

ORDER OF WORSHIP

4th Sunday of Advent

December 24, 2023

10:30 AM



PRELUDE

The Coventry Carol
Mary Jo Cox, piano

John Innes

GATHERING HYMN

Love Has Come
Love has come: a light in the darkness!
Love shines forth in the Bethlehem skies.
See, all heaven has come to proclaim it;
hear how their song of joy arises:
Love! Love! Born unto you, a Savior!
Love! Love! Glory to God on high.

“Love Has Come” by Ken Bible
© 1996 Music Services CCLI 1964967

WELCOME

SILENT PRAYER AND MEDITATION

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

Responsive Litany:

One: During Advent, we wait for the coming Savior who
is our Everlasting Father.

All: From everlasting to everlasting, you are God.

One: During Advent, we look to the One who knows our deepest thoughts.

All: From everlasting to everlasting, you are God.

One: During Advent, we look to the One who cares for our deepest needs.

All: From everlasting to everlasting, you are God.

One: During Advent, we look to the One who knows our
most pressing concerns.

All: From everlasting to everlasting, you are God.

One: During Advent, we look to the One who knows our innermost being.

All: From everlasting to everlasting, you are God.

Candle Lighting:

One: Today we light four candles. The first candle reminds us of our hope in knowing Jesus as our Wonderful Counselor. The second candle reminds us of our joy in proclaiming Christ as our Mighty God. The third candle grants us comfort knowing that Jesus is our Prince of Peace. We light the fourth candle to remind us that Jesus is our Everlasting Father. In a world of change, mobility, and transition, we affirm that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

Congregation Sing:

God with Us, Emmanuel

A Candle Lighting Ceremony for Advent

Words and Music by
JOEL RANEY

Congregation:

Ev - er - last - ing Fa - ther, Prince of Peace,
Won - der - ful Coun - se - lor, Al - might - y God.
Em - man - u - el, Em - man - u - el. God with
us, Em - man - u - el.

The musical score is written on four staves in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The melody is simple and hymn-like, with lyrics written below the notes. A triplet of eighth notes is marked above the third staff.

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Unison Prayer:

All: Gracious Lord, as we continue our Advent journey, we acknowledge that very little in our world stays the same. Thank you for being our Everlasting Father, who is eternally present with us. We pray this in the name of Christ, our Savior. Amen.

HYMN

The First Nowell

1 The first Nowell the angel 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:

Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
born is the King of Israel.

CALL TO CONFESSION
(Silent Confession)

UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Faithful God, we know that you are always there to guide us, yet we often make plans without listening to you and discover that our human agendas can drown out the ability to hear your will for us. We repent of these faults and turn to you in love. Forgive our offenses and pardon our sins, that our lives may magnify your holy name forever. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

PASSING OF THE PEACE

(As we pass the peace, feel free to grab something to eat and drink.)

RESPONSE No. 113 *Angels We Have Heard on High*
Gloria in excelsis Deo!
Gloria in excelsis Deo!

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

STORY & I WONDER STATEMENTS

“The Christmas Story: The Brick Bible” by Breden Powell Smith

HYMN

In the Bleak Midwinter (vs. 1&4)
**1 In the bleak midwinter,
frosty wind made moan;
earth stood hard as iron,
water like a stone;
snow had fallen, snow on snow,
snow on snow,
in the bleak midwinter, long ago.**

**4 What can I give him,
poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd,
I would bring a lamb;
if I were a wise man,
I would do my part;
yet what I can I give him: give my heart.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY AND LORD'S PRAYER

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 sins, as we forgive those who have sinned against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

HYMN

Good Christian Friends, Rejoice
**Good Christian friends, rejoice
with heart and soul and voice;
give ye heed to what we say:
Jesus Christ is born today;
ox and ass before him bow,
and he is in the manger now.
Christ is born today!
Christ is born today!**

CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen

John Innes

NOW THE SERVICE BEGINS, SO GO IN PEACE AND SERVE THE LORD

Notes:

Worship Leaders: Mary Jo Cox and Andrew Miller

The Prayers and Concern of the Congregation are extended to:

Wendy Shugert, Bob Hand, Jan Ackerman (Sheri Loubert's friend), Scott Campbell (Andrew & Martha Miller's friend), Dana Hendershot (Pastor at Immanuel Lutheran), Betty Gempel, Jillian & Flynn Gray, Martha Loubert (sister-in-law of John, Pete, and Sheri Loubert), Lois Miller, Jaime Love (brother of Kevin Love), Louisa Ellis (Jeff & Cam Ellis granddaughter), Olivia Geisthardt (friend of Anna Clare Miller), Suzanne Hand, Charles Loubert, Jim Gilbert, Peter and Verna Russell, Lois Kerr, Sarah Gilbert, Joyce McNabb, Colleen Long, Lavona Osborne. Cathy Chang, Juan Lopez, and Noah Lapp, Vowles Elementary, Chapel Lane Presbyterian, Midland, MI, Church of Central Africa Presbyterian, Harare Synod, and the Commission on Aging.

Offering

If you are joining us for worship in-person and would like to give an offering, please place your offering in an offering plate. You can also give your pledge, per capita payment, or offering by mailing it to the church office: First Presbyterian Church, 1250 Watson Road, Mt. Pleasant, 48858. You can also give an offering by going to the church's website, www.fpcmp.org and hit the "Give Now" button or use the QR Code,



Christmas Eve Evening Service

Please join us for the Evening Christmas Eve Service beginning with Special Music at 7:15pm followed by a Service of Lesson and Carols with candle lighting.

Christmas Joy Offering

The Christmas Joy Offering is a special offering that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) collects. This special offering goes towards helping students to learn and grow in faith at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. The offering also provides assistance for current and retired church workers and their families with critical financial needs. Please consider giving to this special offering. You can give by going to the church website, www.fpcmp.org and go to the GIVE NOW button. You can also mail a check to the church office. Make the check out to "First Presbyterian Church" and in the memo mark, "Christmas Joy Offering". You can also scan the QR Code above and give that way.

2023 Pledges Due Date

Please remember that pledges for 2023 are due in the church office by Sunday, December 31, 2023.