

PROVIDENCE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Order of Worship

DECEMBER 8, 2024

WELCOME

PRELUDE

CALL TO WORSHIP*

adapted from Isaiah 9

Minister: For 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.

All: Of 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.

PRAYER OF INVOCATION AND ADORATION*

HYMN*

Hark, the Herald Angels Sing | No. 203

MENDELSSOHN

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 th'angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

Refrain: Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King."

Christ, by highest heav'n adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord!
Late in time behold him come, offspring of the Virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see; hail th'incarnate Deity,
Pleased as man with men to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel. *Refrain*

Hail the heav'nborn Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings, ris'n with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by, born that man no more may die,
Born to raise the sons of earth, born to give them second birth. *Refrain*

CONFESSION OF FAITH

adapted from Numbers 24.15-19

Minister: How does the vision of a ruler from Jacob point us to the Advent of Christ?

All: The prophecy speaks of one who hears the words of God, who has knowledge from the Most High, who sees a vision from the Almighty, who bows down, and whose eyes are opened. I see him, but not now. I behold him, but not near. A star will come out of Jacob. A scepter will rise out of Israel. It will crush Moab, but Israel will grow strong. A ruler will come from Jacob.

SONG OF PRAISE

Joy Has Dawned

Getty, Townend

Joy has dawned upon the world, promised from creation:
God's salvation now unfurled, hope for ev'ry nation.
Not with fanfares from above, not with scenes of glory,
But a humble gift of love: Jesus born of Mary.

Sounds of wonder fill the sky with the songs of angels,
As the mighty Prince of Life shelters in a stable.
Hands that set each star in place, shaped the earth in darkness,
Cling now to a mother's breast, vuln'erable and helpless.

Shepherds bow before the Lamb, gazing at the glory,
Gifts of men from distant lands prophesy the story.
Gold, a King is born today; incense, God is with us,
Myrrh, His death will make a way, and by His blood He'll win us.

Son of Adam, Son of Heaven, given as a ransom,
Reconciling God and man, Christ, our mighty champion!
What a Savior! What a Friend! What a glorious myst'ry!
Once a babe in Bethlehem, now the Lord of hist'ry.

PUBLIC CONFESSION OF SIN

Minister: Let us confess our sins before our righteous and holy God.

All: When you would guide me, I control myself. When you would be sovereign, I rule myself. When you would take care of me, I suffice myself. When I should depend on your providence, I supply myself. When I should submit to your guidance, I follow my will. When I should study, love, honor, trust you, I serve myself. Convince me that I cannot be my own god, or make myself happy, nor be my own savior to restore my joy, nor my own spirit to teach, guide, rule me. Good Lord, hear my prayer, and forgive me of my sins for the sake of Christ Jesus. In his matchless name, we pray. Amen.

PRIVATE CONFESSION OF SIN

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Psalm 32:5

I acknowledged my sin to You, and my iniquity I did not hide. I said, "I will confess my transgression to the Lord. And You did forgive the guilt of my sin."

INTERCESSORY PRAYER

Children's Time

After the intercessory prayer, children in kindergarten through 3rd grade and their teachers may exit the sanctuary through the north doors of the sanctuary. Teachers will return with the children after the sermon.

Parents may meet them by the north entrance, or children may join their parents at their seats.

SCRIPTURE READING*

Luke 1.18-38

¹⁸ Zechariah asked the angel, "How can I be sure of this? I am an old man and my wife is well along in years."

¹⁹ The angel said to him, "I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to tell you this good news. ²⁰ And now you will be silent and not able to speak until the day this happens, because you did not believe my words, which will come true at their appointed time."

²¹ Meanwhile, the people were waiting for Zechariah and wondering why he stayed so long in the temple.

²² When he came out, he could not speak to them. They realized he had seen a vision in the temple, for he kept making signs to them but remained unable to speak.

²³ When his time of service was completed, he returned home. ²⁴ After this his wife Elizabeth became pregnant and for five months remained in seclusion. ²⁵ "The Lord has done this for me," she said. "In these days he has shown his favor and taken away my disgrace among the people."

²⁶ In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, ²⁷ to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."

SCRIPTURE READING* (CONT.)

²⁹ Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. ³⁰ But the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. ³¹ You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. ³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, ³³ and he will reign over Jacob’s descendants forever; his kingdom will never end.”

³⁴ “How will this be,” Mary asked the angel, “since I am a virgin?”

³⁵ The angel answered, “The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. ³⁶ Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month. ³⁷ For no word from God will ever fail.”

³⁸ “I am the Lord’s servant,” Mary answered. “May your word to me be fulfilled.” Then the angel left her. (NIV)

SERMON

Breaking the Silence

Rev. David Rea

HYMN OF RESPONSE*

The First Noel

FIRST NOEL

Stanzas 1, 2 and 6

The First Noel, the Angels did say,
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay.
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep
On a cold winter’s night that was so deep.

*Refrain: Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel,
Born is the King of Israel!*

They looked up and saw a star
Shining in the East beyond them far,
And to the earth it gave great light,
And so it continued both day and night. *Refrain*

Then let us all with one accord
Sing praises to our heavenly Lord
That hath made Heaven and earth of naught
And with his blood mankind has bought. *Refrain*

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

THE LORD'S TABLE

All those who trust in Christ alone for their salvation, are baptized, and belong to a Bible believing church are invited to partake of the Lord's Supper together, feeding on the grace of God by faith. If you have not put your trust in Christ, please allow the elements to pass you by and take this opportunity to meditate on the meaning of the Gospel.

A word to parents: Baptized children are invited to the table after they have made a profession of faith and been received as communing members by the Session of the church to which their parents belong.

Please hold the bread, and we will partake together. Please drink the cup as you receive it.

The outer ring is grape juice and the inner rings are wine.

During the bread

Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence | No. 193

PICARDY

Stanzas 1, 2 and 4

Let all mortal flesh keep silence, and with fear and trembling stand,
Ponder nothing earthly minded, for with blessing in his hand,
Christ our God to earth descendeth, our full homage to demand.

King of kings, yet born of Mary, as of old on earth he stood,
Lord of lords, in human vesture, in the body and the blood,
He will give to all the faithful his own self for heav'nly food.

At his feet the six winged seraph; cherubim, with sleepless eye,
Veil their faces to the presence, as with ceaseless voice they cry:
"Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, Lord Most High!"

During the cup

Instrumental

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

CLOSING HYMN*

On Christmas Night All Christians Sing | No. 227

SUSSEX CAROL

Stanzas 1, 2, and 4

On Christmas night all Christians sing
To hear the news the angels bring,
On Christmas night all Christians sing
To hear the news the angels bring:
News of great joy, news of great mirth,
News of our merciful King's birth.

Then why should men on earth be sad,
Since our Redeemer made us glad?
Then why should men on earth be sad,
Since our Redeemer made us glad,
When from our sin he set us free,
All for to gain our liberty?

All out of darkness we have light,
Which made the angels sing this night,
All out of darkness we have light,
Which made the angels sing this night:
"Glory to God and peace to men,"
Now and forevermore. Amen.

BENEDICTION*

Minister: May the blessing of God Almighty, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, be
with you all now and forever.