

Sundays

Nursery Care 9:00 a.m.

Breakfast 9:00 a.m.

Christian Education 9:30 a.m.

Worship 10:30 a.m.

Fellowship following service

Youth activities 4:00 p.m.

2701 Rochester Avenue

Iowa City, IA 52245

319-351-2660

www.firstpresidiowacity.org

Welcome to FPC.

Our prayer is that all will be blessed by the Word read and proclaimed as we are bound together by the Spirit as a community of faith.

Children are invited to participate in our worship and welcome as loved, squirmy, laughing, crying children of God. We have busy bags for younger children and binders for young readers to help them in their journey, and a staffed nursery is available for children under 5.

✦ *Please rise, in body or spirit.*

Bold lines are spoken or sung by ***All***. *Non-bold lines* are spoken or sung by one.

Please be seated by a Gathered Community Pad and sign in so that we may have a record of your time with us.



We seek to share the good news of Jesus Christ and his call to the realm of God: the practice of justice, mercy and faith. Our mission is represented by the Celtic cross, a shepherd's crook, the extension of the right arm of fellowship into the world and the church's hospitality toward the world.

24 December 2023

Christmas Eve

Festival of Lessons and Carols

Prelude (~5:50)

Before the Marvel of this Night

Zach Unke

Meditation on It Came Upon a Midnight Clear Craig Phillips

Congregational Carol Sing

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.

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.

Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king,
Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!"
Joyful, all ye nations, rise; join the triumph of the skies;
with the angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king!"

Ave Maria

Charles Gounod

✦ Carol

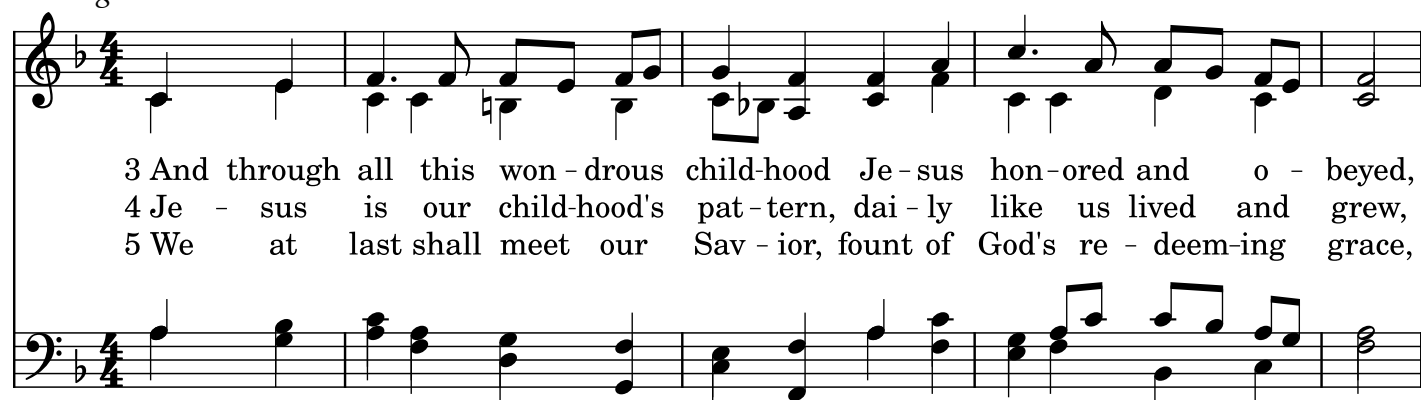
Once in Royal David's City

As is traditional in a service of lessons and carols, we start our service with a solo youth singing the first verse of "Once in Royal David's City." On the second verse, the full choir joins in, and then for subsequent verses the whole congregation sings.

