

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

NOVEMBER 30, 2014

One: Rejoice always! Pray without ceasing.

All: **We give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus.** [1 Thessalonians 5:16-18a, adapt.]

Scripture Lesson: 1 Corinthians 1:3-9

One: This is the word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

One: Loyal, constant, true and steadfast—this is what it means to be faithful, and God is faithful. When God makes a promise, we can always trust that God will do what God says. God promised us a Messiah. And in this season of Advent, we rejoice that the promise of the Messiah, this Child of hope, was fulfilled. We have all met people who have made promises but who have not followed through. God never fails. When our faithful God calls us to a partnership, we are reminded that this is no simple business partnership, but a full sharing—including sharing of resources and sharing in the rewards. Ever since the beginning, God was not solitary, but in partnership: Father, Son, Holy Spirit. God calls us to be in partnership with Jesus, to share fully in God's mission together. United Methodist missionaries understand partnership. They are called from everywhere to serve everywhere. But it is not just missionaries who serve; all Christians are partners together and together we are in partnership with the Lord.

One: God is faithful.

All: **And we are called by God.**

One: God calls us to partnership.

All: **Partnership with our Savior, Jesus Christ our Lord, the light of the world.**

One: We are not alone.

All: **We work together.**

One: God is faithful.

All: **Alleluia! Yes, God is faithful!**

LIGHT THE FIRST CANDLE

One: Rejoice always!

All: **The Child of light is coming!**

1. I've got the light of God in me, I've got the
light of God in me, I've got the
Spir - it of the Son of God, I've got the
light of God in me.

WORDS & MUSIC: Trad. Cameroon. From "O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing: Hymns and Praise of the United Methodist Mission in Cameroon" © 2010 Cameroon Mission Initiative, admin. by General Board of Global Ministries, t/a GBGMusik, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, NY 10115. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

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SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

DECEMBER 7, 2014

One: Rejoice always! Pray without ceasing.

All: **We give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus.** [1 *Thessalonians 5:16-18a, adapt.*]

Scripture Lesson: Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13

One: This is the word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

LIGHT THE FIRST CANDLE

One: Every day many weary children of God journey from all corners of this vast earth, leaving behind their homes and countries ravaged by war, disease, poverty and injustice. Each is looking for the place where "righteousness and peace will kiss each other." Children ride "La Bestia" train from the depths of gang-controlled Honduras to the edges of the United States with hope for lives outside the reach of the *Maras*. Women with malnourished babies endure years in Kenyan refugee camps with hope for health and sustenance. Families in the United States tremble in the shadows, fearful of the moment the deportation officers come to take someone from the home. This Advent season, listen! God's voice is speaking peace to each of those who are faithful. Listen! We are the ones called by God be partners together in steadfast love.

One: Oh God, illuminate the way for migrants on the journey from war, from disease, from poverty, from injustice.

All: **Let justice march out in front, making the path that we may follow.**

One: Help us to welcome and serve the neighbors in our midst, the newly arrived and the deeply rooted.

All: **Let justice march out in front, making the path that we may follow.**

One: We believe in a God who speaks peace to all peoples. We pray for the day when no child or adult is forced to leave their home in search of peace, health, safety or justice. Our hope is for the day we can walk together, neighbor with neighbor.

All: **Let justice march out in front, making the path that we may follow.**

LIGHT THE SECOND CANDLE.

One: Rejoice always!

All: **The Child of hope is coming!**

Musical score for the hymn "The Child of hope is coming!". The score is written in 4/4 time and consists of four staves of music. The lyrics are: "2. I've got the hope of God in me, I've got the hope of God in me, I've got the Spir - it of the Son of God, I've got the hope of God in me." The chords are: C, F, C, G, C, F, C, Am, Dm7, G, C, C7, F, C, C/G, E7, Am, F, Fm, C/G, G7, C.

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THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

DECEMBER 14, 2014

One: Rejoice always! Pray without ceasing.

All: **We give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus.** [1 Thessalonians 5:16-18a, adapt.]

Scripture Lesson: Psalm 126

One: This is the word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

LIGHT THE FIRST AND SECOND CANDLES.

