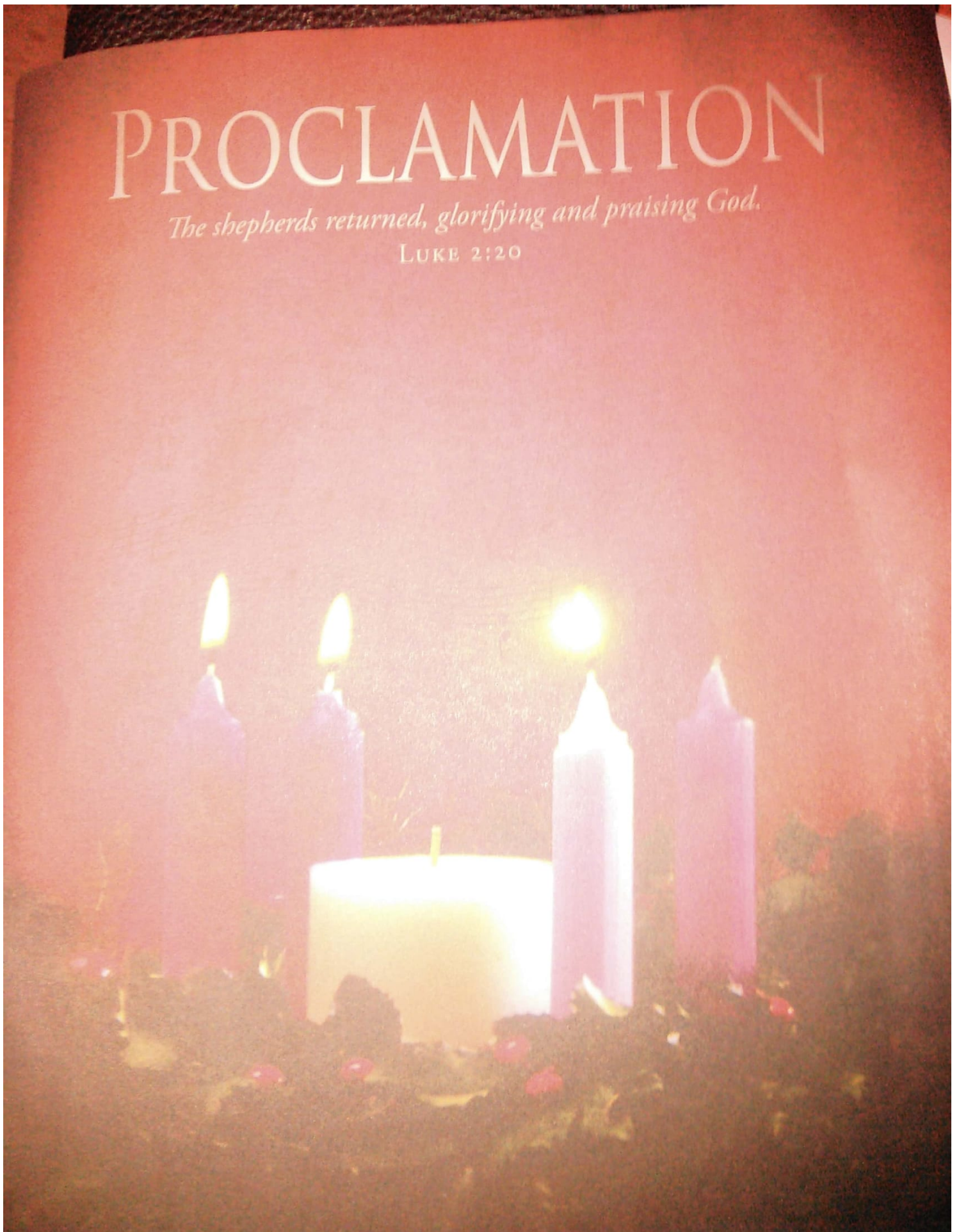


PROCLAMATION

The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God.

LUKE 2:20



The Pink Candle

This Sunday's Advent wreath candle lighting varies because it is *Gaudete* ("rejoice!") Sunday. As a break from the heaviness of Advent's penitential preparations, this Sunday offers a reprise from our dark longings to offer joy's glimmer of light. The Latin word *Gaudete* is grammatically imperative, reminding us that even in the midst of darkness, we are called to rejoice. This is also why we light a pink candle—the color of joy in the penitential season of purple. Only the Christ candle is white, also a color signifying joy in many cultures, because the fullness of joy is in the Lord.



