



Christmas Eve

CANDLELIGHT SERVICE

Greencastle Presbyterian Church

DECEMBER 24, 2025

Prelude Music 6:45 pm

Worship 7:00 pm

A Word of Welcome

The heavens tell of your glory this evening, O God.

*All creation sings for joy. For tonight we celebrate a birth
that took place centuries ago, that night still brings to each of us
great light and the promise of abundant life.*

*We come this evening to experience the awe; to be amazed;
and to hear the story again and make it our own.*

*We come seeking the love and acceptance that Jesus our Christ promises,
to make the story of Christ's birth transformational in us
and to create in us new life as well.*

PRELUDE

The First Noel

Traditional English arr. Cindy Blevins

Ding Dong! Merrily On High

French Carol arr. Cindy Blevins

Brian Keck, *baritone horn*

Barry Leap and Fred Davison, *trombone*

Good King Wenceslas

words by J.M. Neale, melody from *Pias Cantiones* (1582)

Allan Wilson, *tenor*

Robert Bond, *baritone*

Libbi Brewer, *soprano*

Still, Still, Still

Traditional German, arr. Cathy Moglebust

Carol of the Bells

Mykola Leontovich, arr. Cathy Moglebust

GPC Bell Choir

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

Es ist ein Ros 1599, arr. John Carter

Trevor Timmons, *organ*

Welcome By Pastor Robert Cook

The Lighting of the Advent Wreath

*THE CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: We count it in mere hours now.

All: Soon the first pains of labor will be felt.

Leader: Soon the Light will shine in the darkness,

All: Soon the Christ child will be born anew in our hearts.

Leader: Soon God will once again break into our lives, coming in a way that is expected yet unusual, challenging our expectations

All: And calling us to see life differently.

*Carol #140

Once in Royal David's City

(vs.1 solo, vs. 2 choir, vs.3-4 congregation)

Marisabel Cordova, *soprano*

*THE OPENING PRAYER (Unison)

Emmanuel, God-with-us most of all tonight, your light lifts up our hearts, our spirits, and our voices. We give you thanks for your birth long ago and presence with us always. Your hope is more trustworthy than our promises. Your peace is deeper than our prayers. Your joy teaches us to sing even when we want to cry. Your love is wider than the chorus of the galaxies, and yet your Star shines on us now in this church, which has become a manger. Amen.

*Carol #133 *O Come, All Ye Faithful*

*THE PRAYER OF CONFESSION (Unison)

Merciful God, we confess that in our waiting for Christmas, we have sometimes forgotten the One we are waiting for. We have been distracted by busyness, drawn to the glitter more than the glory. Forgive us, Lord. Restore in us the wonder of the shepherds, the faith of Mary, and the joy of the angels, so that we may greet You with praise when You come. Amen.
(Silent Prayer)

*THE ASSURANCE OF PARDON AND PEACE

Leader: Friends! Believe the Good News! In Jesus we are forgiven and set free to live in peace with God and each other!

All: Thanks be to God!

*THE GLORIA #583 *Gloria, Gloria*

Gloria, gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Gloria, gloria, alleluia, Alleluia!

Marisabel Cordova, *soprano* Trevor Timmons, *piano* (3:15)

There is a flower sprung of a tree, the root thereof is called Jesse.
'Tis indeed a flower of Precious Price for there is none such in all of Paradise.
This is the flower sprung of a tree the root thereof is called Jesse.
It is fresh and fair of hue, it never fadeth but is ever new.
This is the flower sprung of a tree the root thereof is called Jesse.
There is a flower sprung of a tree, the root thereof is called Jesse,
the seed thereof, the seed was God's command sown it was by his own hand.
And did bloom this blissful flower Just beside sweet Mary's bower.*
Come everyone in our country, Honor the flower of good Jesse.

**a rustic dwelling*

THE FIRST SCRIPTURE READING

Isaiah 9:2-7

ANTHEM *The Hands That First Held Mary's Child*

Dan Forrest

Jane Peatling, *cello*

The hands that first held Mary's child were hard from working wood.
From boards they sawed and planed and filed and splinters they withstood.
This day they gripped no tool of steel, they drove no iron nail,
but cradled from the head to heel our Lord, newborn and frail.

When Joseph marveled at the size of that small breathing frame,
and gazed upon those bright new eyes and spoke the infants name,
the angel's words he once had dreamed poured down from heaven's height,
and like the host of stars that beamed blessed earth with welcome light.

"This child shall be Emmanuel, not God upon a throne,
but God with us, Emmanuel, as close as blood and bone."
The tiny form in Joseph's palms confirmed what he had heard,
and from his heart rose hymns and psalms for heaven's human word.

The tools that Joseph laid aside a mob would later lift
and use with anger, fear, and pride to crucify God's gift.
Let us, O Lord, not only hold the child who's born today,
but charged with faith may we be bold to follow in His way.

lyrics by Thomas Traeger

*THE GOSPEL READING

Luke 2:1-20

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord!

All: Thanks be to God!

THE CHRISTMAS EVE MESSAGE

-Pastor Robert Cook

*Carol #119 *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*

*A CHRISTMAS EVE AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We believe in God, the Creator of light and life, who spoke the stars into being and wrapped the world in beauty.

We believe in Jesus Christ, God's Word made flesh, born in humility, welcomed by shepherds, and proclaimed by angels as good news for all people.

We believe that in Christ, God drew near to the brokenhearted, lifted the lowly, and shone light into the world's deepest shadows.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, who still whispers hope into weary hearts, kindles joy in the midst of sorrow, and gathers us into one family of faith.

