

NORTHMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Welcome to Christ's Service of Worship for the Lord's Day

December 12, 2021
Third Sunday of Advent

GATHER JOYFULLY

THE PRELUDE

SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR PRAYER AND PREPARATION

Zephaniah 3:14-20; Isaiah 12:2-6; Luke 3:1-6

(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

Matt and Susan Graybill and Family

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

He is coming; tell the glad tidings. Let your lights be shining. (Hymn 85)

*HYMN OF PRAISE 88 *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* (Verses 1, 6 and 7)

*THE CALL TO WORSHIP (responsive)

Minister: It is the time of the star,
and the time of shepherds watching their flocks.

Congregants: It is the season of our Savior's birth!

Minister: Let us surround him now with prayer,
with music, and with the truth of the Word.

Congregants: Let us praise his holy name!

Minister: Come, let us worship God!

*PRAYER OF INVOCATION AND CONFESSION (unison)

**Heavenly Father, Lord Almighty,
Your nature is beyond our ever imagining,
and yet You reveal Yourself to us
through the child of Bethlehem.**

**We come to You in praise and adoration
for the gift of Yourself to the world.**

**We are deeply aware of the darkness around us--
the hate and strife, the envy and division,
the deceit and greed and selfish ambition.**

We confess that we ourselves can embrace that darkness.

**Therefore, we are grateful for moments like this,
when we know Your presence and the hope of Your redemption.
Tune our hearts to sing a new song this day--
the song of Your coming among us in the Babe.
Hear these our silent prayers.**

(Worshippers will enter a time of silent prayer.)

*ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

*RESPONSE HYMN 107 *Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn* (Verse 4)

Rejoice, rejoice, take heart in the night. Though dark the winter and cheerless,
the rising sun shall crown you with light; be strong and loving and fearless.
Love be our song and love our prayer and love our endless story;
may God fill every day we share and bring us at last into glory.

GROW SPIRITUALLY

THE FIRST READING OF GOD'S WORD Luke 2:8-11

⁸In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord.

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.

ANTHEM Advent Processional (*O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*) Donald Pearson

CHILDREN'S MOMENT

THE SECOND READING OF GOD'S WORD Philippians 4:4-7

⁴Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. ⁵Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. ⁶Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

THE PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

THE SERMON

REJOICE

Russ Merritt

*THE AFFIRMATION OF FAITH *The Apostles' Creed* (Unison)

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried. He descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and is seated on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from there He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy universal church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

GO FAITHFULLY

*HYMN OF DEDICATION 105 *People, Look East* (Verses 1, 4 and 5)

THE BENEDICTION

THE POSTLUDE

OUR SERVICE

*Indicates the People Standing

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THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK: *"We are part of nature...which like a fluid seems to drench and steep us throughout, as the whole sky and the rocks and flowers are drenched with God"* *John Muir*

EARTH CARE: *Are there gifts that you can give that might be family heirlooms or things that are already in existence that can be repurposed as a gift for someone else.*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Elise and Stan Lanford want to thank the Northminster congregation for the many cards, prayers, phone calls and verbal good wishes as we have been through three major surgeries in the last 4 months. We are thankful to have had very good results and relatively quick recoveries. Your thoughts and prayers have helped us recover to better health. We are truly blessed to have a wonderful congregation to support each other. And Russ, the best leader-preacher to lead us.

Circle 1 will meet Tuesday, December 14th at 11:00 am at Pete's Deli.

NEXT SUNDAY, DECEMBER 19, we will hold our annual "Joy Gift" program, during the morning service. (Due to the pandemic, we will not share in a fellowship luncheon this year.)

THE ANNUAL CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE

will be held at 4:00 on December 24, and will include celebration of the sacrament of Holy Communion as well as a special candle lighting service. Please make your plans to join us for this moving and memorable time together in worship of the newborn Savior.

PIES TO THE RESCUE MISSION: A total of 27 pies were delivered by Judy Moore on Monday, November 22 to the Rescue Mission for their Thanksgiving meal; the pies were graciously received. Many thanks to everyone who contributed to this project.

The Christmas Joy Offering has been a cherished Presbyterian tradition since the 1930s. The Offering distributes gifts equally to the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions and to Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. The Assistance Program provides critical financial support to church workers and their families. Presbyterian-related schools and colleges provide education and leadership development while nurturing racial and ethnic heritage. This has been a Presbyterian commitment for nearly 140 years. You will find Joy Gift offering envelopes in your bulletin.

CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS: We will not be purchasing poinsettias this year to be placed in the Sanctuary. Instead, we will take up a collection of \$5 from anyone who would like to honor a loved one (in memoriam), indicating the names on a list which will be included in the Christmas bulletin. The money collected will be donated to the Presbyterian Community Center. We ask that you turn in your request and donation to the church office by December 12.

We will **NOT** be collecting used printer cartridges anymore. RAM is no longer involved in this project. If you know of anywhere else where they can be recycled, please contact Holly Woodson. Thank you for your participation in this recycling project.

JUST A REMINDER: there are boxes in the narthex to recycle your bulletins.

Calendar

Today	10:00 – 10:45 am 11:00 am	Sunday School Morning Worship
Tuesday	11:00 am	Circle 1 at Pete's Deli
Next Sunday	10:00 – 10:45 am 11:00 am	Sunday School Morning Worship

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

Jessee Amos	Ann Bailey	Bill Bailey
Frances Bowling	Bobby Brammer	Charlotte Cooley
Jim Cregger	Barry Ferrell	Michael Hambrick
Jake Hayes	Barbara Jones	Dennis Kincer
Reba Kling	Bob Lancaster	Stan Lanford
Homer Linton	Susan Lockard	Floyd Moretz
Ann Pace	Mac Pace	Mary Simpson
Ken Riding	Buddy Smith	Sandy Smith
Jo Ann Threlkeld		

Friends and Family

Joaquin Bielawski

Donna Betters (Sherry Moses)

Berkley Persinger (Elise Lanford's cousin)

Carl Utley (General Presbyter of the Presbytery of the Peaks)

*THE SESSION *

Clerk of Session: Holly Woodson

Elders: Kathy Baker, Bob Bielawski, Frankie Bielawski, Pam Claterbaugh, Richard Claterbaugh, Trent Cundiff, Judy Ferrell, Tom Hale, Vee Hayes, Daniel Kirby, Chuck Lockard, Sherry Moses, Debbie Newman, Jeremy Newman, Gayle Wise