMN NO. 107

*Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn*

REJOICE, REJOICE

\*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

*Westminster Carillon*

Carson Cooman

**New to Westminster?** Welcome! We're so glad you're here. If you are joining us for the first time, please introduce yourself via our contact form on the [I'm New](#) page of our website or scan this QR code to get there from your mobile device. We look forward to getting to know you.



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## 2023 CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS

**Deadline: Wednesday, December 13**



You are welcome to make a contribution toward the beauty of the church for the Christmas season in memory of, or in honor of, loved ones. The deadline is **December 13** for memorial/honoree names to be listed in the Christmas Eve worship bulletins. For any form received *after* that date, the names will be listed in the December 31 bulletin. Please complete a paper form (available on the credenza in the guest seating area near the reception desk) or complete it online at [bit.ly/WPC-Poinsettias-2023](https://bit.ly/WPC-Poinsettias-2023). PAYMENT AND FORM MUST BOTH BE RECEIVED. Please remit payment in one of two ways:

**ONLINE (PREFERRED)** – Go to [wpc.org/donate](https://wpc.org/donate) and click the “DONATE NOW” button. If you have a login/password to our *Realm* system, please select “Sign In” to sign in to your profile first. If you do not have a login/password with our system, please select “Give Online” to make a donation as a guest. Choose **Poinsettias** from the Fund drop-down list.

**CHECK** – Make check payable to *Westminster Presbyterian Church* (memo: **Poinsettias**) and mail or drop off to Susan Alexander at the church address by December 13.



# ADULT EDUCATION

TODAY, DECEMBER 10



## Experience the Pacific Crest Trail (PCT)

*Presented by Baden Saathoff*

**10:10 a.m. | Classroom 6 and Zoom**

Zoom link: [bit.ly/wpc-adult-ed-zoom](https://bit.ly/wpc-adult-ed-zoom)

Baden just hiked the entire 2,653 miles of the PCT and will share his photos and stories. His five-month “walk” took him from the US-Mexico border to Canada, through three states, seven national parks, and 25 national forests. He faced intense weather conditions and long days. Come hear about who he met, what he ate, and how he felt along the way.

## Holiday Traditions

*Presented by Bob Cox*

**10:10 a.m. | Classroom 5**

Part of the joy of the holidays is the traditions, many of which have been with us since childhood or our parents’ or grandparents’ childhoods. Other countries and cultures have different traditions. Join Bob Cox as we explore the many different Christmas traditions within the Christian faith. Of course, Dickens will be discussed.

NEXT SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17

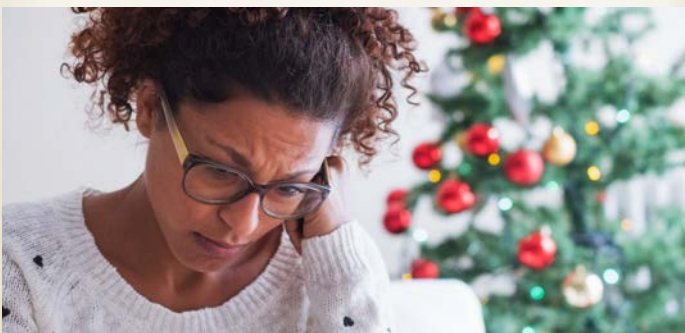
## Attending to our Emotions During the Holidays

*Facilitated by Janet Steinwedel, Ph.D.*

**10:10 a.m. | Classroom 6 and Zoom**

Zoom link: [bit.ly/wpc-adult-ed-zoom](https://bit.ly/wpc-adult-ed-zoom)

While there is much joy to be had at holiday time, some of us also experience some lows. Memories of lost loved ones and difficult gatherings in the past and the current news can overtake us and depress or deplete our overall energy. Attending to our emotions means allowing for them, paying attention to their message, and finding a healthy way to respond. In this session, we will discuss how we can have realistic expectations, healthy boundaries, and lighten the emotional load of celebration.



