

LIGHT *of* COMFORT *come!*



WILLIAMSBURG PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
CHRISTMAS EVE • DECEMBER 24, 2023 • 8PM

PRAYER FOR PREPARATION

Living God, on this holy night we gather—to stand with shepherds, amazed at your glory; to sing with angels, rejoicing in your work; to wait with Joseph, trusting in your promise; to sit with Mary, cradling your love. May the good news of this night inspire us to tell the world of our great joy: for to us is born a Savior, the Messiah, the Lord. Glory and praise to you forever! Amen.

THE GATHERING PREPARING TO HEAR THE WORD

ORGAN PRELUDE

God Rest You Merry	arr. Shows
In the Bleak Midwinter	arr. Fedak
Wexford Carol	arr. Shows
Gesu Bambino / Adeste Fidelis	Yon

PASTORAL GREETING

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

Kai Salud and Katie Bechtler

We gather the light of Christ and take it into the world,
A light of hope
A light of peace
A light of joy
A light of love

*To all who are able, please stand as we offer God thanks and praise.
Bold type face indicates that the congregation participates in word or song.

We gather, here

Because our world is broken, and each of us is part of the people of God
People claimed by Christ's light so we may spread the light
Even as we seek to see the light more clearly

We gather with Christ, anew

Not just in the humble manger in Bethlehem
Not just in the risen king whose reign we await
But in every heart, every home, every street and stream
We gather God's light so it may illuminate the world and comfort the afflicted in all places
and at all times.

So we gather to light a candle, because God is with us, Immanuel.
Glory to God in Highest Heaven, here, with us.

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE

Advent Carol

BETH KENREICH



Joy, joy! Hear the good news: Je-sus our Sav-ior brings joy__ to you.



Joy, joy! Hear the good news: Je-sus our Sav-ior brings joy__ to you.

PRAYER OF ADORATION (Unison)

All: Loving God, we offer our thanks for the gift of love born to us on this most joyous night. Like the shepherds, let us approach the manger with wonder and awe. Like the magi, let us come with grateful hearts. And let us open our hearts to receive the good news of which the angels sang. On this most holy night, we offer our prayers for peace in our world. Help us to make peace possible as we follow in the footsteps of the maker of peace who came to us as a babe in Bethlehem. Amen.

***HYMN 133**

O Come, All Ye Faithful

ADESTE FIDELES

1 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!
O come, let us adore him;
O come, let us adore him;
O come, let us adore him,
Christ, the Lord!

2 True God from true God,
Light from light eternal,
born of a virgin, a mortal he comes;
very God, begotten, not created!
O come, let us adore him;
O come, let us adore him;
O come, let us adore him,
Christ, the Lord!

3 Sing, choirs of angels;
sing in exultation;
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God, all
glory in the highest!
O come, let us adore him;
O come, let us adore him;
O come, let us adore him,
Christ, the Lord!

4 Yea, Lord, we greet thee,
born this happy morning;
Jesus, to thee be all glory given;
Word of the Father,
now in flesh appearing!
O come, let us adore him;
O come, let us adore him;
O come, let us adore him,
Christ, the Lord!

OLD TESTAMENT READING: *Isaiah 9:2-7*

***HYMN 115**

Away in a Manger

MUELLER

1 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.

2 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.

3 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.

NEW TESTAMENT READING: *Luke 2:1-20*

SERMON

"Searching for the Holy"

Rev. John E. Morgan

***HYMN 113**

Angels We Have Heard on High

GLORIA

1 Angels we have heard on high,
sweetly singing o'er the plains,
and the mountains in reply
echoing their joyous strains.
Gloria in excelsis Deo!
Gloria in excelsis Deo!

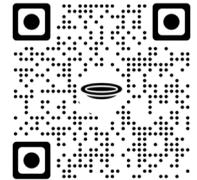
2 Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be
which inspire your heavenly song?
Gloria in excelsis Deo!
Gloria in excelsis Deo!

