

NORTHMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

DECEMBER 20, 2020

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

GATHER JOYFULLY

THE PRELUDE

SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR PRAYER AND PREPARATION

II Samuel 7:1-11, 16; Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26; Romans 16:25-27

(Congregants are encouraged to read and reflect upon these passages as they prepare for worship.)

BUILDING THE BODY OF CHRIST

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

Dave Snider and Holly Woodson

HYMN 85 *Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah*

Tif In Veldele

Light four candles to watch for Messiah: let the light banish darkness.

He is coming; tell the glad tidings. Let your lights be shining.

CAROLS

Sussex Carol

English traditional carol, arr. David Willcocks

He is Born the Divine Christ-Child

French traditional carol, arr. David Willcocks

The Truth From Above

English traditional carol, arr. R. Vaughan Williams

Ding Dong! Merrily on High

16th-century French melody, arr. David Willcocks

In the Bleak Midwinter

Gustav Holst

God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen

English traditional carol, arr. David Willcocks

THE CALL TO WORSHIP

An angel spoke to Mary: "Do not be afraid!"

The child she carries will be God's Son,
and the world will never be the same!

An angel spoke to Mary: "Do not be afraid!"

God was with he, and God is with us,
drawing us into worship and praise.

Come, let us worship God with all our hearts!

THE PRAYER OF INVOCATION AND ADORATION

May our hearts be opened and our imaginations ignited,
God of the manger, Lord of the angels' music,
so that our spirits can sing and our lives proclaim
that Jesus Christ, Your love divine, has been born to us.

May we find this day in our worship and praise
Your living Spirit that occupies every inch of Your world
and every emotion, gift, and possibility at our core.
Through the incarnate, crucified, and resurrected One we pray.
Amen and Amen.

CONGREGATIONAL HYMN 88 *O Come, O Come Emmanuel*

Veni Emmanuel

O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear.

Refrain:

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, Desire of nations, bind
all peoples in one heart and mind;
bid envy, strife, and discord cease;
fill the whole world with heaven's peace. [Refrain]

CAROLS

Lo, How A Rose

Es Ist Ein' Ros'

Lo, how a rose e'er blooming
from tender stem hath sprung,
of Jesse's lineage coming,
by faithful prophets sung.
It came, a floweret bright,
amid the cold of winter,
when half spent was the night.

Isaiah 'twas foretold it,
the rose I have in mind;
with Mary we behold it,
the virgin mother kind.
To show God's love aright
she bore for us a Savior,
when half spent was the night.

I wonder as I wander, out under the sky,
How Jesus the Savior did come for to die
For poor ord'n'ry people like you and like I.
I wonder as I wander, out under the sky.

When Mary birthed Jesus, all in a cow's stall,
Came wise men and farmers and shepherds and all,
And high from the heavens a star's light did fall;
The promise of the ages it then did recall.

GROW SPIRITUALLY

THE FIRST READING OF GOD'S WORD Isaiah 9:1-7

¹But there will be no gloom for those who were in anguish. In the former time he brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time he will make glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations. ²The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined. ³You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. ⁴For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. ⁵For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. ⁶For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onwards and for evermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE / THE 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 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.

CAROLS

Once in Royal David's City

H.J. Gauntlett, arr. David Willcocks

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.

What Child is This

Greensleeves

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!

The First Nowell

English traditional carol, arr. David Willcocks

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.

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 nought,
and with his blood our life hath bought. [Refrain]

The Angel Gabriel

Basque carol, arr. David Willcocks

The angel Gabriel from heaven came,
With wings as drifted snow, his eyes as flame.
"All hail," said he, "O lowly maiden Mary,
Most highly favored lady." Gloria!

"How blest among all women you shall be,
Whom ev'ry age will praise continually.
Your Son shall be Emmanuel, by seers foretold,
"Most highly favored lady." Gloria!

Then gentle Mary meekly bowed her head.
"To me be as it pleases God," she said.
"My soul shall laud and magnify God's holy name."
Most highly favored lady. Gloria!

THE SECOND READING OF GOD'S WORD Luke 1:39-56

³⁹ In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, ⁴⁰where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leapt in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit ⁴²and exclaimed with a loud cry, 'Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. ⁴³And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? ⁴⁴For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leapt for joy. ⁴⁵And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfilment of what was spoken to her by the Lord.' ⁴⁶And Mary said, 'My soul magnifies the Lord, ⁴⁷ and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour, ⁴⁸ for he has looked with favour on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; ⁴⁹ for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. ⁵⁰ His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. ⁵¹ He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. ⁵² He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; ⁵³ he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. ⁵⁴ He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, ⁵⁵ according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants for ever.' ⁵⁶ And Mary remained with her for about three months and then returned to her home.

THE PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

THE SERMON

MARY'S MAGNIFICAT

Dr. Merritt

CAROLS

Good Christian Friends, Rejoice

In Dulci Jubilo

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!

Good Christian friends, rejoice
with heart and soul and voice;
now ye hear of endless bliss:
Jesus Christ was born for this!
He has opened heaven's door,
and we are blest forevermore.
Christ was born for this!
Christ was born for this!