ONGOING/WEEKLY

## Online Bible Studies

**Midweek Manna Bible Study**

**Wednesdays | 12 p.m. | Zoom**

**NO MEETING ON DECEMBER 13**

*Facilitator: The Rev. Sudie Niesen Thompson*

Contact: [sniesenthompson@wpc.org](mailto:sniesenthompson@wpc.org)

**Thursday Evening Bible Study**

**Thursdays | 6–7 p.m. | Zoom**

*Facilitators: Randy Williamson  
and Mary Anne Peters*

Contact: [randywilliamson1@comcast.net](mailto:randywilliamson1@comcast.net)

## Peace and Justice Thursday Evening Education Event

**Learnings from 12 Years of the  
Creative Vision Factory**

*With Director Michael Kalmbach*

**December 14 | 7 p.m. | Zoom**

Zoom link: [bit.ly/peace-justice-zoom](https://bit.ly/peace-justice-zoom)

Hosted by our Peace & Justice Work Group.

[zoom.us/join](https://zoom.us/join) | Meeting ID: 860 2752 1655

For full descriptions of our programs and more adult education and small group opportunities, visit [WPC.ORG/ADULTS](https://WPC.ORG/ADULTS) or check our events calendar at [WPC.ORG/EVENTS](https://WPC.ORG/EVENTS). Select adult education programs are available as a livestream/recording on our [YouTube channel](#).

# ECHO Giving for Advent



*ECHO Giving* provides the opportunity to honor someone by making an *ECHO* gift in their name, while supporting the nine local and three global mission partners of Westminster. Your *ECHO* gift made during this season of giving produces life-sustaining reverberations of kindness and goodwill throughout Wilmington and across the world. Gifts of any size are welcome and 100% of dollars donated go directly to the mission organization you select.



***ECHO Giving* Order Forms are available online at [bit.ly/ECHO-Giving-Advent2023](https://bit.ly/ECHO-Giving-Advent2023) and can also be found at the information table in Walton Community Hall during Advent.**

*You can request gift cards to notify recipients that a gift was made by you in their name.*

## Christmas Boxes Are Wrapping Up!

We continue this joyful *Christmas Box Project* tradition at Westminster, although “boxes” will be shopping “bags” again this year. Our mission is to provide food for Christmas dinner and the means to buy gifts for the children in the families. Help bring holiday cheer to families in our community – be a part of this wonderful project!

- **Check and Online Donations**

Your donations are used to buy ShopRite and Walmart gift cards for the families. Make a financial donation by **DECEMBER 15** for 2023 year-end giving by writing and mailing a **CHECK** to *Westminster Presbyterian Church* (memo: Christmas Box) and either place it in a Sunday offering plate or mail to the church **or** by making an **ONLINE** donation at [wpc.org/donate](https://wpc.org/donate) (preferred method); click the blue “DONATE NOW” button, click “Give Online” (or “Sign In” if you already have a Realm login), enter the amount, and choose “Christmas Box Project” from the fund drop-down list.

- **Distribution Day**

You are needed on **MONDAY, DECEMBER 11**, between 8 a.m. and 12 noon, for Distribution Day. It’s a joyous time when the Christmas spirit flows with smiles and hugs!

Thank you for your generosity and for sharing the love of Christ!





# Experience Christmas at Westminster

*Please join us in celebrating the birth of our Lord and Savior!*

## CHRISTMAS CHORAL CONCERT

**Today • 3 p.m. • Sanctuary**

Starlight and candlelight will enhance this concert of Christmas carols by Jantz Black, Craig Courtney, Dan Forrest, John Rutter, and Mack Wilberg. The Westminster Choir will be joined by Ted W. Barr at our Steinway & Sons concert grand piano, and Dr. F. Anthony Thurman at the organ. A pre-concert Tower Chime recital by Timothy Ohmart begins at 2:30 p.m.

## CHRISTMAS HANDBELL CONCERT

**Saturday, December 16, 2023 • 4 p.m. • Sanctuary**

Experience the joy and wonder of the season across cultures and continents with the Wilmington Handbell Ensemble, Kerry Dietz, artistic director, as they present *Carols Around the World*. A pre-concert Tower Chime recital by Susan Spilecki begins at 3:30 p.m.

## WESTMINSTER CHRISTMAS CAROLING: HOME DELIVERY

**Sunday, December 17, 2023 • 12–2:30 p.m. • Walton Community Hall**

Team up with the Westminster Choir and our Board of Deacons to share the joy of Christmas at four local retirement communities: Cokesbury, Country House, Maris Grove, and Stonegates. Lunch is provided at 12 noon followed by a 30-minute rehearsal and departure to each caroling site. All ages are welcome – especially children! Contact [TonyThurman@wpc.org](mailto:TonyThurman@wpc.org) or (302) 654-5214, ext. 121.

