

In response to God's love and grace, through Jesus Christ,
we commit to learning, proclaiming, and living the love of God.



**PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH**

Third Sunday of Advent



The Order of Worship for December 15, 2024
10:00 am Worship Service

HOPE PEACE JOY LOVE

* *Please stand as able*

Centering Thought

Works of justice follow the road less traveled of Advent's hope to pursue solutions for difficult problems. Hope comes through works of justice rather than simply performing works of charity.

Welcome and Brief Announcements

The Prelude *Intermezzo on Carol of the Bells* John Dixon
Ken Shockey, organ

*The Call to Worship

Leader: You came to us, Word made flesh, to show us what it means to love.

People: You came to us, Word made flesh, to teach us how to serve.

Leader: You came to us, Word made flesh, to remind us to clothe the naked and feed the hungry.

People: Come to us now, Holy Wisdom, Holy Word. Love us, teach us, and feed us as we worship you together now.

All: Alleluia! Amen!

*Hymn #102 *Savior of the Nations, Come*

*The Prayer of Confession (Unison)

Gracious God, Your Son Jesus came not to be served, but to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many. He is our Good Shepherd, whose leadership is defined by the power of love rather than the love of power. Jesus called us to follow Him, to lead as He led, and to serve as He served, showing others the Kingdom way of life. We need Your forgiveness for thoughtless words spoken without love, for hurried decisions made without Your wisdom, for destructive moments when anger tore us apart, and for selfish motives when our power wounded others.

By Your mercy, focus our eyes on You, Lord Jesus, and tune our ears to Your Holy Spirit. Let our greatest passion be compassion, our greatest strength be love, so that in leading, we never fail to follow You. Through Christ our Lord, we pray in silence. (*Silent prayer*)

*The Assurance of Peace

Leader: friends! Believe the Good News! By the merits of Jesus, we are forgiven and restored in God's everlasting love and favor.

All: Thanks be to God!

*The Gloria #583

Gloria, Gloria!

Gloria, gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, gloria, alleluia, alleluia!

The Lighting of the Third Candle of Advent

Reader: Watch and wait for Christ's coming! Light candles of hope, peace, joy and love, remembering the promises of God with prayer. We light this candle in hope. We light this candle for peace. We light this candle in joy! Rejoice! For our Lord is coming into the darkness of oppression's exile to lead us home, as we hear in Isaiah 35:1-10:

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God.

Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you."

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for

joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp, the grass shall become reeds and rushes. A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God's people; no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Let us pray:

ALL: O Lord, our redeemer, you lead us from languishing in sorrow's shadows into laughter's joy over your abundant restoration. Thank you, Jesus, for leading us home along your way. Amen.

Carol: #105 *People, Look East*

Youth Pageant *Tobias' Story*
by Carolyn Peters / adapted by Theresa Cho

The Prayer for Illumination (Unison)
O Lord, your Word is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. Give us grace to receive your truth in faith and love, and strength to follow on the path you set before us; through Jesus Christ, Amen.

The First Scripture Reading Zephaniah 3:14-20

Anthem *An Advent Alleluia* Douglas Wagner

*The Gospel Reading Luke 1:26-38

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord!

All: Thanks Be to God!

The Message

-Pastor Robert Cook

Without Our Imagination Christmas Isn't Possible

The Pastoral Prayer

The Lord's Prayer Unison)

*The Doxology #606

The Dedication of our Offerings

*Antiphon #88 *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* (verses 5 & 6)

*The Blessing

The Postlude

While by Our Sheep We Watched

Gilbert M. Martin

Ken Shockey, organ

O Antiphons

The beloved carol "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" is based on the "O Antiphons" that were sung at vespers during the week before Christmas. Their roots date at least to the reign of Charlemagne (768-814). Set to an ancient plainchant, both text and tune are the fruits of 19th-century efforts to reclaim Christian treasures from pre-Reformation sources.

*Please join us for Coffee & Fellowship in the
Social Room after Worship.*

All Are Welcome!

