**Hillside UMC Sermon Prep Sheet**

***Pastor Chris Neikirk***

**Date: Sunday, December 31, 2017 – Fourth Sunday of Advent – Holy Communion**

**Sermon Title: Anticipate Joy: Worth the Wait**

**Scripture: Isaiah 9:6-7 (NIV)** 6For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. 7Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David’s throne and over his kingdom,  
establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this.

**Luke 2:22-38 (NIV)** 22When the time came for the purification rites required by the Law of Moses, Joseph and Mary took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord 23(as it is written in the Law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male is to be consecrated to the Lord”), 24and to offer a sacrifice in keeping with what is said in the Law of the Lord: “a pair of doves or two young pigeons.” 25Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was on him. 26It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord’s Messiah. 27Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required, 28Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying: 29“Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you may now dismiss your servant in peace. 30For my eyes have seen your salvation, 31 which you have prepared in the sight of all nations: 32a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of your people Israel.” 33The child’s father and mother marveled at what was said about him. 34Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: “This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, 35so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too.” 36There was also a prophet, Anna, the daughter of Penuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, 37and then was a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying. 38Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.

**Call to Worship: (8:30 only)**

Leader: Merciful God, who sent your messengers the prophets to preach repentance and prepare the way for our salvation:

**People: Give us grace to heed their warnings and forsake our sins,  
that we may greet with joy the coming of Jesus Christ our Redeemer;   
who lives and reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit,**

**one God, now and forever. Amen.**

**Basic Theme:Many times in life we get exactly what we expect. It’s almost as if our pre-conceived ideas about how a situation or experience will go help to shape the outcome. Often the anticipation of what will be in the future hinders our ability to experience joy in the present. Advent is a time of great anticipation and great expectation as we relive the moments leading up to the birth of our savior. During this season of Advent, anticipate joy.**

**Sermon Snapshot (Key Points): The prophets spoke of a coming Messiah who would bring peace and hope to all people. The nation of Israel spent many generations longing to see that prophecy fulfilled. John was sent ahead of the Messiah to call a nation in waiting to repentance – to prepare the hearts of the people to receive the Messiah whom God would send. Simeon and Anna had waited an entire lifetime to receive the salvation of the Lord. God always keeps his promises and the Messiah was worth the wait. Unlike other kingdoms, the Kingdom of God will never end.**

**So What? Are you still waiting to receive the joy of the salvation of the Lord? Wait no more, the Lord is come! Shout and Sing praises to our God! The Messiah was worth the wait! Why continue to anticipate joy when everlasting joy is offered and need only be received?**