

# *CHRISTMAS*



*Begins with CHRIST*

*First Presbyterian Church of London*  
*Growing Together through Faith, Love, and Fellowship.*

**Christmas Eve**

**December 24, 2022**

*The asterisk (\*) indicates to please rise in body or spirit.*

**Silent Prayer of Preparation**

*We gather here to recall the mystery of our redemption. Though sin drew us away from God, God never stopped loving us. The prophets told of the coming of a Messiah who would initiate a reign of justice and peace. This promise was fulfilled in the incarnation of Jesus Christ. Let us now reflect with joy on this wondrous mystery. Amen.*

**The Gathering of God's People**

**Prelude - a time to prayerfully prepare oneself for worship**

"In Dulci Jubilo"

Marcel Dupré (1886-1971)

"Echo Carol"

arr. John Lloyd

"Sing We Now of Christmas"

arr. Diane Bish

**Welcome**

**Introit** (*7:30 PM service only*) "God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen" English Carol

God rest you merry, gentlemen, let nothing you dismay,  
Remember, Christ, our Savior, was born on Christmas day;  
To save us all from Satan's power, when we were gone astray.

(refrain)

O tidings of comfort and joy.

In Bethlehem in Jewry, this blessed Babe was born,  
And laid within a manger upon this blessed morn;  
The which his mother Mary did nothing take in scorn. (refrain)

From God, our heavenly Father, a blessed angel came,  
And unto certain shepherds brought tidings of the same;  
How that in Bethlehem was born the Son of God by name. (refrain)

Now to the Lord sing praises, all you within this place,  
And with true love and brotherhood each other now embrace;  
This holy tide of Christmas all others doth deface: (refrain)

## Lighting of the Advent Candles

4:00 PM ... Youngblood/Johnson/Griggs Family

7:30 PM ... Johnson Family

Leader: The season for watching and waiting is over. The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. This is the light of the world, and the darkness cannot extinguish it.  
*(lighting of the Christ Candle)*

**People: “O sing to the Lord a new song;  
Sing to the Lord, all the earth.  
Tell of his salvation from day to day.  
“Declare his glory among the nations,  
His marvelous works among all the peoples.”**

Leader: “Ascribe to the Lord, O families of the peoples,  
Ascribe to the Lord glory and strength.  
Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name;  
Bring an offering, and come into his courts.  
Worship the Lord in holy splendor;  
Tremble before him, all the earth.”

**People: “Say among the nations, ‘The Lord is King!’  
Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice.  
He will judge the world with righteousness,  
And the peoples with his truth.”**

**\*Carol** “Once in Royal David’s City” (verses 1 & 2) #140

**Once in royal David’s city stood a lowly cattle shed, where a mother  
laid her baby in a manger for his bed: Mary was that mother mild;  
Jesus Christ, her little child.**

**He came down to earth from heaven who is God and Lord of all, and  
his shelter was a stable, and his cradle was a stall; with the poor and  
meek and lowly, lived on earth our Savior holy.**

**The Confession of Sin and Assurance of Pardon**

**\*Call to Confession**

**\*A Christmas Confession** *(read in unison)*

God of Joy, we come to celebrate again the arrival of Love Incarnate here in our very midst. Your glorious arrival is enough to cause the forests to sing for joy, yet we still find reasons to complain and sigh. Your light of salvation is bright enough to illuminate every corner of our lives, yet we still find ourselves shrouded in worry and doubt. Your gift of Love is big enough for the whole world, yet we still find ourselves resentful that your love extends to those whom we deem to be unworthy. God, you invite us into the light of the stable where the overlooked and forgotten have gathered to celebrate the miracle of your love. Give us the strength and courage to join you at the manger. Amen. (Silent prayer of confession.)

**\*Assurance of Pardon**

**\*Response**

“From Heaven Above” (verse 5)

#111

"Glo-ry to God in highest heaven, who un-to us the Christ has given." With  
an-gels sing the Savior's birth, a glad new year to all the earth.

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**Ministry of the Word**

**Prayer for Illumination**

**First Lesson**

Genesis 3:1-15

**Prayer**

**Carol**

“Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus”

#82

Come, thou long-expected Jesus, born to set thy people free;  
from our fears and sins release us; let us find our rest in thee.  
Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art;  
dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart.