Hosted by Care Cell #3 - Candace, Polly, Ben



Greencastle Presbyterian Church

CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 24

4:30 PM – Family-Friendly Worship Service

6:45 PM – Musical Prelude

7:00 PM – Candlelight Worship Service with Communion

PRAYER CONCERNS

June Marshall	Rowan Stotler
Nancy McIntyre	Vasilija Milanovic
Patti Sechrist	Jane Everetts
Alan Shope	Sandra Meadows
Tim Walck	Frank & Tracey Toston
Mary Lou Riddle	Bill Horst
Steven Bishop	Colin Rinker
Mindy Grosh	Archer Hohl
Michael Paylor	Leona Cain
Linda Pittman	Mary Steel
Rachael, Christopher & Anna Lee Massieu	Sally Snyder
Mary Buhl	Chelsea White
Cullen Gaston	George Price
Bob & Sandy Seidel	Tim Reed
The Gagne family	Lynne Leap
Bill & Kathy Kendall	Gail Guyton
Aaron Frick	Skylar Sites
Ray Spitz	Cheryl Luger
Sue Angle	Marvin & Nancy Rice
Rev. Bill Beck	Jon Davis
Caroline Robinson	David Myers
Dian Bishop	Liz McCarty
Dan Patton	Dot Wilson
The Hammond family	Cameron Kingsley
Bethany Yeager	Becky Sucke
Penny Mohler	Virginia Vallillo
Cathy Thomas	Frank Marconi
Dominic Frampton	Robin Wingert
Sue Lum	Kenny Reed

Keep in prayer the family of **Mary Steel** who passed away on December 9, 2024. We ask for the peace of Christ to surround and embrace her family in their time of mourning.

Good and gracious God, we surrender all worries and concerns to you, knowing that we are your beloved children. Our faith requires we rest in your infinite mercies.

Welcoming Our Visitors on Christmas Eve

We are privileged to receive visitors to our Sunday morning services several times each month. Sharing hospitality is such a wonderful gift as it makes our visitors feel at home and very welcome. Christmas Eve services are important times for us to go the extra mile with hospitality. The Christmas Story is the story of unexpected guests and strangers coming together to celebrate the birth of Jesus. This continues every Christmas Eve. So, here are a few suggested ways to help our visitors feel welcome

1. Be aware of guests and visitors. They may never have been in the church before. You can reach out, welcome them and help them find a seat. You can point out where the nursery is and the location of restrooms. Offer a welcome brochure and a visitor's card as well.
2. Don't forget to extend a welcome and "*Merry Christmas*" greeting to anyone in the pews you may not know. You may even want to offer to introduce them to the Pastor after worship, though only if the guest feels comfortable with this.
3. Use the time before and after worship to be hospitable. Because of the high turnout and Christmas atmosphere regular attendees may spend more time talking and socializing together prior to or following the service. This can be a very lonely time for first-time guests who might have come by themselves. As congregants are chatting with friends and family, they should also make a point of introducing themselves and sharing Christmas cheer with new faces. Remember that while this service might be highlight of the year for church members, for guests it might be the only service they attend all year.
4. During Holy Communion, be sure to remind everyone that God's table is open to all and that all are invited to partake whether they are long-term members or first-time guests.
5. Encourage them to come back for Sunday worship services and be sure to invite them to Coffee & Fellowship.

THIS WEEK AT A GLANCE

Sunday 12/15 THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

10:00 am **Worship /** Coffee & Fellowship
2:00 pm Dementia Caregivers Meeting
5:45 pm Caroling, Cocoa & Cookies
6:00 pm Youth Group

Wednesday 12/18 9:00 am Greencastle-Antrim Food Pantry
9:00 am Wednesday Prayer Circle
6:00 pm Bell Choir
7:00 pm Chancel Choir
7:00 pm Ladies AA Meeting

Thursday 12/19 6:30 pm Board of Deacon Meeting

Saturday 12/21 WINTER SOLSTICE (First Day of Winter)

Sunday 12/22 FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

10:00 am **Worship /** Coffee & Fellowship

SERVING THE CHURCH

Preaching..... Rev. Dr. Robert Cook
Liturgist Brooklyn Barnhart
Musicians Dr. J. Frederick Davison, Ken Shockey
Acolyte
Audio/Video Tech..... Jim Papa
Closer..... Paul Sauder

CHANCEL CHOIR

Randall Ackerman, Margery Benson, Bobbi Biesecker, Becky Fic,
Barb Grane, Donna Grosh, Brian Keck, Barry Leap, Patsy Lee,
JoAnne Lewis, Tom Thomas, Rebecca Wertime, Dot Wilson

BELL CHOIR

Mary Ann Ackerman, Fred Davison, Patti Divelbiss,
Brian Keck, Kelly Kerstetter, Barry Leap,
Liam Papa, Dot Wilson