## THE LONGEST NIGHT: A SERVICE OF WHOLENESS AND HEALING

**Wednesday, December 20, 2023 • 6 p.m. • Rodney Chapel**

For many, the holidays bring fresh waves of grief. This contemplative worship service will offer a space for both heartache and hope as we wait in darkness for the Light of the World. On the eve of the longest night of the calendar year, we invite you to join us in this candlelight service of healing and wholeness, with music by the Westminster Choir.

## CHRISTMAS EVE

**Sunday, December 24, 2023 • Sanctuary**

**Morning Worship, 10 a.m.** – The Fourth Sunday of Advent will be celebrated with joyful music and the lighting of the fourth candle in our Advent wreath. The Rev. Sudie Niesen Thompson will offer an inspired sermon to bring the season of Advent to a close while we wait in anticipation of our Savior's birth.

**Children's Pageant, 4:00 p.m.** – O come, little children, O come, one and all. This lively service featuring a living crèche and our children's choir will be no silent night! All children are invited to participate in the pageant. Gather for costumes in the Preschool Suite at 3:30 p.m.

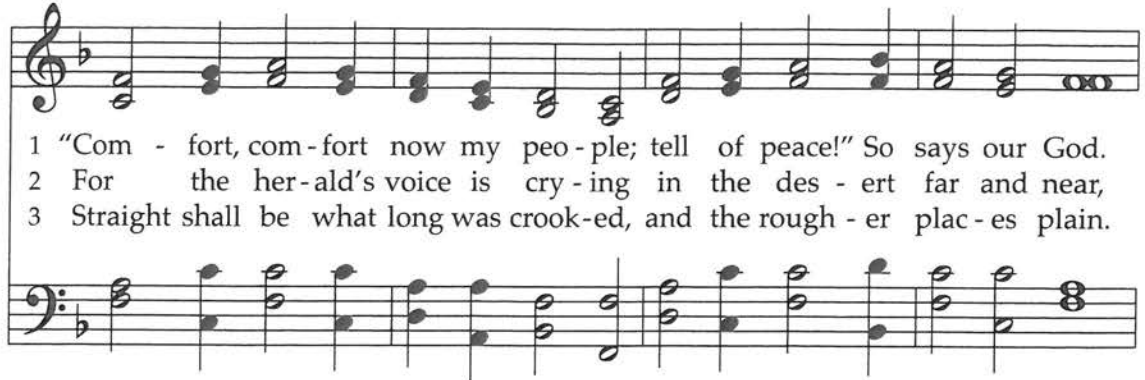
**Service of Story and Song, 5:30 p.m.** – O come, all ye faithful. The Westminster-by-Heart Storytellers will bring new life to ancient scriptures. Westminster's professional soloists, brass, and percussion will trumpet the joy of Jesus' birth! We will celebrate communion (offered to all) and sing by candlelight.

**Candlelight Communion Service, 8:00 p.m.** – On Christmas night all Christians sing to hear the news the angels bring: news of great joy, news of great mirth, news of our merciful Savior's birth. Our traditional candlelight communion (offered to all) service will include a stirring sermon by the Rev. Dr. Gregory Knox Jones and anthems by the Westminster Choir accompanied by organ, piano, and percussion.

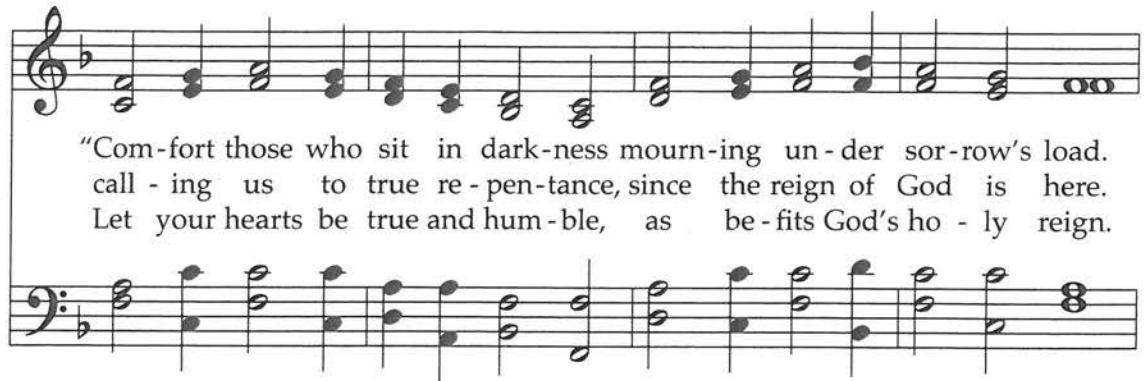
**Join us in person or online! All concerts and services held in the sanctuary will be livestreamed/recorded at [WPC.ORG/WATCH](https://wpc.org/watch) and on Westminster's [YouTube channel](#).**