**Born thy people to deliver, born a child and yet a king,  
born to reign in us forever, now thy gracious kingdom bring.  
By thine own eternal Spirit rule in all our hearts alone;  
by thine all-sufficient merit raise us to thy glorious throne.**

## **Second Lesson**

Jeremiah 23:5-8

### **Prayer**

#### **\*Carol**

“Gentle Mary Laid Her Child” (verses 1 & 2)

#146

**Gentle Mary laid her child lowly in a manger;  
there he lay, the undefiled, to the world a stranger.  
Such a babe in such a place, can he be the Savior?  
Ask the saved of all the race who have found his favor.**

**Angels sang about his birth; wise men sought and found him;  
heaven’s star shone brightly forth, glory all around him.  
Shepherds saw the wondrous sight, heard the angels singing;  
all the plains were lit that night; all the hills were ringing.**

## **Third Lesson**

Isaiah 11:1-10

### **Prayer**

#### **Carol**

“It Came Upon the Midnight Clear” (verses 1 & 5)

#123

**It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old,  
from angels bending near the earth, to touch their harps of gold:  
“Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heaven’s all-gracious King”:  
the world in solemn stillness lay, to hear the angels sing.**

**For lo, the days are hastening on, by prophets seen of old,  
when with the ever-circling years shall come the time foretold,  
when peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling,  
and the whole world give back the song which now the angels sing.**

## **Fourth Lesson**

Isaiah 9:1-6

### **Prayer**

**\*Carol**

“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing” (verses 1 &amp; 3)

#119

**Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn king.  
Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!”  
Joyful all ye nations, rise; join the triumph of the skies;  
with the angelic host proclaim, “Christ is born in Bethlehem!”  
Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn king!”**

**Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the sun of righteousness!  
Light and life to all he brings, risen with healing in his wings.  
Mild he lays his glory by, born that we no more may die,  
born to raise us from the earth, born to give us second birth.  
Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn king!”**

**Fifth Lesson**

Luke 1:26-38

**Prayer****Carol** (4:00 PM service)

“What Child Is This” (verses 1 &amp; 3)

#145

**What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mary’s lap is sleeping?  
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet while shepherds watch are  
keeping?**

**This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing;  
haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary!**

**So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh; come, one and all, to own him.  
The King of kings salvation brings; let loving hearts enthrone him.  
Raise, raise the song on high. The virgin sings her lullaby.  
Joy, joy, for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mary!**

**Choir Carol** (7:30 PM service only)

“The Holly and the Ivy”

arr. Richard Shephard, 2001

The holly and the ivy, when they are both full grown,  
Of all the trees that are in the wood, the holly bears the crown.

(refrain)

The rising of the sun and the running of the deer,  
The playing of the merry organ, sweet singing in the choir.

The holly bears a blossom as white as the lily flower,  
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ to be our sweet savior. (refrain)

The holly bears a berry as red as any blood,  
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ to do us sinners good. (refrain)

The holly bears a bark as bitter as any gall,  
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ on Christmas day in the morn. (refrain)

## **Sixth Lesson**

Luke 2:1-18

### **Prayer**

**\*Carol**                    “Away in a Manger” (verses 1 & 2)                    #115

**Away in a manger, no crib for his bed,  
the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.  
The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,  
the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.**

**The cattle are lowing; the poor baby wakes,  
but little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes.  
I love thee, Lord Jesus; look down from the sky,  
and stay by my side until morning is nigh.**

## **Seventh Lesson**

Matthew 2:1-12

### **Prayer**

**Carol**                    “We Three Kings of Orient Are” (verses 1 & 5)                    #151

**We three kings of Orient are; bearing gifts we traverse afar,  
field and fountain, moor and mountain, following yonder star.  
O star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright,  
westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light!  
Glorious now behold him arise, King and God and Sacrifice:  
Alleluia! Alleluia! sounds through the earth and skies.  
O star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright,  
westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light!**

## **Eighth Lesson**

John 1:1-14

### **Prayer**





**ourselves with friends, and the industry with which we set about reshaping the world in our time.**

**I BELIEVE that the finest carols are often sung by the poorest voices; from hearts made warm by the wonder of the season.**

**I BELIEVE in the angel's message that we should not be afraid—that the Child of Bethlehem is able to overcome all anxieties and insecurities.**

**I BELIEVE in prayer and quietness as a way of appropriating Christmas—that if I wait in silence I will experience the presence of the one born in the manger, for he lives today as surely as he lived then.**

