



The Worship of God

The 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent | Festival of Lessons and Carols

December 17, 2023 | 10:00a

Inspired by the bold and boundless hospitality of Jesus, we are “open to all,” which means we welcome and accept all people into the life of our Church without regard to race, gender, sexual orientation, age, economic status, political affiliation, physical or mental capacity, or religious belief. We believe that God’s call is given to all people, and we embrace the Spirit that continues to cross boundaries in order to unite the world.

Masks are encouraged but not required for anyone. We encourage you to make the best decision for yourself and your family.

Childcare is available for children ages birth – kindergarten. Please see a greeter for more information.  
Worship activities for children are available in the Narthex.

### Prelude

“Joy to the World”

“Hark, the Herald Angels Sing”

“Sinfonia” (from *Messiah*)

Dr. Matthew Manwarren and String Ensemble

arr. Anna Laura Page

arr. Neil Harmon

George Frideric Handel

### Call to Worship and Bidding Prayer

Rev. Dr. Ben Boswell

### \*Carol

“Once In Royal David’s City”

IRBY

Evie Steude, *soloist*: Lord, who left the highest heaven for a homeless human birth  
and, a child within a stable, came to share his life on earth  
with your grace and mercy bless all who suffer homelessness.

Chancel 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: For he 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 feeleth for our sadness, and he shareth in our gladness.**

**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 light shall wait around.**

### \*Lighting the Candle of Love

Mary, Russ, Lydia, and Vivienne Behler

Leader: This is the day the Lord has made,  
the time to hear the story of salvation,  
to listen for the rustle of angels’ wings,  
and to run to the manger to see a newborn baby.  
Listen, those who have ears to hear.  
Look, those who have eyes to see.  
Behold the dawning of amazing grace!

**People: O God, give us the humbleness of the shepherds  
who had ears to hear and eyes to see,  
in the cold December darkness,  
the coming of light and the Advent of Love!**

*(Lighting the Candle of Love.)*



the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.” The Lord God said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?” The man said, “The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate.” Then the Lord God said to the woman, “What is this that you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent tricked me, and I ate.”

Leader: The story of God for the people of God,  
**People: Thanks be to God.**

**\*Carol**

“One Person Changed Every Life”

**Not satisfied with what you gave,  
your people sought to be like you.  
Those early humans disobeyed —  
their story is our story, too.**

**Then, God, in love you sent your Son,  
for as in Adam we did fall,  
so through the faithfulness of One,  
salvation was your gift to all.**

GIFT OF LOVE  
Carolyn Winfrey Gillette

**Second Lesson: Genesis 12:1-5**

Carla Hines

Now the Lord said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.” So Abram went, as the Lord had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. Abram took his wife Sarai and his brother’s son Lot, and all the possessions that they had gathered, and the persons whom they had acquired in Haran; and they set forth to go to the land of Canaan.

Leader: The story of God for the people of God,  
**People: Thanks be to God.**

**\*Carol**

“Hail to the Lord’s Anointed”

**Hail to the Lord's Anointed,  
great David's greater Son!  
Hail, in the time appointed,  
his reign on earth begun!  
He comes to break oppression,  
to set the captive free;  
to take away transgression,  
and rule in equity.**

**He shall come down like showers  
upon the fruitful earth;  
and love, joy, and hope, like flowers,  
spring in his path to birth.  
Before him on the mountains,  
shall peace, the herald, go,  
and righteousness, in fountains,  
from hill to valley flow.**

TOURS



### Third Lesson: Isaiah 40:1-5

Davis Wielunski

Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins. A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

Leader: The story of God for the people of God,

**People: Thanks be to God.**

### Anthem

Chancel Choir

"And the Glory of the Lord" from *Messiah*

George Frideric Handel

And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.

### Fourth Lesson: Isaiah 11:1-4, 6-9

Seth Pilz

A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of its roots. The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide by what his ears hear; but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.

The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

Leader: The story of God for the people of God,

**People: Thanks be to God.**

### Anthem

Chancel Choir with McKenzie Coleman, soloist

"When God's Time Had Ripened"

Alfred Fedak

When God's time had ripened, Mary's womb bore fruit,  
scion of the Godhead, sprung from Jesse's root:  
So the true Vine branches from the lily's stem,  
the Rose without blemish blooms and Bethlehem.

More than mind can fathom, limit or untwine,  
this mysterious yoking, human and divine,  
but what reason fetters faith at length unlocks,  
and wise hearts discover truth in paradox.

