

FAMILY SERVICE FOR CHRISTMAS EVE

NORTHMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

DECEMBER 24, 2016

CHRISTMAS EVE

AND ON EARTH PEACE



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

A Nativity Suite

Wilbur Held

A Thought as You Prepare for Worship

"The child in the manger is none other than God himself.

Nothing greater can be said: God became a child."

-Dietrich Bonhoeffer

INTROIT

We Three Kings

Youth Bell Choir

PROCESSION OF THE STAR

*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 night.

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.

The 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 and 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 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 of the Universe and of each of us, you are God.
You are full of power.
You have the whole world in your hands.
We praise you, for you are a great and wonderful God!
But you came to earth as a baby.
You were born tiny and weak, just like us.
You grew and played, just like us.
We rejoice that you came, celebrate your birthday
and we look forward to when you come again.
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

Away in a Manger

Youth Bell Choir

CHILDREN'S ANTHEM *Away in a Manger* Preschool and
Elementary Sunday School Choirs

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

A mother and a father finally find rest in a barn...

The birthday boy is coming!

Angels sing and shepherds run...

The birthday boy is coming!

The stars shone bright; the Wise Men began their journey...

The birthday boy is coming!

This afternoon, we joyfully light the Christ Candle,
remembering the night when God's love came down at the
birth of the King. God loves us!

MESSAGE *Coming Home for Christmas*

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, you have done and are doing great things for us, and wonderful is your name. Bless all we give to you—ourselves, our time, and all of our things—that through us your light might shine brightly in the world. In Jesus' name we pray, 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.)

*HYMN *Silent Night, Holy Night!* See insert

*CHARGE AND BLESSING

*HYMN *Joy to the World* Purple, No. 134

POSTLUDE *Joy to the World* Wilbur 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 this offering in a pew envelope and label it Christmas Joy.

Candles are a symbol of Divine Presence in many religious traditions.

TODAY'S WORSHIP LEADERSHIP

Preaching—Rev. Michael D. Kirby

Candle Lighters—Kristen, Michael, Emma & Jake Beaudoin,
Members of the Junior High Sunday School Class

Liturgists—Alex DeMarco, Julie & Nicholas Antonoglu, Merritt Wooldridge

A Time with the Children—Pastor Jessica

Cantors—Dennis Kalup & Jackie King

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

Ushers—Aaron Martin, John Davidson, Ben Buettell, Joe & Kevin Doyle, Bill Steers

Acolytes—Ashlyn & Henry Rogowski

Preschool Shepherds—Paige Steers & Joan LePontois

Nativity Cast—Lead Star: Valerie Larsen; Star: Claire Smith; Lead Angel: Bridget Lesch;
Angels: Natalie Lesch, Phoebe Lesch; Mary: Abby Perry; Joseph: Connor Lum;
Inn Keeper: Calvin Wooldridge; Shepherds: Henry Fennell, Alec Carroll, Shane Macris;
Wise Men: Nate Janes-Smith, Theo Janes-Smith, Aidan Lum;
Gold: Emma Beaudoin; Frankincense: Anabelle Brown; Myrrh: Nathan Gregory