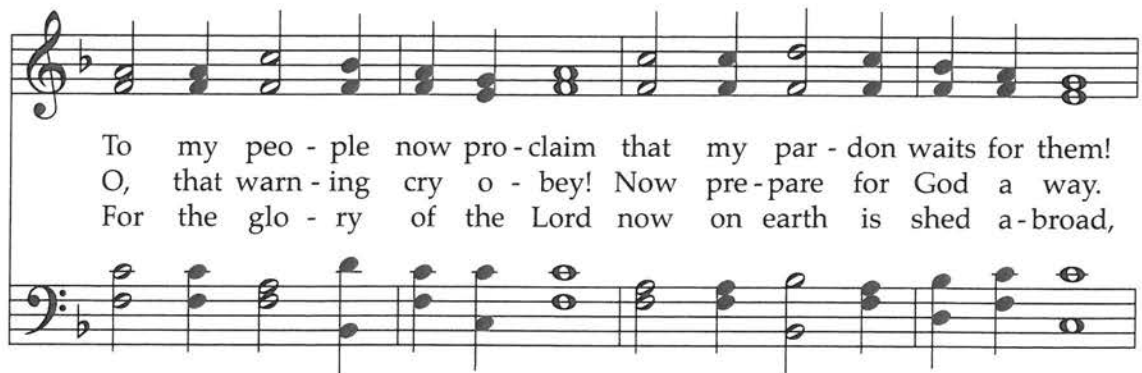
## Comfort, Comfort Now My People 87



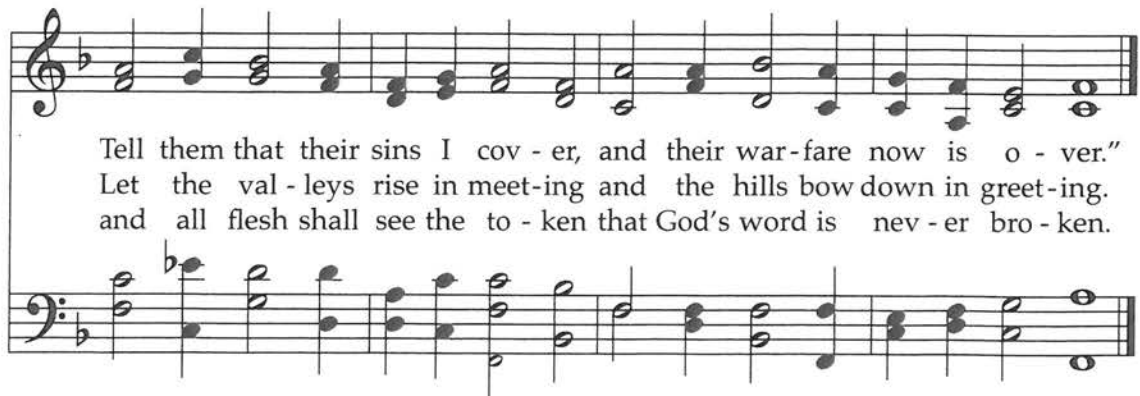
1 "Com - fort, com-fort now my peo - ple; tell of peace!" So says our God.  
 2 For the her-ald's voice is cry - ing in the des - ert far and near,  
 3 Straight shall be what long was crook-ed, and the rough - er plac - es plain.



"Com-fort those who sit in dark-ness mourn-ing un-der sor-row's load.  
 call - ing us to true re - pen-tance, since the reign of God is here.  
 Let your hearts be true and hum - ble, as be - fits God's ho - ly reign.



To my peo - ple now pro-claim that my par - don waits for them!  
 O, that warn - ing cry o - bey! Now pre-pare for God a way.  
 For the glo - ry of the Lord now on earth is shed a-broad,



Tell them that their sins I cov - er, and their war-fare now is o - ver."  
 Let the val - leys rise in meet-ing and the hills bow down in greet-ing.  
 and all flesh shall see the to - ken that God's word is nev - er bro - ken.

