



The Order of Worship December 24, 2020

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE

We welcome all to this service of worship. In the time before the service begins, we invite all who worship here to take a moment to offer a prayer lifting up to God the life and work of this family of faith and its pastors.

PROCURE A CANDLE IN THE NARTHEX

PRELUDE
Concerto grosso in G Minor, Op. 6, No. 8 (The "Christmas Concerto"), Allegro
Arcangelo Corelli
Edward Pulgar, Violin I
Helen Bryenton, Violin II
Kathryn Gawne, Viola
Andy Bryenton, Cello

WELCOME Barbara Adamcik

A MESSAGE FROM BETHLEHEM

INVOCATION Mary Boyd

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE The Gilbert Family

CALL TO WORSHIP Griffen Oros

Leader: Fear not, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.
People: For unto you is born this day in the city of David a savior, who is Christ the Lord.
Leader: And this shall be a sign for you.
People: You will find the baby wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger.

Leader: And suddenly there was, with the angel, a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God.
People: Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's people on earth.

*HYMN Hark! The Herald Angels Sing Mendelssohn

TIME WITH CHILDREN Allie Brewington

SCRIPTURE Micah 5:2-5a Arthur Collins

*HYMN O Little Town of Bethlehem Forest Green

SCRIPTURE Isaiah 9:2,6-7 Bobby Manrod

SCRIPTURE Psalm 96:1-6 Jake Phillips

SCRIPTURE Psalm 96:11-13 Gracie Kringen

*HYMN Joy to the World! Antioch

SCRIPTURE Luke 2:1-7 Anna Grace Gilbert

SCRIPTURE Luke 2:8-14 Lucy Gilbert

CAROL I Saw Three Ships arr. Reginald Jacques and Peter Van Eenam

I saw three ships come sailing in, On Christmas Day in the morning.

And what was in those ships all three? (Refrain)

Our Saviour Christ and his lady. (Refrain)

Pray, whither sailed those ships all three? (Refrain)

O, they sailed into Bethlehem. (Refrain)

And all the bells on earth shall ring, (Refrain)

And all the angels in Heaven shall sing, (Refrain)

And all the souls on earth shall sing, (Refrain)

Then let us all rejoice amain! (Refrain)

Traditional
(The congregation is invited to join the choirs in singing the final verse.)
Boys' and Girls' Choirs

CHRISTMAS EVE MEDITATION Rev. Dr. Buran Phillips

*HYMN O Come, All Ye Faithful Adeste fideles

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Leader: God be with you.
People: And also with you.
Leader: Lift up your hearts.
People: We lift them up to God.
Leader: Let us give thanks to God.

People: It is right to give God thanks and praise.

Leader: God of all times and places, we gather at your table of grace to recall your vision of hope for all people and for your world.

Through Abraham and Sarah, you revealed your promise in the surprise of a child. Through your prophets, you called your people to make way for peace and justice. In Jesus, you revealed your way of forgiveness and love. Through the ever-circling year, your Word discloses to us-again and anew-your promise for the restoration of all creation.

As we gather to share this sign of hope and fulfillment, we remember Jesus, the child born into obscurity, amid fear and uncertainty. We remember the fragility of that revelation, as well as the hope he stirred and imagination he inspired.

All: We open our hearts to God, the Christ birthing now in our lives, and to one another-precious embodiments of Your creation.

Leader: We remember Jesus, the One who blazed a new and risky path of extravagant generosity and of passionate concern: temple-shaker, world-maker, rule-breaker, risk-taker; the author and finisher of our faith.

We remember Jesus' self-giving love and the offer of himself for others, even those who gave him over to death

All: God of love, creativity, novelty, joy, meaning, peace and hope, in spite of all the challenges on earth and in our personal lives, we give thanks for Your persistence throughout the universe.

Leader: God of All, we pray for your people.
For those who are afraid and oppressed, may you give courage.
For those suffering conflict and fear, may you bring peace.
For those who long for food and water, may they be filled.
For those who long for justice, may it be fulfilled.
We pray also for ourselves and our community.
That those in hospital and in care feel your strength.
That those who are alone and anxious feel you near.
That those who are ill in body and in spirit be comforted.
That our friends and family be blessed by healing and love

All: All praise to You, rejoicing in the Spirit of Jesus Christ, who lives among us, and the Holy Spirit, who binds us together in love. Amen.

Leader: On that night, in the midst of great confusion and fear, Jesus broke bread with friends, saying, "This is my body, which I give for you and for all. When you do this, remember me."
With a blessing, he took the cup and offered it to them saying: "This cup is God's covenant which is given for all. When you drink this, remember me."

MUSIC FOR COMMUNION Lux Aurumque Eric Whitacre
Lux, calida gravisque pura velut aurum et canunt angeli molliter modo natum.