**I BELIEVE in going away from Christmas as the wise men went: “another way.” I want to be different when these days are past—more centered, more thoughtful, more caring.**

**AND I BELIEVE God will help me. Amen.**

## **Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer**

**Leader: Wonderful Counselor,**

**People: we pray for wisdom for the world's leaders, that they may use their power to lift burdens and break the bonds of oppression.**

**Leader: Mighty God,**

**People: we pray for the church of Jesus Christ our Lord, that you will multiply and increase our joy as we share in the harvest you have gathered.**

**Leader: Everlasting Father,**

**People: we pray for families, friends, and loved ones, that those who now walk in deep darkness may see the great light of your saving love.**

**Leader: Prince of Peace,**

**People: we pray for an end to violence and warfare, that your authority may continue to grow until there is endless peace in every land.**

**Leader: Lord of hosts, establish your holy realm with justice and righteousness, from this time on and forevermore. And now we**

pray as Christ Jesus taught us:

**People: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.**

### **Choir Carol** (7:30 PM service only)

“Before the Star” Paul Loesel, 2022 ... Text by Marilyn Biery

Before the star was bid to rise, before the angels flew the skies,  
Before the shepherds stood nearby, the God of love heard earth’s deep sigh.  
Before pure Mary’s first caress, before kind Joseph saw his face,  
The Child of God was knit from grace.

Look now! The star gives brilliant light and angels flutter into sight!  
Look now and see the Holy One, the infant child, beloved Son.  
Look now, the faces gathered there reflect the love he came to share.  
Look now! The Child of God has come, our God with us, Emmanuel!

For us God sent the Holy One, defenseless child, beloved Son.  
For us the Christ took human frame, to love the outcast, heal the lame.  
For us he taught and wept and died, for us despised, betrayed, denied.  
For us the Child of God has come, our God with us, Emmanuel!  
Sing on, all you who listen here, and spread the Gospel far and near.  
Sing on with love and truth and grace, let God’s own light shine from your face.  
Sing on and love each one you meet, and spread God’s love to all you greet.  
Sing on with love, the Child has come! Our God with us, Emmanuel!

### **Invitation to Offering**

**\*Response** “Angels, from the Realms of Glory” (verse 4) #143

**All creation, join in praising  
God the Father, Spirit, Son,  
evermore your voices raising  
to the eternal Three in One:  
come and worship, come and worship,  
worship Christ, the newborn king!**

### **\*Prayer of Dedication**

## The Sending of God's People

**\*Closing Carol**      "Joy to the World" (verses 1 & 2)      #134

**Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her king;  
let every heart prepare him room, and heaven and nature sing,  
and heaven and nature sing, and heaven, and heaven and nature sing.**

**Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns! Let all their songs employ,  
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains repeat the sounding joy,  
repeat the sounding joy, repeat, repeat the sounding joy.**

**\*Charge and Blessing**

**\*Congregational Response**

"Go, Tell It on the Mountain" (refrain)      #136

Go, tell it on the moun-tain, o-ver the hills and ev - erywhere;  
go, tell it on the moun - tain that Je - sus Christ is born!

The image shows two staves of musical notation in 4/4 time, key of B-flat major. The first staff contains the melody for the first line of the refrain: "Go, tell it on the moun-tain, o-ver the hills and ev - erywhere;". The second staff contains the melody for the second line: "go, tell it on the moun - tain that Je - sus Christ is born!". Both staves feature triplet markings over the first three notes of each line.

**\*Postlude**      "Joy to the World"      arr. Anna Laura Page

**Pastors:** Rev. Désirée M. Youngblood  
Dr. Mark A. Johnson  
Steve Watters

**Acolyte:** Devin Griggs, Darren Cox

**Music Director:** Thomas Lloyd

**Organist:** Carol Welk

**Harpist:** James Predovich

**Trumpets:** Claudia Bow, Steve Bow

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**C**elebrate Jesus by

**H**olding the hand of someone you love.

**R**eflect on the blessings of the past year.

**I**nhale.

**S**low down and

**T**ake time to be

**M**indful of this day and who you share it with.

**A**s you join in the traditions,

**S**avor them,

**E**ach taste, aroma, emotion, gift.

**V**oice your love. Share your hope. Because Jesus is

**E**nough.