As the bread of heaven, that we might be fed,  
chose a manger cradle in the House of bread,  
so has life Eternal mingled in the womb  
with our mortal nature to confound the tomb.

For this swaddled infant in a humble place  
holds our hope of glory and our means of grace;  
in the love and enfleshed here dawns the world's rebirth,  
promise of salvation, pledge of peace on earth.

**Fifth Lesson: Luke 1:26-35, 38**

Sofia Bartholomew

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God."

Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

Leader: The story of God for the people of God,

**People: Thanks be to God.**

**Anthem**

Chancel Choir with Dan Wielunski, piano and Shanka Pettis, soloist

"Gospel Magnificat"

*Patti Drennan*

Oh, my soul magnifies the Lord.  
Oh, my soul magnifies the Lord, Holy and Mighty Lord,  
for my spirit rejoices in God my savior.

God has seen in me a humble servant. Now generations will call me blessed,  
for God has done great things for me, and holy is God's name.  
God gave food to the hungry with food to eat and banished all the rich away.  
The promise of God's mercy fills me with joy today!

Oh, my soul magnifies the Lord.  
Oh, my soul magnifies the Lord, Holy and Mighty Lord, for my spirit rejoices in God my savior.  
Oh, my soul magnifies the Lord.  
God my savior glorified.

Oh, my spirit rejoices, my soul magnifies the Lord!  
God, my Savior glorify.  
Savior be glorified.  
God, my Savior glorify!

**Sixth Lesson: Luke 2:1-7**

Scott Crowder

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. 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. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. 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.

Leader: The story of God for the people of God,

**People: Thanks be to God.**

**\*Carol**

“O Little Town of Bethlehem”

FOREST GREEN

**O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!  
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by;  
yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light.  
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.**

**For Christ is born of Mary, and, gathered all above  
while mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wond’ring love.  
O morning stars, together proclaim the holy birth,  
and praises sing to God the King and peace to all the earth.**

**Seventh Lesson: Luke 2:8-16**

Eliza McClelland

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom God favors!” When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger.

Leader: The story of God for the people of God,

**People: Thanks be to God.**

**Anthem**

Chancel Choir  
Craig Courtney

“Festival Gloria”

Gloria!  
Glória in excélsis Deo  
et in terra pax homínibus bonæ voluntátis.  
Laudámus te,  
benedícimus te,  
adorámus te,  
glorificámus te,  
Laudámus te.  
Gloria!

*Translation:*

*Glory!  
Glory to God in the highest,  
and on earth peace to people of good will.  
We praise you,  
we bless you,  
we adore you,  
we glorify you.  
Glory!*

## Eighth Lesson: Matthew 2:1-12

Kurtis Wilson

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, scholars from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage." When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet: 'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.'" Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage." When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

Leader: The story of God for the people of God,

**People: Thanks be to God.**

### \*Carol

"The First Noel"

THE FIRST NOEL

**The first Noel 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:*

**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]**

## Eighth Lesson, Continued: Matthew 2:13-18

Bethany Johnson

Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, "Out of Egypt I have called my son."

When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the scholars, he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah:

"A voice was heard in Ramah,  
wailing and loud lamentation,  
Rachel weeping for her children;  
she refused to be consoled, because they are no more."

Leader: The story of God for the people of God,

**People: Thanks be to God.**



## Solo

David Young  
15th CENTURY TUNE

### “Coventry Carol”

Lully, lullay, thou little tiny child. Bye-bye, lully, lullay.  
Oh, sisters two, how may we do to persevere this day?  
To this poor youngling for whom we do sing, Bye-bye, lulle, lullay.

Herod, the King, in his raging, charged he hath this day  
his soldiers in their strength and might all children young to slay.

Then woe is me, poor Child, for Thee  
and every mourn and say, for at thy parting nor say nor sing, Bye-bye, lulle, lullay.

And when the stars ingather do, in their far venture stay,  
then smile as dreaming, Little One, Bye-bye, lulle, lullay.

## Ninth Lesson: John 1:1-14

Grant Kinghorn

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a parent’s only son, full of grace and truth.