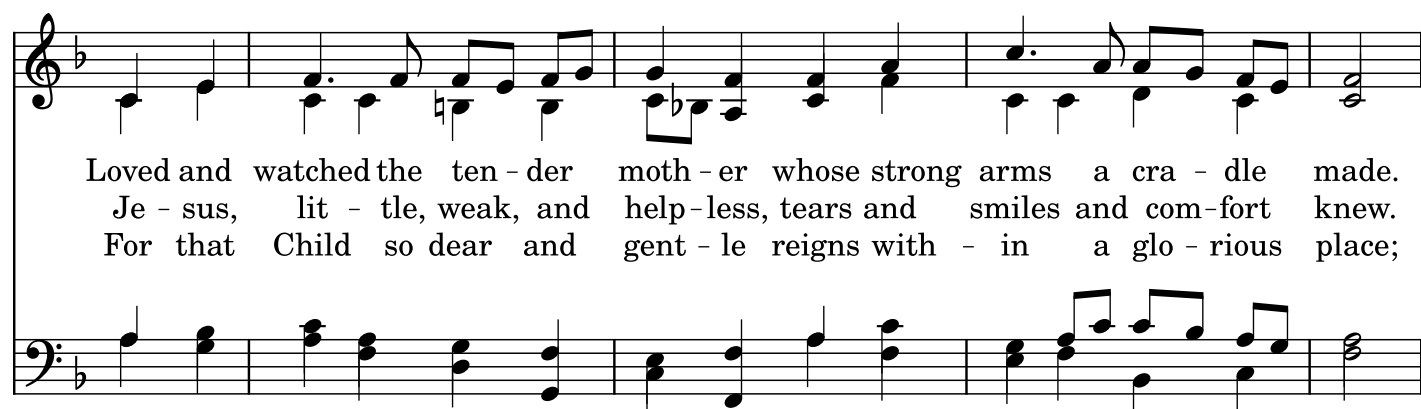
Verse 1 (solo): Once in Roy-al Dav-id's cit-y stood a low-ly cat-tle shed. Where a moth-er laid her ba-by in a man-ger for a bed: Mary was that moth-er mild, Je-sus Christ her lit-tle child.

Verse 2 (choir) Je-sus came to earth from heav-en, who is God and Head of all, Shel-tered in a rus-tic sta-ble, cra-dled in a com-mon stall; With the poor and meek and low-ly lived on earth our Sav-ior ho-ly.

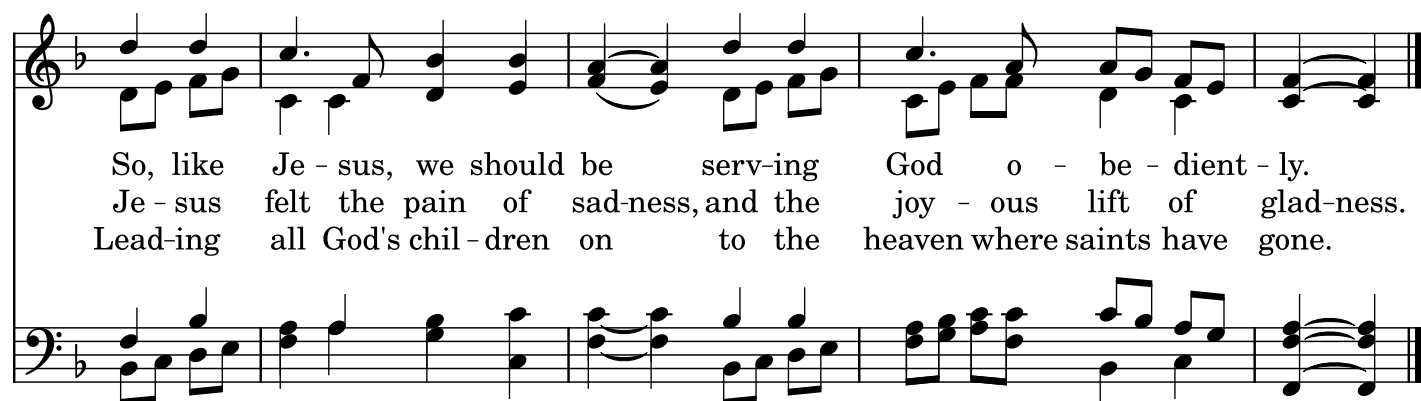
All sing:



3 And through all this won-drous child-hood Je-sus hon-ored and o-beyed,
 4 Je - sus is our child-hood's pat-tern, dai-ly like us lived and grew,
 5 We at last shall meet our Sav-ior, fount of God's re-deem-ing grace,



Loved and watched the ten-der moth-er whose strong arms a cra-dle made.
 Je - sus, lit - tle, weak, and help-less, tears and smiles and com-fort knew.
 For that Child so dear and gent-le reigns with - in a glo-rious place;



So, like Je - sus, we should be serv-ing God o - be - dient - ly.
 Je - sus felt the pain of sad-ness, and the joy - ous lift of glad-ness.
 Lead-ing all God's chil-dren on to the heaven where saints have gone.