One: Just as the Israelites petitioned God for deliverance from captivity, refugees and asylum seekers are desperate for deliverance from persecution today. Their tears water the ground as they flee their homes and leave their lives behind. Their prayers rise up to heaven as they languish for years in refugee camps. Their frustrations silently mount as they face discrimination and apathy in their new homeland. At such times, God's promises of eventual deliverance, justice and joy can seem distant. Yet the coming of Christ this Advent season gives us reason to rejoice despite our troubled world. We can rejoice always, knowing that salvation will come, that justice will be served and that those who go out weeping will one day return with songs of joy.

One: The pain of this world too often overwhelms us.

All: **May tears turn to songs of joy.**

One: Constant tragedies and senseless violence seem to steal our hope.

All: **May tears turn to songs of joy.**

One: God's promises give us light in the darkness.

All: **Tears will turn to songs of joy.**

LIGHT THE THIRD CANDLE.

One: Rejoice always!

All: **The Child of Joy is coming!**

3. I've got the joy of God in me, I've got the
joy of God in me, I've got the
Spir - it of the Son of God, I've got the
joy of God in me.

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FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

DECEMBER 21, 2014

One: Rejoice always! Pray without ceasing.

All: **We give thanks in all circumstances;
for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus.** [1 Thessalonians 5:16-18a, adapt.]

Scripture Lesson: Luke 1:46b-55

One: The Gospel of the Lord.

All: **Praise be to you, O Christ.**

LIGHT THE FIRST, SECOND AND THIRD CANDLES.

One: Rejoice, for the Gospel of the Lord has been spread and lives have been transformed. Like Mary, we praise and thank the Lord for the good news of God's reign breaking in to our broken world. When God's reign breaks in, an ordinary and powerless girl named Mary becomes the most blessed of women. God continues to do great things for all those who come with faith. God stands with the weak, lifts up the small, defends the persecuted, fills the hungry and remembers the forgotten. Our God values people first, no matter how miserable, lowly and beat down they are. That gives us hope and joy as we proclaim and embody the Gospel to the world.

One: The Gospel of the Lord has been announced to the world!

All: **Our spirit rejoices.**

One: We sing of God's love and goodness and faithfulness to the people.

All: **Our soul *vui mù'ng*.***

One: Let us share the good news of God's reign with joy and gladness and thankfulness.

All: **Our heart rejoices.**

LIGHT THE FOURTH CANDLE.

One: Rejoice always!

All: **The Child of Joy is coming!**

4. I've got the peace of God in me, I've got the
peace of God in me, I've got the
Spir - it of the Son of God, I've got the
peace of God in me.

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* "Rejoice" in Vietnamese; phonetically: "vwee muhng"

CHRISTMAS EVE/CHRISTMAS DAY

One: Rejoice always! Pray without ceasing.
All: **We give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus.** [1 Thessalonians 5:16-18a, adapt.]

Scripture Lesson: Isaiah 9:2-7

One: This is the word of the Lord.
All: **Thanks be to God.**

LIGHT THE FOUR ADVENT CANDLES.

One: The images of violence and destruction in the world are often before our eyes and in our minds. It seems that nothing changes as the years pass. And then we hear the words of the Prophet Isaiah, who shows a radical different path to liberation, peace, love and justice. What hope he brings! Through the birth of this tiny boy-child, the world will be renewed, and violence and oppression will be overcome. God gives up power to become a helpless child. Hope comes with the mighty vision of the end of violence and oppression through the birth of this tiny human being. The life of the world in the hands of a newborn baby: unbelievable, too radical. We struggle with this message. And yet the prophet says: The world cannot be changed by power and might, but through a helpless baby, innocent and vulnerable. God help us to make this dream our dream every day. Let us be bearers of the hope this child brings in the way we live and act.

One: A child is born tonight ...
All: **to make all the difference.**

One: A child is born tonight ...
All: **for the peace of all.**

One: A child is born tonight ...
All: **for the light of the world.**

One & All: **Let's celebrate Christmas: God's all-embracing love in a baby born for us.**

LIGHT THE CHRIST CANDLE.

One: Rejoice always!
All: **The Child of Love is born this night!**

5. I've got the love of God in me, I've got the love of God in me, I've got the Spir - it of the Son of God, I've got the love of God in me.

Chords: C, F, C, G, C, F, C, Am, Dm7, G, C, C7, F, C, C/G, E7, Am, F, Fm, C/G, G7, C.

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