

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA
Christmas Eve

5:00 PM

December 24, 2020

**A SERVICE FOR THE WORSHIP OF GOD
WITH THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION**

(Click [here](#) to connect to today's live worship.)



*In preparation for celebrating communion where you are, **please have your own bread and cup available at the beginning of worship** so that we might partake of the elements at the same time during today's worship.*

*We also invite you to **gather candles** (and a way to light them) for each member of your household who will participate in the candle lighting that will take place at the end of this worship.*

GATHERING MUSIC

Sarabande (arranged for harp)
Jacquelyn Bartlett, harpist

J.S. Bach

WELCOME

Mindy Douglas

PRELUDE

What Child Is This Greensleeves, arr. Jacquelyn Bartlett

CALL TO WORSHIP

Susan Dunlap

Leader: This year, we dreamed of world peace.

All: **We dreamed of deep breaths and restful sleep.**

Leader: We dreamed of love that lasts and suffering that passes.

All: **We dreamed of doors open wide and a cure to disease.**

Leader: We dreamed, because to dream is to believe.

All: **For to dream is to hope; to dream is to see.**

Leader: So make room in your being to dream yet again,

All: **of a world without fear, and a God that draws near.**

Leader: For it is almost Christmas.

All: **Love is here.**

Leader: Let us worship God.

OPENING HYMN

O Come, All Ye Faithful

Adeste Fideles

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!

True God from true God, Light from light eternal,

born of a virgin, a mortal he comes;

very God, begotten, not created!

O come, let us adore him; O come, let us adore him;

O come, let us adore him, Christ, the Lord!

*Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation;
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God, all glory in the highest!
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ, the Lord!*

*Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning,
Jesus, to thee be all glory given;
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing!
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ, the Lord!*

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

Romines/Fullenkamp Family

CONFESSION OF SIN

Mitzi Lesher-Thomas

Call to Prayer

Prayer of Confession

Leader: Ever-present God, from time to time we dream radical dreams.

All: **We dream of freedom for the imprisoned,
food for the hungry, and equality for all.**

Leader: We dream bold, radical dreams,
until the world tells us that these dreams are impossible.
Until we become afraid,
until our desire for the familiar and safe
stunts our love of God and neighbor.

All: **And when that happens, we tuck our dreams into coat pockets,
let them collect dust on the shelves of our hearts,
grow deaf to the cries of our neighbor,
and fail to trust in your boundless grace.
Forgive us for our timid, constricted dreams.**

Leader: Forgive us for giving up so easily,

All: **for on this night we remember and celebrate a radical dream—
that you dwelt among us.**

Leader: Give us the courage to dust off old dreams

All: **trusting that with you, the impossible is possible.**

Response

St. Louis

*O holy child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray;
cast out our sin and enter in; be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us; abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel!*

Assurance of Pardon

HYMN

Joy to the World

Antioch

*No more let sins and sorrows grow, nor thorns infest the ground;
he comes to make his blessings flow far as the curse is found,
far as the curse is found, far as, far as the curse is found.*

*He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the nations prove
the glories of his righteousness and wonders of his love,
and wonders of his love, and wonders, wonders of his love.*

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

John Weicher

Leader: The Lord be with you.

All: **And also with you.**

Leader: Let us pray.

All: **Holy God, if we listen closely, we can hear the angels sing.
If we listen closely, we can hear the bleats of sheep following shepherds,
and the hooves of confused barn animals.
If we listen closely, we can hear the innkeeper say, "No room."
If we listen closely, we can hear the star whisper, "Follow me."
If we listen closely, God, we can hear you.**

(Pause for a moment of silent reflection.)

All: **So, as we turn to your Word, don't let us miss a thing—
the smell of the hay, the cry of the infant,
the way Mary cherished this wild dream in her heart.
We want to hear it all; we don't want to miss a thing.
So today we pray—can you help us listen closely? Amen.**

HEBREW SCRIPTURE READING

Isaiah 9:2-7

John Weicher

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL READING

Luke 2:1-20

Mindy Douglas

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

MEDITATION

"The Light Shines"

Mindy Douglas

HYMN

On Christmas Night All Christians Sing

Sussex Carol

*On Christmas night all Christians sing, to hear the news the angels bring;
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 we on earth be sad, since our Redeemer made us glad;
then why should we 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;
when sin departs before his grace, then life and health come in its place;
heaven and earth 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;
all out of darkness we have light, which made the angels sing this night:
"Glory to God in highest heaven; peace on earth and goodwill. Amen!"*

A TIME WITH THE CHILDREN

John Weicher

THE OFFERING

Susan Dunlap

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

Mindy Douglas

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

Mindy Douglas

Leader: God is with us.