✠Bidding Prayer

George Minot

Beloved in Christ, be it this Christmas Eve our care and delight to prepare ourselves to hear again the message of the angels; in heart and mind to go even unto Bethlehem and see this thing which is come to pass, and the Babe lying in a manger. Let us read and mark in Holy Scripture the tale of the loving purposes of God from the first days unto the glorious Redemption brought us by this Holy Child; and let us make this place glad with our carols of praise: But first let us pray for the needs of his whole world; for peace and goodwill over all the earth; for unity and fellowship within the Church he came to build.

And because this of all things would rejoice his heart, let us at this time remember in his name the poor and the helpless, the cold, the hungry and the oppressed; the sick in body and in mind and them that mourn; the lonely and the unloved; the aged and the little children Lastly, let us remember before God all those who rejoice with us, but upon another shore and in a greater light, that multitude which no person can number, whose hope was in the Word made flesh, and with whom, in this Lord Jesus, we for evermore are one. These prayers and praises let us humbly offer up to the throne of heaven, in the words which Christ himself hath taught us:

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

The Almighty God bless us with your grace: Christ give us the joys of everlasting life: and unto the fellowship of the citizens above may the Sovereign of Angels bring us all. **Amen.**

First Reading: God Creates Community

Genesis 2:15-23

Read by Maeleen Thorius

The Lord God took the human and settled him in the garden of Eden to farm it and to take care of it. The Lord God commanded the human, "Eat your fill from all of the garden's trees; but don't eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, because on the day you eat from it, you will die!" Then the Lord God said, "It's not good that the human is alone. I will make him a helper that is perfect for him." So the Lord God formed from the fertile land all the wild animals and all the birds in the sky and brought them to the human to see what he would name them. The human gave each living being its name. The human named all the livestock, all the birds in the sky, and all the wild animals. But a helper perfect for him was nowhere to be found. So the Lord God put the human into a deep and heavy sleep, and took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh over it. With the rib taken from the human, the Lord God fashioned a woman and brought her to the human being. The human said, "This one finally is bone from my bones and flesh from my flesh. She will be called a woman because from a man she was taken."

Carol

Who Would Think That What Was Needed



1 Who would think that what was need-ed to trans-form and save the earth
 2 Shep-herds watch and sag-es won-der, mon-archs scorn and an-gels sing;
 3 Cen-tu-ries of skill and sci-ence span the past from which we move,



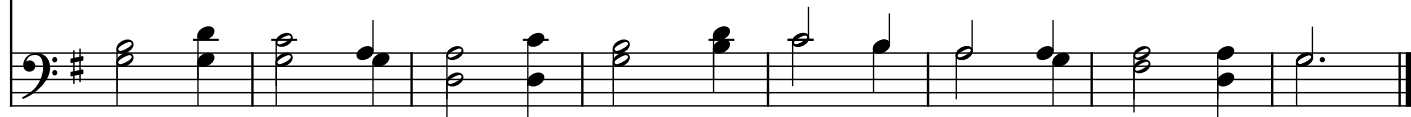
might not be a plan or ar-my proud in pur-pose, proved in worth?
 such a place as none would reck-on hosts a ho-ly, help-less thing;
 yet ex-per-ience ques-tions wheth-er with such progress we im-prove.



Who would think, de-spite de-ri-sion, that a child should lead the way?
 Sta-bled beasts and pass-ing strang-ers watch a ba-by laid in hay:
 In our search for sense and mean-ing, lest our hopes and hu-mor fray,



God sur-pris-es earth with heav-en, com-ing here on Christ-mas Day.
 God sur-pris-es earth with heav-en, com-ing here on Christ-mas Day.
 God sur-pris-es earth with heav-en, com-ing here on Christ-mas Day.



Second Reading: The prophet predicts reconciliation

from Isaiah 11

Read by George Minot

A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his 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. 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. The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den. They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain; for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

Carol 129**Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming (v1-2)**

Lo, how a rose e'er bloom - ing from ten - der stem hath sprung,
I - sa - iah 'twas fore - told it, the rose I have in mind;
of Jes - se's lin - eage com - ing, by faith - ful proph - ets sung.
with Mar - y we be - hold it, the vir - gin moth - er kind.
It came, a flower - et bri - ght a - mid the cold of
To show God's love a - ri - ght she bore for us a
win - ter, when half spent was the night.
Sav - ior, when half spent was the night.