3 Come to Bethlehem and see
him whose birth the angels sing;
come, adore on bended knee
Christ, the Lord, the newborn King.
Gloria in excelsis Deo!
Gloria in excelsis Deo!

CHRISTMAS PRAYER

OFFERING

Thank you for your continued faithful stewardship to WPC. May our offerings continue to help us be the light for our neighbors and our siblings in Christ all over the world. Offering envelopes can be found inside the friendship register book. We invite you to make your offering or pledge payment in one of the following ways:



- Place your offering into the plates as you exit the sanctuary
- Visit mywpc.org/offering or scan the QR code at the right to give online
- Mail your offering to the church office at 215 Richmond Road, Williamsburg, VA 23185.

OFFERTORY

The First Noel

arr. Dan Forrest

The first noel the angels did say
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields where they lay,
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep,
On a cold winter's night that was so deep.

Refrain:

Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel,
Born is the King of Israel.

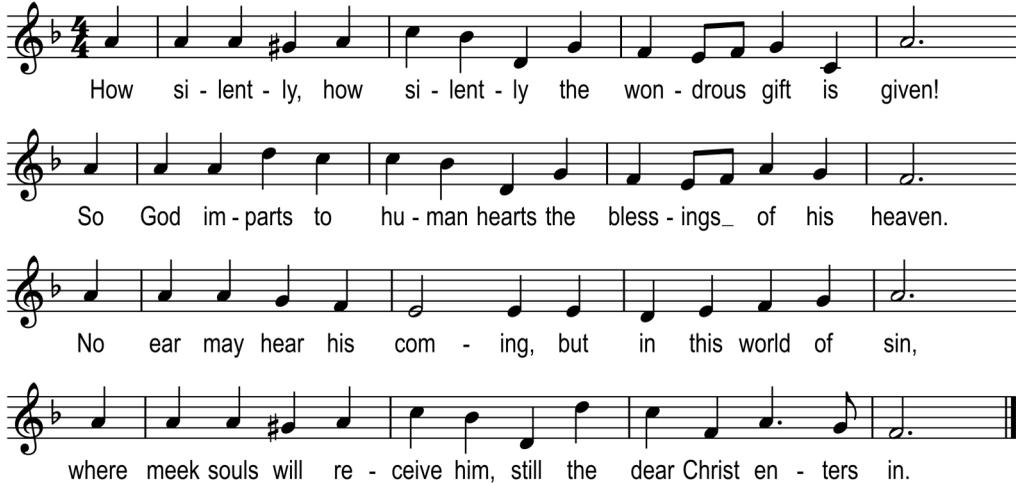
They looked up and saw a star
Shining in the east beyond them far.
And to the earth it gave great light,
And so it continued both day and night. (Refrain)

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 mankind hath bought. (Refrain)

*DOXOLOGY

O Little Town of Bethlehem

ST. LOUIS



How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly the won - drous gift is given!
So God im - parts to hu - man hearts the bless - ings_ of his heaven.
No ear may hear his com - ing, but in this world of sin,
where meek souls will re - ceive him, still the dear Christ en - ters in.

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS

Leader: God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. In Christ was life and the life was the light of all people.

People: **The light shines in the darkness; and the darkness has never been able to put it out. That was the true light, which enlightens everyone that comes into the world. Jesus said, "I am the light of the world; those who follow me shall not walk in darkness but shall have the light of life."**

LIGHTING OUR CANDLES FROM THE CHRIST CANDLE

(When lighting candles, please hold the lit candle upright.)