This 17th-century German paraphrase of Isaiah 40:1-5 was one of the texts translated as part of the 19th-century British interest in German religious poetry. It is set here to one of the most popular Genevan Psalter tunes, probably derived from an earlier French folksong.

## 86 The People Who Walked in Darkness

Capo 3: (Em) (C/E) (Em) (C/E) (Em)

Gm Eb/G Gm Eb/G Gm

1 The peo - ple who walked in dark - ness a - wak - en to  
 2 For God has en - larged the na - tion, and pros - pered the  
 3 The yoke of de - spair and bond - age, the chains of the  
 4 For us now a child is giv - en, for all the de -  
 5 How vast is our God's do - min - ion! How far truth and

(D) (G) (B) (Em) (C/E)  
 F B<sup>b</sup> D Gm Eb/G

see a great light. The peo - ple who dwelt in the  
 fruit of its land. God's peo - ple are blest with the  
 slave mas - ter's rod are shat - tered and scat - tered like  
 spised and for - lorn. The rule of com - pas - sion shall  
 mer - cy ex - tend. The zeal of the Lord will ac -

(Em) (Bm) (Cmaj7) (Am7) (Bsus) (B)  
 Gm Dm Ebmaj7 Cm7 Dsus D

land of the shad - ow rise to a star shin - ing bright.  
 har - vest of vic - tory, gift from a boun - ti - ful hand.  
 dust in a wind - storm, loosed by the jus - tice of God.  
 rest on his shoul - der. God's own Mes - si - ah is born!  
 com - pish its pur - pose: jus - tice shall reign with - out end.

Refrain (E) (Am7) (D) (G) (C) (F<sup>#</sup>dim7) (B) (Em)  
 G Cm7 F B<sup>b</sup> Eb Adim7 D Gm

His name is Won - der - ful, Coun - sel - or, Al - might - y God,

(Cmaj7) (G) (Am7) (D) 1 (G)  
 Ebmaj7 B<sup>b</sup> Cm7 F B<sup>b</sup>

Fa - ther for - ev - er, Prince of Peace.

2 (G) (B7sus) (B) Final (G) (C/G) (G)  
 B<sup>b</sup> D7sus D B<sup>b</sup> Eb/B<sup>b</sup> B<sup>b</sup>

Peace. (to stanzas) Peace.

One of the great virtues of scriptural paraphrases is that they bring fresh understanding and appreciation to familiar passages. This adaptation of a customary Advent text, Isaiah 9:2-7, provides an effective example of how revisited verses can take on new life when recast.

# Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn



1 A - wake! A - wake, and greet the new morn, for an - gels  
2 To us, to all in sor - row and fear, Em - man - u -  
3 In dark - est night his com - ing shall be, when all the  
4 Re - joice, re - joice, take heart in the night. Though dark the



her - ald its dawn - ing. Sing out your joy, for soon he is  
el comes a - sing - ing; his hum - ble song is qui - et and  
world is de - spair - ing, as morn - ing light so qui - et and  
win - ter and cheer - less, the ris - ing sun shall crown you with



born, be - hold! the Child of our long - ing. Come as a ba - by  
near, yet fills the earth with its ring - ing; mu - sic to heal the  
free, so warm and gen - tle and car - ing. Then shall the mute break  
light; be strong and lov - ing and fear - less. Love be our song and



weak and poor, to bring all hearts to - geth - er, he o - pens  
bro - ken soul and hymns of lov - ing - kind - ness. The thun - der  
forth in song, the lame shall leap in won - der, the weak be  
love our prayer and love our end - less sto - ry; may God fill



wide the heaven - ly door and lives now in - side us for - ev - er.  
of his an - thems rolls to shat - ter all ha - tred and vio - lence.  
raised a - bove the strong, and weap - ons be bro - ken a - sun - der.  
ev - ery day we share and bring us at last in - to glo - ry.

After attending a carol concert, the author and composer of this hymn was moved to create a contemporary, accessible carol that drew on the familiar images in a new way. There are echoes here of passages such as Isaiah 9:6, Isaiah 7:14/Matthew 1:23, Isaiah 35:5-6, Isaiah 2:4.