Sunday,
December 24, 2023
10:30 AM

A Service of Lessons & Carols

CHRIST
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

A Festival of Lessons and Carols

December 24, 2023 Christ Presbyterian Church ✠ Canton, Ohio 10:30 o'clock in the morning

**at these moments, we invite you to stand in body or spirit*

Voluntary "O Little Town of Bethlehem" and "Infant Holy, Infant Lowly" arr. Michael Rondeau

Welcome and Worship Notes Rev. Dave de Vries

Call to Worship (*remain seated*)

Leader: The Word was made flesh,
People: Alleluia, alleluia!
Leader: And dwelt among us,
People: Alleluia, alleluia!
Leader: Jesus, Son of the living God, splendor of the Father, Light eternal:
People: Glory to you, O Lord!
Leader: Jesus, King of glory, Sun of righteousness, born of the Virgin Mary:
People: Glory to you, O Lord!
Leader: Jesus, Wonderful Counselor, mighty God, everlasting Lord:
People: Glory to you, O Lord!
Leader: Jesus, Prince of Peace, Shepherd of souls, perfect in holiness:
People: Glory to you, O Lord!
Leader: Jesus, Friend of all, Protector of the poor, Treasure of the faithful:
People: Glory to you, O Lord!
Leader: Jesus, Good Shepherd, inexhaustible Wisdom, our Way, our Truth, and our Life:
People: Glory to you, O Lord!
Leader: Jesus, joy of the angels, and crown of all the saints:
People: Glory to you, O Lord!
Leader: Christ is born! Give him glory! Christ has come down from heaven! Receive him!
Christ is now on earth! Exalt him! O earth, sing to the Lord!
O you nations, praise him in joy, for he has been glorified!
People: Amen.

Hymn in Procession "Once in Royal David's City" Irby

solo
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 the mother mild, Jesus Christ, her little child.

choir
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.

****all stand and sing***
Jesus is our childhood's pattern; day by day like us he grew;
He was little, weak, and helpless; tears and smiles like us he knew;
And he feels for all our sadness, and he shares in all our gladness.

And our eyes at last shall see him, through his own redeeming love,
For that child so dear and gentle is our Lord in heaven above;
And he leads his children on, to the place where he is gone.

Not in that poor lowly stable, with the oxen standing by,
We shall see him; but in heaven, set at God's right hand on high;
When like stars his children crowned all in white shall wait around.

***Bidding Prayer** Rev. Michael Wallace

Dear People of God: In this Christmas Season, let it be our duty and delight to hear once more the message of the Angels, to go to Bethlehem and see the Son of God lying in a manger. Let us hear and heed in Holy Scripture the story of God's loving purpose from the time of our rebellion against him until the glorious redemption brought to us by his holy Child Jesus, and let us make this city glad with our carols of praise.

But first, let us pray for the needs of his whole world, for peace and justice on earth, for the unity and mission of the Church for which he died, and especially for his Church in our country and in Stark County.

And because he particularly loves them, let us remember in his name the poor and helpless, the cold, the hungry and the oppressed, the sick and those who mourn, the lonely and unloved, the aged and little children, as well as all those who do not know and love the Lord Jesus Christ.

And now, to sum up all these petitions, let us pray in the words which Christ himself has taught us, saying:

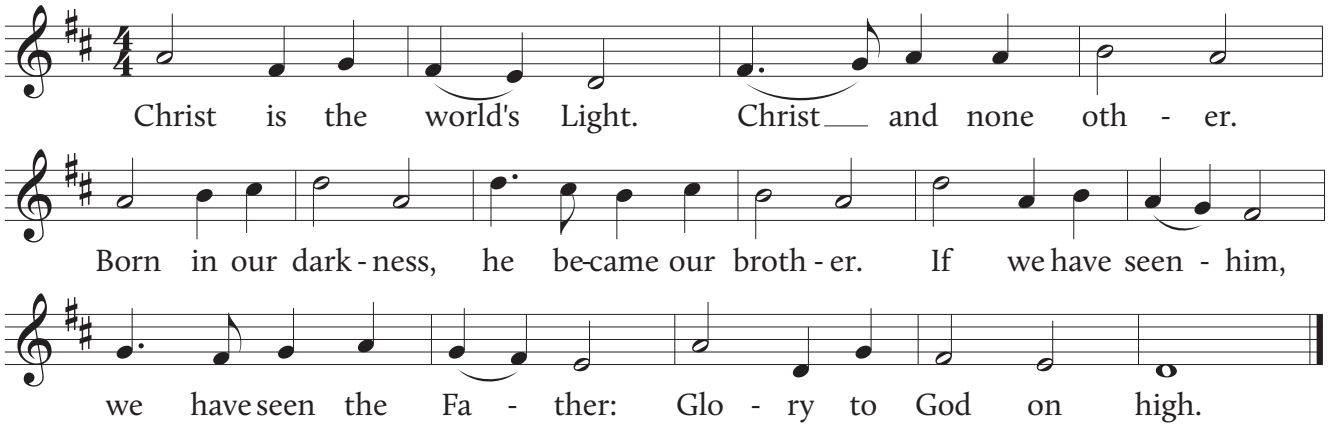
Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors;
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

May Almighty God bless us with his grace; may Christ give us the joys of everlasting life; and to the fellowship of the citizens above, may the King of Angels bring us all.
Amen.