People: **We are not alone.**

Leader: Christ is present here.

People: **The Spirit moves within us.**

Leader: Let us give thanks to God.

People: **In memory and in hope.**

Leader: Blessings be to you, Creator God,
 who in the beginning brought light and life to the world
 and who continues to bring love and light everlasting.

People: **Your song of wisdom echoes through the ages;
 Your ancient promise still brings us hope.**

Leader: Over the ages, you sent prophets and messengers to your people,
 reminding them of the promised time of peace and justice
 that would surround the world.

People: **They came in the middle of our despair and filled us with hope.**

Leader: And then you came to a young woman named Mary
 and laid out the promise in a new way,

People: **Promising her a son who would be called Jesus;
 promising her that in her son the world would be changed.**

Leader: Now as we celebrate that child,
 we lift our voices in song,
 singing together the praises of ages:

All (sung): (Sung to Mendelssohn/*Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*)
*Holy, Holy, Holy Lord! God of Hosts, by all adored!
 Heaven and earth cannot contain all the glory of your name!
 Hail, hosanna, God most high! Blest is he who now draws nigh,
 In the name of God the King! Hallelujah glad we sing:
 Hail, hosanna! Praises due be forever, Lord to you!*

Leader: Yet even now, as we prepare to celebrate his birth,
 we remember the life this baby will live.

People: **We remember how he broke the bonds of human tradition
 to show all what the Banquet of Hope could be
 as he ate openly with the despised and the outcasts of his world.**

Leader: And we remember one special meal, foretaste of the banquet that is to come,
 that he ate with his closest friends.

People: **Gathering them together in an upper room to share the story of liberation,
 he prepared them for liberation.**

Leader: At the end of the meal he took bread, blessed and broke it,
 then passed it to them saying:

People: **Take and eat. This bread is the body of Life, broken by the world.
 Eat it in remembrance and in hope.**

Leader: After that he took the cup, blessed it, and passed it to them saying:

People: **This cup is the sign of the New Covenant.
 Whenever you drink it remember me, for I shall not eat or drink again
 until the time of the heavenly banquet.**

Leader: Remembering the birth of the child in the stable, we remember also his life,
 his death, and his resurrection.

People: **We remember how he poured his love out to all he met
 and we look forward to his return
 and the coming reign of peace, love, and justice.**

Leader: Let us remember, in his name, the poor and helpless,
the cold, the hungry and the oppressed;
the lonely and the unloved; all who have none to care for them;
all those whose lives have been torn asunder by injustice, terror and war;
the aged and little children;
and all who know not the great loving-kindness of the Lord Jesus.

All: And now, as beloved children of a loving parent, we pray:
**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.**

Leader: The bread we break is the Bread of Life.
The cup we share is the Cup of Promise.
These are the gifts of God for the people of God.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Leader: Come and eat, the banquet awaits.

THE SHARING OF THE BREAD AND CUP

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Mindy Douglas

Leader: The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

People: **Amen.**

All: **God of grace and peace,
as you have shared your life with us
through the child in the manger and this simple meal together,
let us share your life with others
as the body of Christ in the world;
through Jesus, bread of heaven. Amen.**

LIGHTING OF CANDLES

John Weicher

Leader: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;

People: **Those who lived in a land of deep darkness, on them light has shined.**

ANTHEM

Silent Night, Holy Night

Stille Nacht

*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.*

*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."*

*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.*

*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.*

BLESSING AND CLOSING

Mindy Douglas

Leader: Arise and shine, for your light has come!
The glory of the Lord has risen upon you.
All: **Alleluia!**
Leader: Go now and bear witness to the light of Christ.
All: **Amen.**

POSTLUDE

In Dulci Jubilo

J.S. Bach

First Presbyterian Church welcomes all who worship with us. We honor and celebrate the human diversity and unity that God gives us in Christ. We welcome individuals of every age, race, nationality, gender, ability, sexual orientation, and economic circumstance to participate fully in the life of the church.

The *poinsettias* in the sanctuary are given to the glory of God and are a gift to the church from Arthur Clark.

Special thanks to *Jacquelyn Bartlett* (harpist), *Kathy Parkins* (organist, pre-recorded) and *Gordon Campbell* for their music leadership with today's service. Gordon is serving as organist and interim music director while Kathy Parkins recovers from surgery.

We are especially grateful to *John Fricks* who helped locate and edit the music files used in today's worship, as well as *Michael Smith* (music producer), and *Jody Maxwell, Pat Dillon, Keith Rokoske, and Jay Klinck* for their "behind the scenes" technical assistance with our live broadcasts of worship.

