

Order of Worship
Sunday, December 22, 2024
Central Presbyterian Church
Bristol, VA

- * All who are able are asked to stand.
Please silence your cell phones.

CCLI #1230512

Pre-Service Advent Music

Love Has Come
He Is Born
What Child Is This?
Away In a Manger

Cherwein
Hayes
Purvis
Martin

Gathering for Worship

Chiming of the Hour

Prelude *Of the Father's Love Begotten*

Thyngerson

Welcome and Announcements

Introit *Advent Candle Song* Lezy
Candles glowing, promise showing joy that fills our very soul. Grace abounding, hymns resounding, Christ restores and makes us whole. Mercies gleaming, wonders beaming, justice streaming, Christ redeeming, Christ restores and makes us whole! Christ restores and makes us whole!

Candles glowing, promise showing love that makes the world anew, shines in glory, tells the story, Christ's own love will see us through. With the outcast and unwelcome Christ is steadfast, brings us all home. Christ's own love will see us through! Christ's own love will see us through!

Advent Candle Lighting Members of the Choir

- * Opening Hymn #118 *While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks*
**While shepherds watched their flocks by night,
all seated on the ground, the angel of the Lord came down,
and glory shone around, and glory shone around.**

“Fear not,” said he, for mighty dread had seized their troubled mind: “Glad tidings of great joy I bring to you and humankind, to you and humankind.”

“To you, in David's town this day, is born of David's line the Savior, who is Christ the Lord, and this shall be the sign, and this shall be the sign:”

“The heavenly babe you there shall find to human view displayed, all humbly wrapped in swathing bands, and in a manger laid, and in a manger laid.”

“Thus spoke the seraph, and forthwith appeared a shining throng of angels praising God, who thus addressed their joyful song, addressed their joyful song:”

“All glory be to God on high, and to the earth be peace; good will to all from highest heaven begin and never cease, begin and never cease.”

- * Call to Confession
- * Prayer of Confession (Unison)

Heavenly and Loving God, as we consider on Joseph's role here at Christmas, we confess our own struggles with doubt and fear when faced with the unknown. Like Joseph, we sometimes hesitate to fully trust in Your plan, even when it seems perplexing. We think that we can figure things out on our own and only look to you when it becomes too hard. Forgive us for our lack of faith and for wanting to rely on our own understanding instead of fully submitting to Your will. Grant us the courage to follow Your guidance, even when it challenges our expectations, and help us to embrace the mystery of Your divine work in our lives and in our world. In Jesus' name we seek your mercy, Amen.

(Silence)

- * Assurance of Pardon
...friends, believe the good news of the gospel:
In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

- * Passing of the Peace

- * Gloria Patri Hymn #582

**Glory to God, whose goodness shines on me,
and to the Son, whose grace has pardoned me,
and to the Spirit, whose love has set me free.**

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen.

World without end, without end. Amen.

World without end, without end. Amen.

World without end, without end. Amen.

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen.

Hearing the Word

Children's Message

Anthem

Glory to the Newborn King

Larson

Sermon

The Gift of Good News to Joseph

Rev. Ann Aichinger

Scripture

Matthew 1:18-25

- * Affirmation of Faith (Unison) from The Declaration of Faith
We do not fully comprehend who God is or how God works. God's God's reality far exceeds all our words can say. The Lord's requirements are not always what we think is best. The Lord's care for us is not always what we want. God comes to us on his own terms and is able to do far more than we ask or think. God makes himself known in Jesus Christ. Jesus' involvement in the human condition is God's involvement. His compassion for all kinds of people is God's compassion. His demand for justice, truth, and faithfulness is God's demand. His willingness to suffer rejection is God's willingness.

Jesus' love for the very people who reject him is God's love. Jesus Christ stands at the center of the biblical record. The Bible is the account of God's word and action in history, together with God's people's response in faith. It is the story of the one God, who is the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. That story is still unfolding and in faith we make it our own. It forms our memory and our hope. It tells us who we are and what we are to do. To retell it is to declare what we believe.

Responding to the Word

Prayers of the People and 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.

Call to Offering

Offertory

In Dulci Jubilo

Hughes

- * Doxology - tune is #609

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;

Praise God, all creatures here below: Alleluia! Alleluia!

Praise God, the source of all our gifts!

Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts!

Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

- * Prayer of Dedication

Sending Out

- * Hymn #146 *Gentle Mary Laid Her Child*

**Gentle Mary laid her child lowly in a manger;
there he lay, the undefiled, to the world a stranger.
Such a babe in such a place, can he be the Savior?
Ask the saved of all the race who have found his favor.**

**Angels sang about his birth; wise men sought and found him;
heaven's star shone brightly forth, glory all around him.
Shepherds saw the wondrous sight, heard the angels singing;
all the plains were lit that night; all the hills were ringing.**

**Gentle Mary laid her child lowly in a manger;
he is still the undefiled, but no more a stranger,
Son of God, of humble birth, beautiful the story;
praise his name in all the earth; hail the King of glory!**

- * Charge and Benediction
- * Response *Love Has Come* French melody/Bible
- * Postlude *Lift Up Your Heads, You Mighty Gates* Martin

The Christmas Joy offering envelopes and information are in your bulletin. The theme this year is “Preparing the Way” and the money will go to help retired ministers and certain retired employees.