The Christ candle in the center of the wreath is lit on Christmas Eve as we celebrate his birth. We re-light this candle on the Sunday following Christmas as we continue to celebrate the season of *Christmas* which ends on *Epiphany* (January 6).

"Advent" means *coming* or *arrival*. During the four weeks of this season, we celebrate Christ's coming in the world and watch with expectant hope for his coming again. It is a time for communal discernment and personal examination. We have been told through scripture to prepare so that we are ready for the Christ when he comes.

Until the dawning of that Great Day when Christ will return, we watch and wait for Christ's coming into the darkness of our world, lighting candles of hope, peace, joy, and love; and remembering the promises of God with prayer.

Lift up your heads, O gates! And be lifted up, O ancient doors!
that the King of glory may come in. (Psalm 24:7)



Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church
301 Patton Avenue NW, Roanoke, Virginia 24016
www.5thavepresbychurchroanoke.com
Historic Past • Contemporary Presence • Exciting Future

Third Sunday in Advent
December 17, 2017

Organist.....Mr. Frederick Bolden
Pastor.....The Rev. Vernie Bolden, Jr.

We Assemble in God's Name

Organ Prelude and Lighting of Candles

Gathering in Song (seated).....*"While We Are Waiting, Come"*.....# 242

Welcome

Lighting of the Third Advent Candle

Leader: Watch and wait, for Christ is coming! We light candles of Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love, remembering the promises of God with prayer. Today, we light the first candle in Hope. We light the second candle in Peace. We light the third candle, the pink candle, in Joy.

To those who live as exiles from home in a dark time, to those enslaved as exiles due to others' oppression, to those who are sin's exiles from their best God-promised selves, the Lord speaks the joy of good news. Let us read responsively these words from Isaiah 35.

Leader: The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing. They shall see the glory of the Lord, the Majesty of our God.

People: *Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, do not fear! Your God will come and save you."*

All: *The redeemed of the Lord shall return to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorry and sighing shall flee away.*

Prayer of Preparation (unison): Who are we, Lord God, that you should come to us? Yet you have visited your people and redeemed us in your Son. As we prepare to celebrate his birth, make our hearts leap for joy at the sound of your word, and move us by your Spirit to bless your wonderful works. We ask this through him whose coming is certain, whose day

draws near, your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

Chimes

*** Call to Worship**

Leader: Rejoice in the Lord always; again, I will say, Rejoice!

People: *Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near.*

All: *Come, Lord Jesus!*

*** Hymn of Praise**..... "Angels From the Realms of Glory"# 131

Announcements and Celebrations

Welcome of Visitors

*** Passing of the Peace +**

Leader: May the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all!

People: *Peace be with you! Let us now share the peace of God with one another.*

(Congregation greets one another, exchanging words of peace.)

Hymn..... "Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates"# 8 Blue

Invitation to Confession

from 1 John 1:5-7

Leader: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin. In humility and faith let us confess our sin to God. Let us pray.

Prayer of Confession (unison): Holy and merciful God, in your presence we confess our sinfulness, our shortcomings, and our offenses against you. You alone know how often we have sinned in wandering from your ways, in wasting your gifts, in forgetting your love. Have mercy on us, O Lord, for we are ashamed and sorry for all we have done to displease you. Forgive our sins, and help us to live in your light, and walk in your ways, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Savior.

Silent Confession

Assurance of Forgiveness

Leader: Hear the good news! God so loved the world that he gave his Only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

People: *God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.*

Leader: Friends, believe the good news of the Gospel,

All: *In Jesus Christ we are forgiven! Thanks be to God.*

Prayer Concerns

Prayers of the People and The Lord's Prayer

All: *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.

Prayer Response (all)..... "Emmanuel"# 134

We Proclaim God's Word

Scripture Lesson:	Luke 1:39-56	page 1225
Special Music		Ja'da Robinson
Prayer for Illumination		The Rev. Vernie Bolden
Sermon		"Ain't I a Woman?"

We Respond to God's Word

*** Affirmation of Faith**

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy universal church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting. Amen.