On this holy night, we rejoice that love has come, light has dawned, and God is with us —now and forever! Amen.

Anthem *Sussex Carol*

Traditional English arr. Elaine Hagenberg

Kaylynn Leap, *clarinet* Jane Peatling, *cello*

On Christmas night all Christians sing, to hear the news the angels bring,
news of great joy, news of great mirth, news of our merciful King's birth.

Then why should men on earth be sad, since our Redeemer made us glad;
when from our sin he set us free, all for to gain our liberty?

When sin departs before his grace then life and health come in its place;
angels and men with joy may sing, all for to see the newborn King.

All out of darkness we have light, which made the angels sing this night,
“Glory to God in highest heaven, now and forevermore,” Amen!

THE PASTORAL PRAYER

*THE DOXOLOGY #606

*THE DEDICATION OF OUR OFFERINGS

All: Giving God, as we recount the story of your gift of a Savior on that night long ago, we remember there were some who said, “*There’s no room*”, and others who responded, “*Come, we’ll make room.*” As we bring our gifts to your altar, which group will be the best fit for each of us? Help us give with a heart of abundance and not one of scarcity! On this holiest of nights, let us dwell with those whose chorus is, “*Come, we’ll make room...*,” remembering your abundant love for us. In the name of our Savior and Redeemer, we pray. Amen.

THE SERVICE OF HOLY COMMUNION

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

Pastor: Let us open our hearts to the Spirit of Christ, born a long time ago, and born again this night in our lives.

All: We open our hearts to God, the Christ birthing now in our lives, and to one another—precious incarnations of Your creation.

Pastor: We give thanks.

All: We thank God joyful!

Pastor: God of humble births and the stars in the heavens, we thank You for Your persistent love for all creation. We thank You for those who can see You and make connections that lead toward meaning. We thank You for those who are wise—who will journey out to strange lands and unknown territories in search for truth or to bring justice. We thank You for Your way of breathing life into us, and of helping us to take deep breaths when we need them.

All: God of love, creativity, novelty, joy, meaning, peace and hope, in spite of all the challenges on earth and in our personal lives, we give thanks for Your persistence throughout the universe.

Pastor: We rejoice in Your Word through Jesus the Christ, who was born humbly, who communed with those others called outcast, who lived a complex life that sought justice, who died unfairly, and whose Spirit lives among us still.

Remembering Your boundless love, we offer our praise and proclaim our faith:

All: Christ was born. Christ lived and died. Christ comes again and again into our lives.

Pastor: God, we know that Your Spirit is poured on us and on these elements of bread and juice, and we pray that Your love, peace and justice in the world may be born through us.

All: All praise to You, rejoicing in the Spirit of Jesus Christ, who lives among us, and the Holy Spirit, who binds us together in love. Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER (Unison)

BREAKING THE BREAD

GIVING THE CUP

[Communion notes: All are welcome to the table of the Lord. We will serve you in the pew. Ushers will serve those on the end of each pew and you are to serve your neighbor. When all are served the pastor will guide us to share together. We will do likewise with the cup]

THE PRAYER AFTER HOLY COMMUNION (Unison)

Son of Mary, Son of God, we have joined the worship of the angels; may we never lose that heavenly vision. Like the shepherds, we have rejoiced at the news of your birth; help us to proclaim that message in word and deed, To your praise and glory. Amen.

Ushers will fan through the congregation lighting candles on the ends of the pew. Please share the light with your neighbor. Please keep your lit candle upright, to avoid dripping wax. It is also important to keep them away from anything flammable: bulletins, music, scarfs, coats, long hair, etc. At the conclusion of the service, make sure your candle is extinguished. Place them in the metal receptacle by the doors as you exit.

*The Candlelight Carol *Silent Night*

1) 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.

2) 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!"

3) 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.

4) 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.

***THE BLESSING**

THE POSTLUDE *The Virgin Mary Had A Baby Boy* arr. Lloyd Larson
Trevor Timmons, *piano*

***May Christmas Eve truly be for you and yours
a wonderful and blessed night!***

MUSICIANS

Dr. J Frederick Davison, Director of Music Ministries

Trevor Timmons, *organ and piano*

Robert Bond, *baritone*

Libbi Brewer, *soprano*

Marisabel Cordova, *soprano*

Paul Grane, *alto sax*

Brian Keck, *baritone horn*

Barry Leap, *trombone*

Kaylynn Leap, *clarinet*

Jane Peatling, *cello*

Allan Wilson, *tenor*

GPC Bell Choir

Mary Ann Ackerman	Danielle Kline
Terry Davis	Barry Leap
Brian Keck	Kaylynn Leap
Kelly Kerstetter	Liam Papa
Berry Kline	Dee Patton

GPC Chancel Choir

Randall Ackerman	Brian Keck
Margery Benson	Danielle Kline
Robert Bond	Barry Leap
Libbi Brewer	Patsy Lee
Marisabel Cordova	Rebecca Wertime
Barbara Grane	Allan Wilson
Donna Grosh	



SERVING THE CHURCH

Rev. Dr. Robert Cook, *Pastor*

Dr. J. Frederick Davison, *Director of Music Ministry*

Chloe Kingsley, *Acolyte*

David Rutherford, *Liturgist*

Communion Servers – Racheal Bowman, Dottie Davison, Fred Davison,
Chelsea Johnston, Chris Johnston, Albert Miller, Dee Patton

Jim Papa, *Audio/Video Technician*