Third Reading: God surprises and comforts Mary

Luke 1:26-35

Read by Debbie Beermann

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.

Carol 112

On Christmas Night All Christians Sing (v 1-2)

On Christ-mas night all Chris-tians sing to hear the news - the
Then why should we on earth - be sad, since our Re - deem - er
an - gels bring; on Christ-mas night all Christians sing, to hear the news-the
made us glad; then why should we on earth be sad, since our Re-deem-er
an - gels bring, news of great joy, news of - great mirth, news of our
made us glad, when from our sin he set us free, all for to
mer - ci - ful - king's birth.
gain our lib - er - ty?

Offertory

On Christmas Eve, we collect money for the Christmas Joy Offering

Offertory Anthem

In the Bleak Midwinter

Harold Darke

✠Offertory Response

OLD HUNDREDTH

To God, all glorious heavenly Light, / to Christ revealed in earthly night
To God the Spirit now we raise / our joyful songs of thankful praise. *Amen*

✠Prayer of Dedication

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.
Amen.

Fourth Reading: God addresses Joseph

Matthew 1:18-24

Read by Alex Voss

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: "Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means, "God is with us." When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife.

Carol 123

It Came Upon the Midnight Clear (v 1-3)



All: It came up - on the mid - night clear, that glo - rious song of old,
Low Voices: Still through the clo - ven skies they come, with peace - ful wings un - furled,
All: Yet with the woes of sin and strife the world has suf - fered long;
 from an - gels bend - ing near the earth, to touch their harps of gold:
 and still their heaven - ly mu - sic floats o'er all the wea - ry world:
 be - neath the heaven - ly hymn have rolled two thou - sand years of wrong;
 "Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heaven's all - gra - cious King":
 a - bove its sad and low - ly plains they bend on hov - ering wing,
 and we at war on earth hear not the tid - ings that they bring;
 the world in sol - emn still - ness lay, to hear the an - gels sing.
 and ev - er o'er its Ba - bel sounds the bless - ed an - gels sing.
 O, hush the noise and cease the strife to hear the an - gels sing!

Fifth Reading: Mary delivers God's Promise

Luke 2:1-7

Read by Ann Burton

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.

Carol 145

What Child Is This (v 1, 3)



High Voices: What child is this who, laid to rest On Ma-ry's lap is sleep-ing? Whom

All: So bring him in - cense, gold, and myrrh; come, one and all, to own him; The



an - gels greet with an-thems sweet, While shep-herds watch are keep - ing?
King of kings sal - va - tion brings; let lo - ving hearts en - throne him.



This, this is Christ the King, Whom shep-herds guard and an - gels sing;
Raise, raise the song on high. The vir - gin sings her lul - la - by.



Haste, haste, to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mar - y!
Joy, joy, for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mar - y!

Sixth Reading: God reveals hope for the whole world

Luke 2:8-20

Read by George Minot

Nearby shepherds were living in the fields, guarding their sheep at night. The Lord's angel stood before them, the Lord's glory shone around them, and they were terrified. The angel said, "Don't be afraid! Look! I bring good news to you – wonderful, joyous news for all people. Your savior is born today in David's city. He is Christ the Lord. This is a sign for you: you will find a newborn baby wrapped snugly and lying in a manger." Suddenly a great assembly of the heavenly forces was with the angel praising God. They said, "Glory to God in heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors." When the angels returned to heaven, the shepherds said to each other, "Let's go right now to Bethlehem and see what's happened. Let's confirm what the Lord has revealed to us." They went quickly and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger. When they saw this, they reported what they had been told about this child. Everyone who heard it was amazed at what the shepherds told them. Mary committed these things to memory and considered them carefully. The shepherds returned home, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen. Everything happened just as they had been told.

Carol 113

Angels We Have Heard on High

An - gels we have heard on high, sweet - ly sing - ing o'er the plains,
 Shep - herds, why this ju - bi-lee? Why your joy - ous strains pro - long?
 and the moun - tains in re - ply e - cho - ing their joy - ous strains.
 What the glad - some ti - dings be which in - spire your heaven - ly song? Glo -
 - ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o! Glo -
 - ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o!

Lighting of the Christ Candle

All children, if they are so moved, are invited to join Pastor Nathan near the Advent wreath. We will sing our song before and after the lighting of the Advent Candle.

