

FAMILY SERVICE FOR CHRISTMAS EVE

NORTHMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

DECEMBER 24, 2017

CHRISTMAS EVE

THE WORLD IS ABOUT TO TURN



WELCOME

As the welcome pads are passed down your aisle, please help us to celebrate your worshipping with us today by signing the register.

PRELUDE

Ah Bleak and Chill the Wintery Wind

A. Burt

A Thought as You Prepare for Worship

"For unto you this day is born in the city of Bethlehem, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; you shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel, a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest, and on Earth peace, good will toward men!'" That's what Christmas is all about, Charlie Brown."

—Linus Van Pelt

INTROIT

The First Noel

Youth Bell Choir

PROCESSION OF THE STAR

*CALL TO WORSHIP AND

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES

The Advent wreath is a circle with no beginning and no end...We light the first candle with hope, for God is to be among us and will shine a great light in the midst of our darkness.

Jesus, Light of the World, shine in our lives and shine among us now.

Good afternoon! We are so glad you have joined us for this Christmas Eve celebration in song, scripture and prayer!

You are invited to stand when indicated by an asterisk () and join in saying all text that appears in **bold italics**.*

The tradition of the Advent/Christmas wreath in worship comes from 16th Century German protestant pastor Johann Wichern, who served a very poor parish. Every day in December during worship, his students would ask if Christmas had come. He devised the Advent wreath (originally with 21 small candles and four large ones for Sundays) to help them prepare. It was first used in this country by German Lutheran immigrants in the 1930s.

All children are welcome to come forward and participate in a conversation with Pastor Jessica.

The Wise Men began their journey to visit Jesus upon hearing of his birth, but did not arrive to meet him until Jesus was a toddler. Contrary to most nativity scenes, they were not present at Jesus' birth.

We light the second candle as we seek peace in our hearts, in our community, and in the world.

Jesus, Light of the World, shine in our lives and shine among us now.

We light the third candle to remind us to look for all of the joy in the world.

Jesus, Light of the World, shine in our lives and shine among us now.

We light this final candle as a sign of God's loving presence in Jesus Christ, now and always, that we may trust that God is with us and may live in the promise of the angels' declaration at his birth, "Glory to God...and on earth peace."

Jesus, Light of the World, shine in our lives and shine among us now. Amen.

*HYMN

O Come, All Ye Faithful
Verses 1 & 2

Purple, No. 133

*OPENING PRAYER

Creator God, tonight we see that you are not too great to be humble, and you are not too powerful to be weak. Indeed, your greatness includes humility, and your power is made perfect in weakness. You come among us, to be God-with-us and to save us, not as a king wielding the world's power, or as a superhero in a cape, but as an infant in a manger, in humility and fragility. As we look back at that manger this evening, to the wonderful mystery of your coming in the power and the greatness of love, may we catch a hope-filled glimpse of what lies ahead; may we be given eyes to see you coming again in our own time, to see the unexpected ways that your bright future is breaking in, even now. Amen.

*SHARING THE PEACE

The Peace of Christ be with you, ***And also with you.***

A TIME WITH THE CHILDREN

HYMN (Seated)

O Come, All Ye Faithful
Verses 3 & 4

Purple, No. 133

SCRIPTURE READING

Luke 2:1-20

NT, p. 58

The Gospel of our Lord.

Thanks be to God.

SUNDAY SCHOOL NATIVITY TABLEAU

CHILDREN'S ANTHEM *Away in a Manger*

Preschool and Elementary Sunday School Choirs

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

N. Rockwell, alt.

The Christmas Candle honors the Child, who warms and lights our lives, who refreshes us with stories and waters us with promises, and whose fruitfulness we hope to be.

Wonderful birth, God has come to earth!

It honors ordinary and powerful people, Christmas creatures and a Star, who found in the Child a love worth remembering.

Wonderful birth, God has come to earth!

It honors flowering rivers and teeming seas that lent their power to him, and an ocean of human souls who have flowed to him over the centuries.

Wonderful birth, God has come to earth!

We joyfully light the Christ Candle, remembering the night when God’s love came down at the birth of the King. May no heart be untouched this night, and may every wandering soul find a way to Bethlehem.

Wonderful birth, God has come to earth! Amen!

MESSAGE

Every Good Gift

HYMN

What Child Is This

Purple, No. 145

WORSHIP THROUGH GIVING

Call to Offering

Offertory

O Holy Night

A. Adam

*Response

Gloria, Gloria

Purple, No. 583

*Prayer of Thanksgiving

Holy God, Gracious Giver, bless these, and all our gifts—gifts of money, of things, of time, and of ourselves. Use them to dispel darkness, and to bring light, beyond all that we could ask or imagine. Amen.

*PASSING OF THE LIGHT

Please hold candles upright after they are lit. Do not tip a lit candle! Unlit candles only should be tipped to receive flame from lit ones. We will extinguish our candles together during the charge and blessing. Thank you

*SPECIAL MUSIC

Born in the Night, Mary’s Child

G. Ainger

*HYMN

Silent Night, Holy Night!

See insert

*CHARGE AND BLESSING

*HYMN

Joy to the World

Purple, No. 134

POSTLUDE

Joy to the World

W. Held

This hymn comes from a British poem, “The Manger Song,” published in 1865. The tune, Greensleeves, preceded the hymn by almost a century.

This afternoon we will be collecting for the PCUSA’s Christmas Joy offering. A gift to this offering provides financial aid to current and former church workers and their families, and enables deserving students to attend Presbyterian-related racial ethnic colleges and schools. Please place your offering in the Christmas Joy envelope found in the pew racks or in a pew envelope and mark it “Christmas Joy.” Thank you!

TODAY'S WORSHIP LEADERSHIP

Preaching—Rev. Michael D. Kirby

Advent Candle Lighters—Members of the Junior High Sunday School Class

Christ Candle Lighters—Autum, Drew, Connor & Aidan Lum

Lighting Director—Jenna DeMarco

Liturgists—Julie Antonoglu, Jack Clair, John Davidson, Alex DeMarco, Emily Eloff, Claire Geibel, Valerie Larsen, Merritt Wooldridge

A Time with the Children—Pastor Jessica

Cantors—Jackie King & Steve Uliana

Musicians—Paul Vander Weele, Kate Lee, Youth Bell Choir, Preschool & Elementary Sunday School Choirs

Ushers—John Davidson, Adam & Kent Geibel, Gretchen & Merritt Wooldridge

Acolytes—Ashlyn & Henry Rogowski

Preschool Shepherd—Joan LePontois

Nativity Cast—Lead Star: Ava Piemontese; Star: Natalie Lesch;

Heavenly Host of Angels: Anabelle Brown, Brynn Clair, Phoebe Lesch, Maddie Sitz, Calvin Wooldridge;

Mary: Claire Smith; Joseph: Shane Macris; Inn Keeper: Alec Yancey-Carroll;

Shepherds: Jasper Brown, Henry Fennell, Nathan Gregory, Nate Janes-Smith, Theo Janes-Smith;

Wise Women: Avery Ross, Chloe Ross, Tea Vuckovic;

Lambs: Lorelai Brown, Alice Smith, Colette Yancey-Carroll