Leader: The story of God for the people of God,

**People: Thanks be to God.**

## Invitation to Offering

Rev. Carrie Veal

*There are several ways to give:  
scan the QR code below or drop your offering in the plate.*



## Offertory Anthem

“Pastorale”

Dr. Matthew Manwarren  
Joseph Clokey

## \*Presentation of Gifts and the Doxology

“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”

MENDELSSOHN

**Christ, by highest heaven adored,  
Christ, the everlasting Lord,  
late in time behold him come,  
offspring of the Virgin's womb:  
veiled in flesh the Godhead see;  
hail th'incarnate Deity,  
pleased with us in flesh to dwell,  
Jesus, our Immanuel.  
Hark! the herald angels sing,  
“Glory to the newborn King.”**

**\*Prayer of Dedication**

Rev. Carrie Veal

**\*Closing Carol**

“Angels We Have Heard on High”

GLORIA

**Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o'er the plains,  
and the mountains in reply echoing their joyous strains:**

*Refrain:*

**Gloria, in excelsis Deo!**

**Gloria, in excelsis Deo!**

**Shepherds, why this jubilee?  
Why your joyous strains prolong?  
What the gladsome tidings be  
which inspire your heav'nly song? [Refrain]**

**Come to Bethlehem and see  
Him whose birth the angels sing;  
come, adore on bended knee  
Christ the Lord, the new-born King. [Refrain]**

**Christmas Benediction**

Rev. Dr. Ben Boswell

**Postlude**

“God Rest Ye Merry”

Dr. Matthew Manwarren

arr. Alfred Fedak

***If you are our guest today, please connect with a  
minister after worship and receive a Welcome bag.***

***Childcare for children ages birth to kindergarten will be provided until noon.***



String Ensemble:  
David Strassberg, Violin 1  
Kirsten Allen, Violin 2  
Elda Franklin, Viola  
Henadz Shepiotkin, Cello



Audio/Video Team Members are Wes Cobb, Joe Kuhlmann,  
Hannah Combs, Alicia Dunn, Eric Roberts, and volunteers.



We are affiliated with [allianceofbaptists.org](http://allianceofbaptists.org)  Alliance  
of Baptists

## HOW TO JOIN MYERS PARK BAPTIST CHURCH

Becoming a member of Myers Park Baptist is as simple as filling out a Joining Card. To receive a card or learn more, contact Rev. Carrie Veal at [cveal@myersparkbaptist.org](mailto:cveal@myersparkbaptist.org).



**CHRISTMAS EVE**

10:00 am  
Morning Service

5:30 pm  
Music of Christmas

6:00 pm  
Candlelight Service

The poster features a dark blue background with a large, colorful circular graphic on the right. The graphic is a mosaic of various colors (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple, brown) with a white dove in the center, symbolizing the Holy Spirit. Three gold starburst graphics are scattered around the circle.



**WE'RE  
GLAD YOU  
ARE HERE**

Connect with us  
in one easy step.

Learn more about us  
and how to get  
involved.

Just point the camera  
on your phone at the  
QR Code to access  
the items listed here.

- EVENTS
- GUESTS
- GIVE
- PRAY
- WEBSITE

MYERS PARK  
BAPTIST  
CHURCH

The graphic includes a QR code and a small illustration of a church building at the bottom left. A horizontal bar with a rainbow-like color gradient is positioned above the church illustration.

## Our Covenant

We, the members of the Myers Park Baptist Church, are a people on a journey of faith. By God's grace we are experiencing love through Jesus Christ and in the community of the faithful. We are discovering in this experience our freedom to become new creatures and our responsibility to be faithful stewards of our lives and of this world.

We will be open to all new light, strengthened by God and each other in our faith. We will sustain a critical examination of Scripture, belief and ritual as interpreters of God's active presence in the world. We will accept controversy as a reality of life together and an opportunity for growth toward maturity. We covenant to be a community of God's New Creation and affirm that we are open to all and closed to none.

We covenant together to nurture this church as a community of faith and as an instrument for reconciliation in the world: by worship, by Christian education, by the dedication of our personal and material resources and by all the other ways we express the significance of our lives with God and one another.

We covenant together to be priests celebrating God's presence in community and in the world, believing we are participants in God's kingdom on Earth.

### OUR MINISTERS

**Rev. Dr. Benjamin Boswell**

Senior Minister

**Rev. Carrie Veal**

Executive Minister

**Rev. Tara Gibbs**

Associate Minister of Spiritual Growth

**Rev. Dr. JJ Flag**

Associate Minister of Pastoral Care & Justice

**J. Kevin Gray**

Minister of Music & Worship



## MYERS PARK BAPTIST CHURCH

Inclusivity | Spirituality | Community | Justice

*We occasionally take photographs during our worship service. If you would prefer not to be included, please contact Laura Geer | Communications Director | [lgeer@myersparkbaptist.org](mailto:lgeer@myersparkbaptist.org).*

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