* Gloria Patri..... "Glory Be to the Father"# 623

*Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.*

*** Invitation to Discipleship**

The Rev. Vernie Bolden

* Hymn of Commitment..... "Go, Tell It on the Mountain" # 138

The Offering of Our Tithes and Gifts

Offertory Prayer (unison): God of grace, your eternal Word took flesh among us when Mary placed her life at the service of your will. As we dedicate ourselves and our offerings, prepare our hearts for his coming again; keep us steadfast in hope and faithful in service, that we may

receive the coming of his kingdom, for the sake of Jesus Christ the ruler of all, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

*** Choral Response**

All things come of Thee, O Lord; and of Thine own have we given Thee.

We Go in God's Name

Charge and Benediction

We Carry Our Light Into the World

The Rev. Vernie Bolden
"This Little Light of Mine"

1. This little light of mine... 2. Everywhere I go...

*Those who are able may stand

+ Late worshipers seated

Welcome Visitors!

We are glad you have joined us in worship today. Please fill out the card that the ushers gave you at the door. We hope to see you here again soon. Anyone who is interested in joining this part of Christ's church should speak to the pastor or one of the elders.

+ Notes from the Pastor +

- If you are coping with sadness or grief during this holiday season, please join us for a "Blue Christmas" Worship Service on Tuesday evening at 6:30 p.m.
- Office hours this week: by appointment—contact vernlee3@hotmail.com, or call the office—540.342.0264

+ Other Announcements +

- The Adult Choir meets as announced. Come join the fellowship. New members are welcomed.
- *Remember:* Children are back in school and need good food in their tummies to help them learn! Bring a food offering to share with those who need our help.
- Check out our web page: www.5thavepresbychurchroanoke.com



The annual "Christmas Joy" Offering will be received next Sunday, December 24, Christmas Eve. Please see bulletin inserts for more information throughout the coming weeks!

Remember our Shut-Ins and Members Away from Our Community

Mr. Bob Hale—Salem Health & Rehabilitation Center, 1945 Roanoke Blvd, Salem VA 24153	556-6680
Mr. Jim Slaughter—1219 Grayson Ave NW, Roanoke VA (24017)	366-0391
Mr. Don Wahls—138 Whaley Rd, Raeford NC 28376	don.wahls@gmail.com

Congregational Prayer and Pastoral Concerns

- For our nation and its leadership, for President Trump; for our state and local officials, and those elected to national office— for wisdom and compassion, for a spirit of cooperation and the overcoming of barriers; for a capacity to seek the greater good instead of personal gain
- For the leaders of other countries, and the efforts of all who seek to bring peace to the world—for North and South Korea; for Israel/Palestine; for The Congo
- For our enemies, both personal and national, including terrorists
- For our pastor and his family; for our ministry together
- For unity in the Church, cooperation among denominations, for people of other faiths and for those who have no faith
- For all who mourn the deaths of loved ones and friends: for victims of violence including in of California wildfires, the Mexico earthquake, victims of Hurricane Harvey, Irma, Jose, Maria, Nate & other tropical storms, dealing with the aftermath of both natural disasters and manmade accidents & for those who work to help them rebuild their lives; for those suffering from famine and hunger; for people in our own Roanoke & SW Virginia region
- For those battling cancer & other health and life-challenging issues, for those dealing with depression, with addiction; for those recovering from illness or surgery: Bob Hale, Terry Campbell, Audra Williams, Pat Brown (Ruth's sister), Carolyn Coleman (cousin of Joyce & Fred), Rev. Dusty Fiedler, Anita Pendleton, Jim Slaughter, The Roberson family, Betty McFadden (Russ' mother), Cynthia & Nat Harris, Ruth Hilton, Brenda Williams, Jackie Manns, Harold Robertson, Paul Witting (with Parkinson's); Todd Moorman; Thom Witting; Robert Woodworth; health care workers and researchers; for the elderly
- For our children and youth; for their teachers & school staff; for those in our neighborhood; for those who work with young people and seek to bring them to Christ and to nurture their faith in him
- For our service men and women stationed around the world and their families, including Kevin & Bryan Preston.
- For those who seek employment, for the under-employed, for the homeless, for those who are in fear of losing their homes or their jobs; for those under stress at work and at home.