**All sing: Light of Jesus (echo: light of Jesus), show the way (show the way).
 Shine in us forever (shine in us forever); this we pray (this we pray).**

With the prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah, we watch and wait for the coming of Christ who will bring light and peace to all the world.

With John the Baptist, we cry out in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the Lord! Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near."

With Mary, the mother of Jesus, we rejoice, for the Mighty One has done great things for us. How holy is God's name!

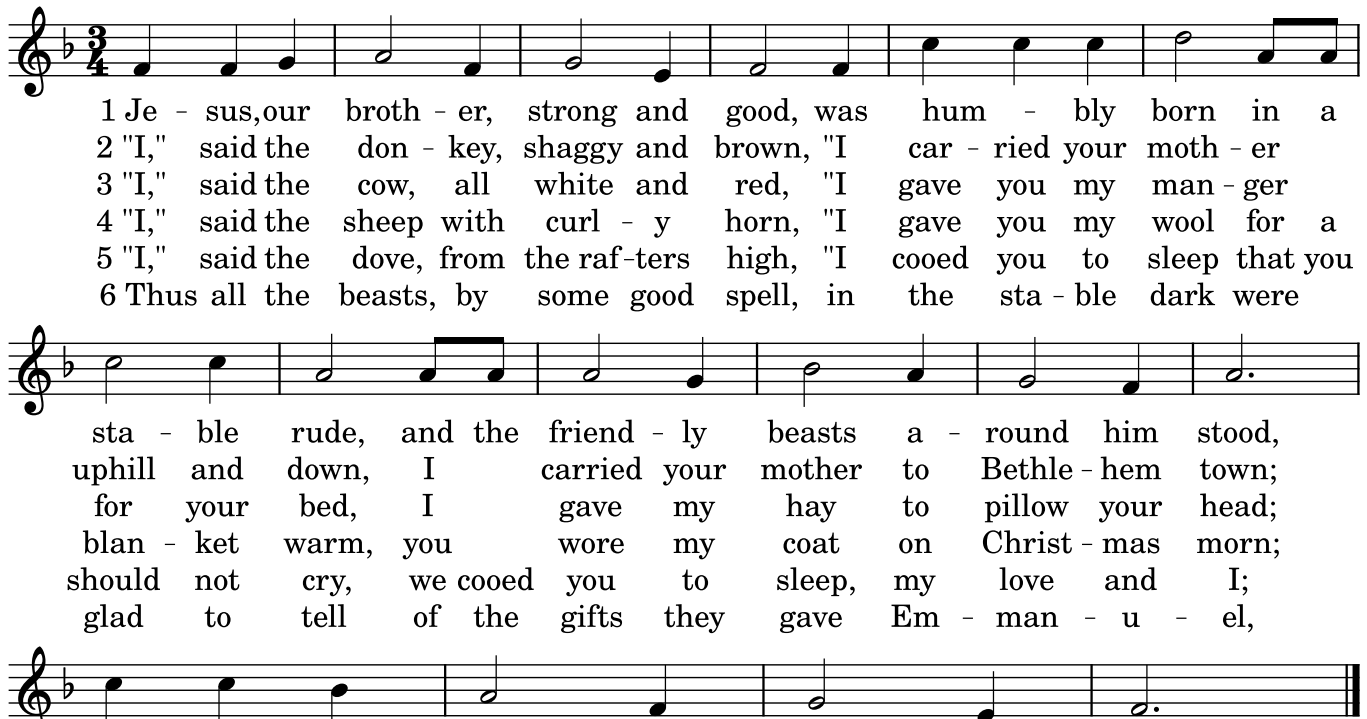
With Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, we tell the story of Jesus, the child of Bethlehem, who came to save us, and is coming again in glory.

**With the choirs of angels, we sing: "Glory to God in the highest,
 and peace to all people on earth!"**

**All sing: Light of Jesus (echo: light of Jesus), show the way (show the way).
 Shine in us forever (shine in us forever); this we pray (this we pray).**

Carol

Jesus, Our Brother



1 Je - sus, our broth - er, strong and good, was hum - bly born in a
 2 "I," said the don - key, shaggy and brown, "I car - ried your moth - er
 3 "I," said the cow, all white and red, "I gave you my man - ger
 4 "I," said the sheep with curl - y horn, "I gave you my wool for a
 5 "I," said the dove, from the raf - ters high, "I cooed you to sleep that you
 6 Thus all the beasts, by some good spell, in the sta - ble dark were

sta - ble rude, and the friend - ly beasts a - round him stood,
 uphill and down, I carried your mother to Bethle - hem town;
 for your bed, I gave my hay to pillow your head;
 blan - ket warm, you wore my coat on Christ - mas morn;
 should not cry, we cooed you to sleep, my love and I;
 glad to tell of the gifts they gave Em - man - u - el,

Je - sus our broth - er, strong and good.
 I," said the don - key, shaggy and brown.
 I," said the cow, all white and red.
 I," said the sheep with curl - y horn.
 I," said the dove, from the raf - ters high.
 the gifts they gave Em - man - u - el.

