

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

*December 19, 2021*  
*Fourth Sunday of Advent*

**GATHER JOYFULLY**

THE PRELUDE

SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR PRAYER AND PREPARATION

Micah 5:2-5a; Luke 1:39-55; Psalm 80:1-7

(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

Sherry Moses and David Snider

*Light four 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 140      *Once in Royal David's City*

\*THE CALL TO WORSHIP (responsive)

Minister: The mystery of the ages is now revealed.

**Congregants: To God be the glory forever!**

Minister: Christ is born to us in Bethlehem.

**Congregants: He will be the shepherd of peace.**

Minister: Let us worship God.

\*PRAYER OF INVOCATION AND CONFESSION (unison)

**God of grace and goodness, Lord of life and love,  
Your eternal Word took flesh among us  
when Mary offered her life in service to Your Will.  
Prepare our hearts for his coming  
so that we also can give our lives to You.  
Keep us steadfast in faith and faithful in service,  
since too often we stray from Your path.  
Guide us to receive his Kingdom  
rather than the false gods around us.  
In this time together, bless us with Your presence  
and fill our spirits with Your Holy Spirit.  
Hear these our silent prayers.**

(Worshippers will enter into a time of private prayer.)

\*ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

\*RESPONSE HYMN 132 *Good Christian Friends, Rejoice* (Verse 3)

Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice;  
now ye need not fear the grave: Jesus Christ was born to save!  
Calls you one and calls you all to gain the everlasting hall.  
Christ was born to save! Christ was born to save!

## GROW SPIRITUALLY

THE FIRST READING OF GOD'S WORD Luke 2:1-7

<sup>1</sup>In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. <sup>2</sup>This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. <sup>3</sup>All went to their own towns to be registered. <sup>4</sup>Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. <sup>5</sup>He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. <sup>6</sup>While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. <sup>7</sup>And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

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 *The Holly and the Ivy* English traditional carol, arr. H. Walford Davies

CHILDREN'S MOMENT

THE SECOND READING OF GOD'S WORD I John 4:7, 10-12

<sup>7</sup>Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. <sup>10</sup>In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. <sup>11</sup>Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. <sup>12</sup>No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us.

THE PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

THE SERMON

*CHRISTMAS LOVE*

Russ Merritt

HYMN OF COMMITMENT 116     *The Snow Lay on the Ground*

\*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 112     *On Christmas Night All Christians Sing*

THE BENEDICTION

THE POSTLUDE

OUR SERVICE

\*Indicates the People Standing

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**THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:** *The righteous care for the needs of their animals. Proverbs 12:10*

**EARTH CARE:** *Consider giving a gift of time.*

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

OUR ANNUAL CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE will be held at 4:00 this Friday. We will celebrate the holy sacrament of communion and have special music, as well as having a candle lighting service. Please make plans to join us, and to bring friends and family.

THE MINISTER WILL BE ON VACATION next Sunday, December 26. We will again be blessed by having Pam Claterbaugh in the pulpit leading worship.

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.

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
Friday	4:00 pm	Christmas Eve Service
Next Sunday	10:00 – 10:45 am 11:00 am	Sunday School Morning Worship

NORTHMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
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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	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