Lighting of the Advent Candle

Karsten, Eva, Juliana, Emmerich, Joshua, and Allison Burdeshaw and Dorothy Rasnick

Response to the Lighting of the Advent Candle



First Lesson *"God promises to faithful Abraham that in his seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed"* Genesis 22:15–18
Theo Wallace

Carol "Ding Dong Merrily on High" arr. Carolyn Jennings

Ding dong! merrily on high in heaven the bells are ringing,
Ding dong! verily the sky is riven with angels singing. Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis!
E'en so, here below, below, let steeple bells be swungen,
And "io, io, io," by priest and people sungen. Gloria, hosanna in excelsis!
Pray you, dutifully prime your Matin chime, ye ringers;
may you beautifuly rime your Evetime song, ye singers: Gloria, hosanna in excelsis!

Second Lesson *"The peace Christ will bring is foreshadowed"* Isaiah 11:1–9
Nancy Irving

***Hymn #378** "We Wait the Peaceful Kingdom" Merle's Tune

We wait the peaceful kingdom, when wolf and lamb shall lie
In gentleness and friendship without a fear or sigh,
When lion shall be grazing, when snake shall never strike;
A little child shall lead us both strong and weak alike.

Where is the peaceful kingdom? When will this new day start?
We long for peace and comfort to reign within each heart.
Yet not in our lives only, nor simply in our home:
We pray that all creation will one day find shalom.

That little child shall lead us to walk the chosen way,
To share the peaceful kingdom, to greet God's newborn day.
The child born in a stable is sent to break our chains,
To bring through word and table the day when justice reigns.

Third Lesson and Carol "Mary's Story" *and* "Magnificat" Luke 1:26–35, 38
Hailey Hon arr. John Ferguson

My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God,
Rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant.
Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;
For the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name.
And his mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.
He has shown strength with his arm;
he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.
He has brought down the mighty from their thrones,
And lifted up the lowly;
He has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty.
He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy,
According to the promise he made to our ancestors,
To Abraham and his descendants forever, forevermore.

Children are now invited to come forward for the reading of the Fourth Lesson

Fourth Lesson *"Luke tells of the birth of Jesus"* Luke 2:1–7
Kate George

***Hymn #115** "Away in a Manger" Müller

Away in a manger, no crib for his bed,
The little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head
The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay
The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing; the poor baby wakes,
But little Lord Jesus, no crying He makes.
I love thee, Lord Jesus; look down from the sky,
And stay by my side until morning is nigh**.**

(continued on next page)

Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask Thee to stay
Close by me forever and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in Thy tender care,
And fit us for heaven to live with thee there.

Fifth Lesson *"The shepherds and the angels"* Luke 2:8–16
Kristi Wood

Carol "Shepherd's Farewell" Hector Berlioz

Thou must leave thy lowly dwelling, the humble crib, the stable bare,
Babe, all mortal babes excelling, content our earthly lot to share,
Loving father, loving mother, shelter thee with tender care!
Blest are ye beyond all measure, thou happy father, mother mild!
Guard ye well your heav'nly treasure, the Prince of Peace, the Holy Child!
God go with you, God protect you, guide you safely through the wild!

Sixth Lesson *"The wise men are led by the star to Jesus"* Matthew 2:1–12
Geoffrey Darling

***Hymn #147** "The First Nowell" The First Nowell

The first Nowell the angel did say was to certain poor shepherd in fields as they lay,
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep, on a cold winter's night that was so deep.
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. *Nowell…*

And by the light of that same star three wise men came from country far;
To seek for a king was their intent, and to follow the star wherever it went. *Nowell…*

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. *Nowell…*

The Good News of redemption is celebrated in the Gospel reading
The people are invited to stand in body or spirit for the reading from the Gospel of John

***Seventh Lesson** *"The Word was made flesh and we have seen his glory"* John 1:1-18
Rev. Dave de Vries

***Hymn #108** "Of the Father's Love Begotten" Divinum Mysterium

Of the Father's love begotten, ere the worlds began to be,
he is Alpha and Omega; he the source, the ending he,
Of the things that are, that have been, and that future years shall see, Evermore and evermore!