Homily

"Christmas Company"

Pastor Nathan Willard

Anthem

Silent Night

arr. Gary Lanier

While the anthem plays, we will begin to distribute the light. When lighting your candle, slide the cup down and tilt the unlit candle to the lit candle. After lighting, slide cup up to fully enclose the flame. After all the candles are lit, we will join in singing the carol.

Carol 122

Silent Night

Si-lent night, ho-ly night! All is calm, all is bright
 'round yon vir-gin moth-er and child! Ho-ly In-fant, so ten-der and mild,
 sleep in heav-en-ly peace, sleep in heav-en-ly peace.

Si-lent night, ho-ly night Shep-herds quake at the sight;
 glo-ries stream from heav-en a-far, heaven-ly hosts sing "Al-le-lu-ia:
 Christ the Sav-ior is born; Christ the Sav-ior is born!"

Si-lent night, ho-ly night! Son of God, love's pure light;
 ra-diant beams from thy ho-ly face, with the dawn of re-deem-ing grace,
 Je-sus, Lord, at thy birth, Je-sus, Lord, at thy birth.

✦ **Seventh Reading:** God's mystery shown in Christ's life

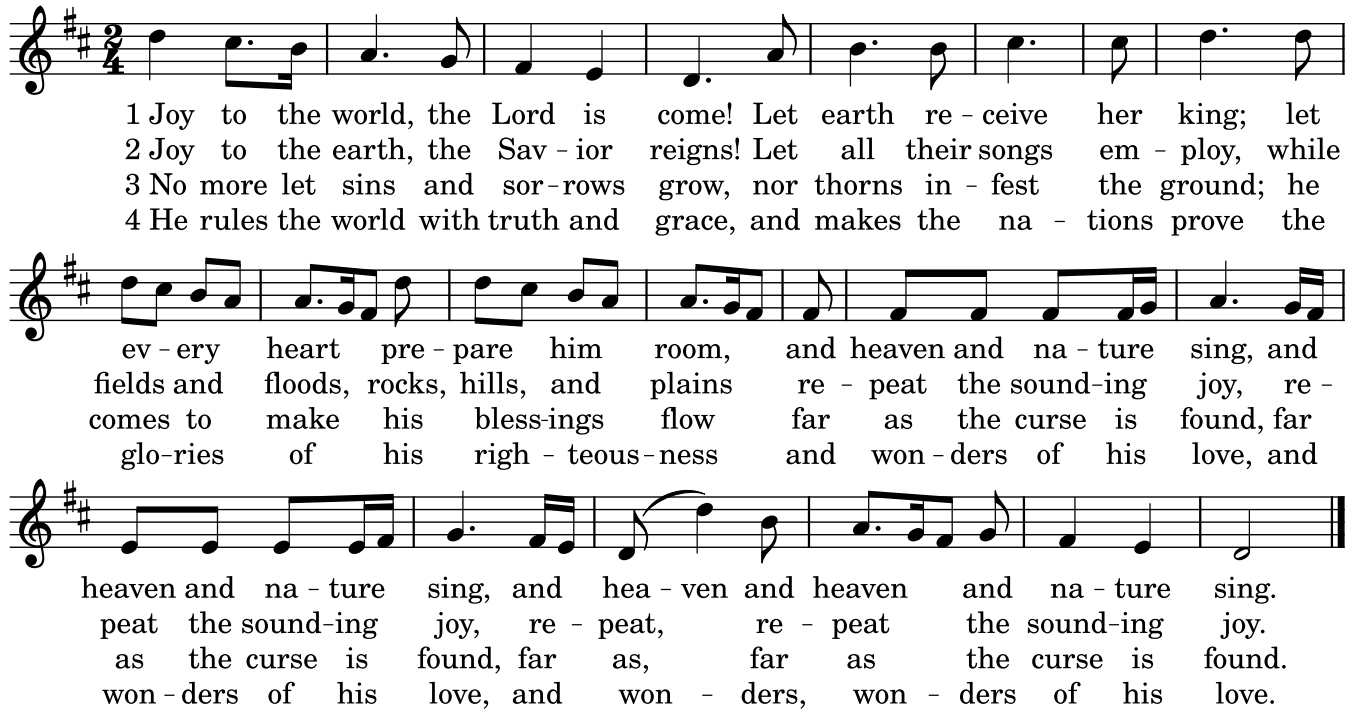
John 1:1-5

Read by Pastor Nathan Willard

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.