HYMN

Silent Night, Holy Night STILLE NACHT

(Please remain seated)

**Silent night, holy night! All is calm, all is bright,
Round yon virgin mother and Child!
Holy Infant, so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace, Sleep in heavenly peace.**

**Silent night, holy night! Shepherds quake at the sight,
Glories stream from heaven afar, Heavenly hosts sing "Alleluia;
Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born!"**

**Silent night, holy night! Son of God, love's pure light
Radiant beams from Thy holy face, With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.**

**Silent night, holy night! Wondrous star, lend thy light;
With the angels let us sing, Alleluia to our King;
Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born!**

CHARGE AND BLESSING

PLEASE EXTINGUISH YOUR CANDLE

*HYMN 134

Joy to the World

ANTIOCH

1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her king;
let every heart prepare him room,
and heaven and nature sing,
and heaven and nature sing,
and heaven, and heaven and nature sing.

2 Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!
Let all their songs employ,
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

3 No more let sins and sorrows grow,
nor thorns infest the ground;
he comes to make his blessings flow
far as the curse is found,
far as the curse is found,
far as, far as the curse is found.

4 He rules the world with truth and grace,
and makes the nations prove
the glories of his righteousness
and wonders of his love,
and wonders of his love,
and wonders, wonders of his love.

***BENEDICTION**

POSTLUDE

Bring a Torch, Jeanette Isabella

arr. Chapman

The service of worship concludes after the postlude. The music can be enjoyed or used as an opportunity for prayer. You may remain seated; if you wish to depart, please do so quietly and without disturbing those who choose to stay.

∞ THE CHANCEL FLOWERS ∞

The flowers are given today to the glory of God and in loving memory of
Dr. & Mrs. John M. Pitman, Jr., Reverend. F. W. Pitman, John M. Pitman, Sr.,
Catherine P. Pitman, Mary Sue Pitman Aldridge, Mary L. Pitman, Ella Pitman Jones,
and Lawrence C. Pitman, Jr., by Dr. John M. Pitman, III and Mrs. Mary Bissell Pitman,
Second Lieutenant John M. Pitman, IV, Annamaria Pitman, and Bert Pitman.

∞ THOSE SERVING IN WORSHIP THIS EVENING ∞

PASTORS

John E. Morgan, Pastor

Pam Hrcir, Covenant Pastor for Congregational Care

MUSIC MINISTRY

Christopher Bechtler, Director of Music Ministries

Norman Elton, Organist and Director of Westminster Ringers

Chancel Choir

GREETERS

Cherie Wodarski

USHERS

Tom Cobb, Ruth Cobb, Megan Davis, Joan Seamon, Dave Littell, JD Due, Shanna Due, John Due,
Sam Due

CANDLE LIGHTERS

Kai Salud and Katie Bechtler

AUDIO AND VIDEO TECHNICIAN

John Schoenberger

∞ SUNDAY IN WORSHIP ∞

1st Sunday of Christmas • December 31, 2023

Please join us for a service of Lessons and Carols.

***9:30am service is live-streamed on mywpc.org.**

****11:00am service is broadcast on FM93.5 The Burg and AM740**



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❧ **WORDS OF WELCOME AND INFORMATION** ❧

- **Welcome to Williamsburg Presbyterian Church!** Any Usher (designated with a name tag) will be glad to answer your questions, help you find your way around, or help you find ways to connect with the ministries and people in this community of faith. Please feel free to ask an usher for large-print worship bulletins, directions to the restrooms, coat racks or access ramps.
- **If you would like more information about WPC**, please visit the church website at mywpc.org and subscribe to receive news from the church office via email.
- **For those of you with a T-coil option** installed in your hearing aid, our sanctuary includes two loop systems allowing you to better understand the spoken word. Although you may find adequate reception in many pew seating locations on the main floor, the highest signal levels will be between the two lines shown in the photo (4th-6th rows) and extends from the center aisle to the pew divider in each row.
- **The Christian Education Ministry provides worship bags for children to use during the worship service.** You will find them hanging on a rack outside the side door to the sanctuary. The worship bags include information, activities, books, worship bulletins, and family supplements to help connect children and families with the story of Christmas and God with Us. These bags also include manipulatives which help children connect to other parts of the service such as music, the confession, and prayers at a level they can understand. Please return the worship bags after the service.