O ye heights of heaven, adore him. Angel hosts, his praises sing.
Powers, dominions, bow before him, and extol our God and King.
Let no tongue on earth be silent; every voice in concert ring, Evermore and evermore!

Christ, to thee with God the Father, and, O Holy Ghost, to thee,
Hymn and chant and high thanksgiving and unwearied praises be.
Honor, glory, and dominion, and eternal victory, Evermore and evermore!

Prayers of the People Rev. Benjamin George

Leader: All the ends of the earth
have seen the salvation of our God. Alleluia!
People: Shout to the Lord, all the earth. Alleluia!
Leader: O Christ, splendor of Gods eternal glory,
the mighty Word, sustaining the universe:
Renew our lives by your presence.
People: Lord, have mercy.
Leader: O Christ, born into the world in the fullness of time
for the liberation of all creation:
Release all into your promised freedom.
People: Lord, have mercy.
Leader: O Christ, begotten of the Father before all time,
born in a stable at Bethlehem:
May your church be a sign of hope and joy.
People: Lord, have mercy.
Leader: O Christ, truly God and truly human,
born to a people in fulfillment of their expectations:
Fulfill our desires in you.
People: Lord, have mercy.
Leader: O Christ, born of the Virgin Mary,
child of wonder and splendor,
mighty God of all ages, Prince of Peace:
May the whole world live in peace and justice.
People: Lord, have mercy.
Leader: All-powerful and unseen God, the coming of your light into our world
has brightened weary hearts with peace.
Teach us to proclaim the birth of your Son Jesus Christ,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, forever and ever.
People: Amen

Invitation to the Offering

Offertory Carol "What Is This Lovely Fragrance?" arr. Healey Willan

What is this lovely fragrance wafting like to the scents of flowers in Spring!
Shepherds, O tell us, whence such beauty, hear not you heavenly caroling?
What is this light so fair, so tender, Breaking upon our wondering eyes?
Never the Morning Star so radiant followed his course o'er eastern skies.
Shepherds, O haste with eager footsteps, Seek the Savior, born today.
Low at His feet we lay our treasure, heart's adoration, love for aye.

***Presentation Hymn** Greensleeves

So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh; come, one and all, to own him.
The King of kings salvation brings; let loving hearts enthrone him.
This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and angles sing;
Haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary!

***Prayer of Thanksgiving (*in unison*)**

Incarnate Christ, be born in me this Christmas.
May my voice be as the angels', joyfully proclaiming Good News;
my knees as the animals', quietly bent in adoration.
May my feet be as the shepherds', running eagerly to find you;
my hands as the wise man's, offering up all that I have.
May my heart be as the manger, poor yet treasure filled;
my life as the stable, hallowed ground settled with your presence.
Incarnate Christ, be born again in me this Christmas.

Being Christ's Church—Living Our Faith

***Hymn #119** "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" 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 the angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king!"

Christ, by highest heaven adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord,
Late in time behold him come, off-spring of the virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see; hail the incarnate deity,
Please in flesh with us to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel. *Hark!...*

Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the sun of righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings, risen with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by, born that we no more may die,
Born to raise us from the earth, born to give us second birth. *Hark!...*

Benediction

Voluntary "Break Forth into Joy" J.S. Bach, arr. Kreuger
from *Christmas Oratorio*

We welcome guest musicians Larry Herman and Sean Monigold (trumpet), Tom Pylinski and Lauren Rudzinkas (trombone), and Tom Roblee (timpani) this morning

Please note that due to New Years Eve falling on a Sunday, there will not be any Sunday school classes next week and we will hold one combined 10:30 AM worship service. In that special service, Pastor Michael will re-present a historical sermon from December 31, 1899, entitled "Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might." This sermon from our archives was most likely preached by Rev. O Brown Milligan, who served as pastor of the then-First Presbyterian Church from 1895 to 1908.

The Cathedral Hour this morning is made possible through generous donations from members and friends of Christ Presbyterian Church.

Bible Bearer: Abram George
Chalice Bearer: Ezekiel George
Crucifer: Megan Cooper

Elders of Christ Presbyterian Church
Jennifer Anderson
Charles Ash
Becky Banfield
Jennie George
David Hudson
Richard Milligan
Nancy Okonak
Adam Wiggins
Kristi Wood

Christ Presbyterian Church
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Director of Chancel Choir: Dr. Britt Cooper
Director of Family and Children's Ministries: Kate George
Director of Youth Ministry: Bonnie Wiggins
Pastor and Director of Camp Wakonda: Rev. Benjamin George
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HEARING LOOP INSTALLED
Switch hearing aid to T-coil

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