✦ **Carol 134**

Joy to the World



1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re - ceive her king; let
2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their songs em - ploy, while
3 No more let sins and sor - rows grow, nor thorns in - fest the ground; he
4 He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the na - tions prove the
ev - ery heart pre - pare him room, and heaven and na - ture sing, and
fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains re - peat the sound - ing joy, re -
comes to make his bless - ings flow far as the curse is found, far
glo - ries of his righ - teous - ness and won - ders of his love, and
heaven and na - ture sing, and hea - ven and heaven and na - ture sing.
peat the sound - ing joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
as the curse is found, far as, far as the curse is found.
won - ders of his love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.

The candles are extinguished after the hymn. Please place candles in baskets at the doors as you depart.

✦ **Benediction**

Postlude

Joy to the World

Go in peace, keeping Christmas well, this year and every year!

Thank you to the following participants in tonight's service:

Preacher, Pastor Nathan Willard

Liturgist, George Minot

Readers: Maeleen Thorius, Debbie Beerman, Ann Burton, Alex Voss

Usher, John Barr

Musicians: Sanctuary Choir, Melissa Moll, Leah Bergman, Oliver Bostian,
J. Kyle Coleman



Poinsettia Donations Given for the Glory of God! Emmanuel!

The poinsettias that beautify our Sanctuary this Christmas are given to the Glory of God and in memory or in honor of friends and family.



Sara Burton in memory of Maren Virginia Mondul
Richard and Ann Burton in memory of their parents
Maeleen Thorius in memory of Jerry Thorius
Linda Couch in memory of Leland and Gladys Blake, Carl and DeeDee Couch
Mary Beth Davis in memory of Sarah Parker, Stanley and Elizabeth Davis
Jen and Vivian Adams in memory of Lou Leeper
Candace Wiebener in memory of Howard and Bernice Wiebener
Steve and Kathy Smith in memory of David and Mary Noble, Earl and Lois Smith
Steve and Karen Hurt and Kevin Viksten in memory of Ray and Esther Viksten
Debbie Beermann in memory of Carol Janssen
David Van Dusseldorp in memory of Dean Van Dusseldorp
Susan Van Duyn in memory of her parents Richard and Joyce Van Duyn
Dwight and Pauline Miller in memory of their loved ones
Mary and Jim Linn in memory of their parents
Barbara Meier in memory of Dallis Meier
Jeanie Wade-Nagle in memory of Gary Nagle, Harold Wade and Ray and Vivian Nagle
Tom and Wanda Martin in memory of their parents
Nancy Ross and family in memory of Don Ross
Elizabeth Bolin in honor of Ginny Hall and in memory of Bob Hall and Dorothy Bolin
Dwight Younkin in honor of Irene Watson
Linda Younkin in honor of Sarah Oswald
Kathy Maxey in honor of all who grieve the loss of a loved one this past year
Glenn and Audrey Van Roekel

First Presbyterian Church Staff

PASTOR

Nathan Willard

nathan.willard@firstpreswacivacy.org

DIRECTOR OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Anna Sheetz

anna.sheetz@firstpreswacivacy.org

DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS

Tammy Schroeder

tammy.schroeder@firstpreswacivacy.org

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

J. Kyle Coleman

kyle.coleman@firstpreswacivacy.org

ORGANIST

Melissa Moll

melissa.moll@firstpreswacivacy.org

SEXTON

Gerald Hill

gerald.hill@firstpreswacivacy.org

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Tammy Foster

tammy.foster@firstpreswacivacy.org

MANAGER OF FINANCE & PURCHASING

Krista Livingston

finance@firstpreswacivacy.org

**ENDOWMENT & MEMORIAL
COORDINATORS**

Bob & Millie Youngquist

endowment@firstpreswacivacy.org