Go Tell it on the Mountain

Go Tell It

Refrain:

Go, tell it on the mountain,
over the hills and everywhere;
go, tell it on the mountain
that Jesus Christ is born!

Down in a lowly manger
the humble Christ was born,
and God sent us salvation
that blessed Christmas morn. [Refrain]

*CONGREGATIONAL HYMN 133

O Come, All Ye Faithful

Adeste Fideles

O come, all ye faithful,
joyful and triumphant;
O come ye; O come ye to Bethlehem!
Come, and behold him, born the King of angels!

Refrain:

O come, let us adore him;
O come, let us adore him;
O come, let us adore him,
Christ, the Lord!

Sing, choirs of angels;
sing in exultation;
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God, all glory in the highest! [Refrain]

Yea, Lord, we greet thee,
born this happy morning;
Jesus, to thee be all glory given;
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing! [Refrain]

GO FAITHFULLY

THE CHARGE

In a time when so many do not know Your love,
in a world where so many need the presence of that love,
let us go forth, and be the love of God through Christ.

THE BENEDICTION

And now, may the music of the spheres ring in our spirits,
that we may depart with a song of joy and hope, peace and love,
in our hearts and minds and lives,
through God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit,
now and forevermore. Amen.

THE POSTLUDE

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OUR OVERFLOWING THANKS to Jeff Midkiff, David Lipps, and Melissa Hudson, our wonderful Music Director, for leading us in the worship of Almighty God through music this morning!

Thought for the Week: *Good people take care of their animals, but even the kindest acts of the wicked are cruel. Proverbs 12:10*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

WE SHARE OUR SYMPATHY AND CHRISTIAN LOVE with the family of long-time Northminster member Betty Hinkle, who joined the Church Triumphant this past week after several years of ill health. Betty is now held in the loving embrace of our Lord. To God be the glory!

WE ARE SADDENED TO HEAR THAT GLADYS PRESSON graduated to the Church Triumphant this past Tuesday. We celebrate her life among us, and give God thanks for the assurance through Jesus Christ that Gladys now rests eternally with Him! To God be the glory!

OUR ANNUAL CHRISTMAS EVE COMMUNION SERVICE will be held this Thursday, December 24 at 4:00. Everyone is invited to join us for this special service.

PERSONS WORSHIPING IN PERSON IN THE SANCTUARY are encouraged to move to their seats as soon as they arrive, and not to spend much time visiting in the narthex, so that we can continue to control the possible spread of the virus.

The Presbyterian Center is in need of school supplies and asking for donations. A list of supplies needed is on the bulletin board across from the secretary's office.

THE OFFERING WILL NOT BE COLLECTED and plates will not be passed during the service, to protect worshippers from any possible surface-based contagion. Plates are located in the narthex, for worshippers to place their gifts following the service.

Northminster is proud to announce we have joined the **Kroger Community Rewards Program**. To participate simply go to the [kroger.com](https://www.kroger.com) website. Once logged into your **Kroger account**, you can search for **Northminster Presbyterian Church** either by name or code **PL601** and then click **Enroll**. New users will need to create an account which requires some basic information, a valid email address and a *Rewards Card*. **REMEMBER**, purchases will not count for the church until after you register your *Rewards Card*. You must swipe your registered Kroger *Rewards Card* or use the phone number that is related to your registered Kroger *Rewards Card* when shopping for each purchase to count. If you do not yet have a Kroger *Rewards Card*, they are available at the customer service desk at any Kroger. Contact Chuck Lockard if you have any questions. Thanks for supporting our work at Northminster!

Calendar

Today	11:00 am	Worship Service
Thursday	4:00 pm	Christmas Eve Service
Next Sunday	11:00 am	Worship Service

NORTHMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
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WEBSITE:WWW.NORTHMINSTERPCUSA.ORG

Russ Merritt, Transitional Pastor Melissa Hudson, Music Director
Susie Tallmage, Secretary Lauren Axelson, Nursery Attendant
Ministers...Members of Northminster

If you or someone you know should be included in the list of those needing special prayer, please contact the Minister. If prayers have been answered and we can celebrate God's goodness by removing your name from the list, let the Minister know.

Let us keep those listed below in our prayers.

Members

Frances Bowling	Bobby Brammer	Charlotte Cooley
Jim Cregger	Michael Hambrick	Jake Hayes
Maryanne Huff	Atwood Huff	Barbara Jones
Dennis Kincer	Bob Lancaster	Homer Linton
Floyd Moretz	Mary Moretz	Ann Pace
Mac Pace	Buddy Smith	Sandy Smith
Frances Stevens	Jo Ann Threlkeld	

Friends and Family

Joaquin Bielawski
Nancy Assaid (Sherry Moses' sister)
Tim Smith (Karen's husband)

*THE SESSION *

Clerk of Session: Holly Woodson

Elders: Bob Bielawski, Frankie Bielawski, Jeff Echols, Judy Ferrell, Vee Hayes, Lynn Kirby, Chuck Lockard, Sherry Moses, Bob Newman, Jeremy Newman, Betsy Robison, Dave Snider, Gayle Wise