Light, warm and heavy as pure gold and the angels sing softly to the newborn baby.

Edward Esch
trans. Charles Anthony Silvestri
Meredith Mackay, Soprano
Chancel Choir

SERVICE OF CANDLE LIGHTING...

SCRIPTURE Luke 2:15-20 Meghan Oros

After the scripture is read, the lights will be dimmed, and the minister will light a candle from the Christ Candle. The minister will then light the candles of the ushers, who will then light the candles of the first person on each aisle. Light will then be passed from worshiper to worshiper. Remember that the lighted candle remains upright and the unlighted candle is tipped to the lighted candle.

***HYMN** Silent Night, Holy Night *Stille Nacht*

(The candle is held close to the breast)
Silent night, holy night! All is calm, all is bright,
Round yon virgin mother and child!
Holy infant, so tender and mild.
Sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.

(The candle is extended outward)
Silent night, holy night! Shepherds quake at the sight.
Glories stream from heaven afar.
Heavenly hosts sing: “Alleluia;
Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born.”

(The candle is extended upward)
Silent night, holy night! Son of God, love’s pure light.
Radiant beams from Thy holy face.
With the dawn of redeeming grace
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at Thy Birth.

Following the singing of “Silent Night, Holy Night,” the minister shall lead a silent recessional to carry the light outside, weather permitting. After everyone has gathered, we will sing the first verse of “O Come, All Ye Faithful.”

***BENEDICTION**

*Indicates standing.

Symbolism of the Lights

The significance of the Candlelight Service is twofold. First, in the distribution of the lights, we see dramatized before us the spreading of the Gospel Message and the growth of the church through the centuries. The pastor’s candle is symbolic of Christ, the living Word, and is an extension of the Christ candle in the Advent wreath. The ushers who carry the light to the congregation represent the Apostles whom Christ sent out to spread the Word and draw the world to Him. The church has grown because men and women and young people who have heard the Good News have been faithful in telling someone else about it, and this is symbolized by your passing the light to the person beside you. The ushers will light the candle closest to the aisle. As each candle bursts into flame and the sanctuary gradually brightens, we catch the significance of Jesus’ statement that we are “the light of the world,” and that we should spread this light to the “very ends of the world.” Secondly, we find significance in the lights during the singing of the dedication hymn. During the singing of the first verse, we hold our lights close as we rededicate ourselves to Christ. As we sing the second verse, we hold the candle out in front of us as we rededicate our homes and families once again to him. During the last verse, we hold our candles high as we rededicate our part of His church here to the task of taking the Gospel Light to every corner of the earth. After the Benediction, please extinguish your light. Receptacles for the spent candles are located in the narthex.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

OUR THANKS to Helen and Andy Bryenton, Katy Gawne, and Edward Pulgar for their enrichment of our worship. Many thanks also to Margaret, Nicola, and John Harrison, and Meredith Mackay for singing “Silent Night.”

MANY THANKS TO OUR YOUTH who worked hard setting up over 250 luminaria bags, and who continue to bring the light out into our world! Youth participating in our service tonight are: Griffen Oros, Anna Grace Gilbert, Bobby Manrod, Meghan Oros, Arthur Collins, Jake Phillips, Ella Chattin, Gracie Kringen, Lucy Gilbert, Bobby Powell, Josie Chattin, James Gilbert, Cooper Kringen, and Lucy Powell.

TO HEAR AND SEE THE WESTMINSTER CHURCH CHOIRS sing and play more music for the seasons of Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany, including the Corelli concerto in its entirety, please visit us on YouTube, where you’ll find a series of mini-concerts alongside all other videos from Westminster Presbyterian Church.

THE CHURCH OFFICE will be open Monday, December 28 from 9-4 and Thursday, December 31 from 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Regular office hours resume on Monday, January 4.

FINAL 2020 CONTRIBUTIONS as well as any 2021 prepaid offerings need to be in the church office by December 31. All offerings received by December 31 will be included in your 2020 contribution statement. If you have any questions regarding your contributions, please contact Renee Wiesehuegel.

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Daniel Lewis, Youth Assistant
Allie Brewington, Director of Children’s Ministries
Mary Boyd, Education Coordinator
Renee Wiesehuegel, Office Manager/Bookkeeper
Melissa Everett, Administrative Assistant
Debbie Bendy, Abbey Editor

THE CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING has been a cherished Presbyterian tradition since the 1930s. The Offering distributes gifts equally to the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions and to Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. The Assistance Program provides critical financial support to church workers and their families. Presbyterian-related schools and colleges provide education and leadership development while nurturing racial and ethnic heritage. This has been a Presbyterian commitment for nearly 140 years. You can donate through Westminster by sending in a check (please indicate on the memo line that it is for the JOY offering) or you may give directly to the PCUSA.