Portions of *today's worship text* are taken from *A Sanctified Art* and *Book of Common Worship (2018)*. *Hymn texts* and *music* are reprinted from *Glory to God* under Onelicense.net: A.713926.

Church Office/Staff Holiday Schedule

During the Christmas and New Year's Day holidays, the church staff will continue working from home as they have been during the pandemic. The pastors and administrators will be reachable by text, mobile phone, church voicemail and email so feel free to reach out to them if you have a need or concern.

Sunday, December 27

First Sunday after Christmas

No children, youth or adult Sunday School classes

Worship (virtual) at 11:00 a.m.

Mitzi Lesher-Thomas, preaching

CHURCH STAFF

Tom Bloom, Business Administrator
Lenore Champion, Children's Ministry Director
Robert Daye, Sexton
Mindy Douglas, Pastor/Head of Staff
Susan Dunlap, Parish Associate



Sybil King, Administrative Assistant
Mitzi Lesher-Thomas, Associate Pastor
Valerie McMillian, Parish Administrator
Kathy Parkins, Minister of Music
John Weicher, Associate Pastor

For more information about First Presbyterian Church, email the church office:
info@firstpres-durham.org or visit our website: <https://firstpres-durham.org>.

305 EAST MAIN STREET DURHAM NC 27701 919-682-5511

O Come, All Ye Faithful

133

1 O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant; O come
2 True God from true God, Light from light e - ter - nal, born
3 Sing, choirs of an - gels; sing in ex - ul - ta - tion; sing,
4 Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this hap - py morn - ing; Je -

ye; O come ye to Beth - le - hem! Come, and be - hold him,
of a vir - gin, a mor - tal he comes; ver - y God, be -
all ye cit - i - zens of heaven a - bove! Glo - ry to God, all
sus, to thee be all glo - ry given; Word of the Fa - ther,

Refrain

born the King of an - gels!
got - ten, not cre - at - ed!
glo - ry in the high - est! O come, let us a - dore him; O come, let
now in flesh ap - pear - ing!

us a - dore him; O come, let us a - dore him, Christ, the Lord!

121 O Little Town of Bethlehem

1 O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, how still we see thee lie!
 2 For Christ is born of Mar - y and, gath - ered all a - bove,
 3 How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly, the won - drous gift is given!
 4 O ho - ly child of Beth - le - hem, de - scend to us, we pray;

A - bove thy deep and dream - less sleep the si - lent stars go by.
 while mor - tals sleep, the an - gels keep their watch of won - dering love.
 So God im - parts to hu - man hearts the bless - ings of his heaven.
 cast out our sin and en - ter in; be born in us to - day.

Yet in thy dark streets shin - eth the ev - er - last - ing light;
 O morn - ing stars, to - geth - er pro - claim the ho - ly birth,
 No ear may hear his com - ing, but in this world of sin,
 We hear the Christ - mas an - gels the great glad ti - dings tell;

the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee to - night.
 and prais - es sing to God the king, and peace to all on earth.
 where meek souls will re - ceive him, still the dear Christ en - ters in.
 O come to us; a - bide with us, our Lord Em - man - u - el!

Joy to the World



1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re - ceive
 2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their songs
 3 No more let sins and sor - rows grow, nor thorns in - fest
 4 He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the na -



her king; let ev - ery heart pre - pare him room,
 em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
 the ground; he comes to make his bless - ings flow
 tions prove the glo - ries of his righ - teous - ness



and heaven and na - ture sing, and heaven and na - ture
 re - peat the sound - ing joy, re - peat the sound - ing
 far as the curse is found, far as the curse is
 and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his
 and heaven and na - ture sing,



and



sing, and heaven, and heaven and na - ture sing.
 joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
 found, far as, far as the curse is found.
 love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.



heaven and na - ture sing,

On Christmas Night All Christians Sing 112

Capo 3: (D) (G) (D) (A7) (D)
 F B^b F C7 F



1 On Christ - mas night all Chris - tians sing, to hear the
 2 Then why should we on earth be sad, since our Re -
 3 When sin de - parts be - fore his grace, then life and
 4 All out of dark - ness we have light, which made the

(G) (A) (D) (G)
 B^b C F B^b



news the an - gels bring; on Christ - mas night all
 deem - er made us glad; then why should we on
 health come in its place; when sin de - parts be -
 an - gels sing this night; all out of dark - ness

(D) (A) (D) (G) (A) (D)
 F C F B^b C F



Chris - tians sing, to hear the news the an - gels bring,
 earth be sad, since our Re - deem - er made us glad,
 fore his grace, then life and health comes in its place;
 we have light, which made the an - gels sing this night:

(A) (Em) (D) (A)
 C Gm F C



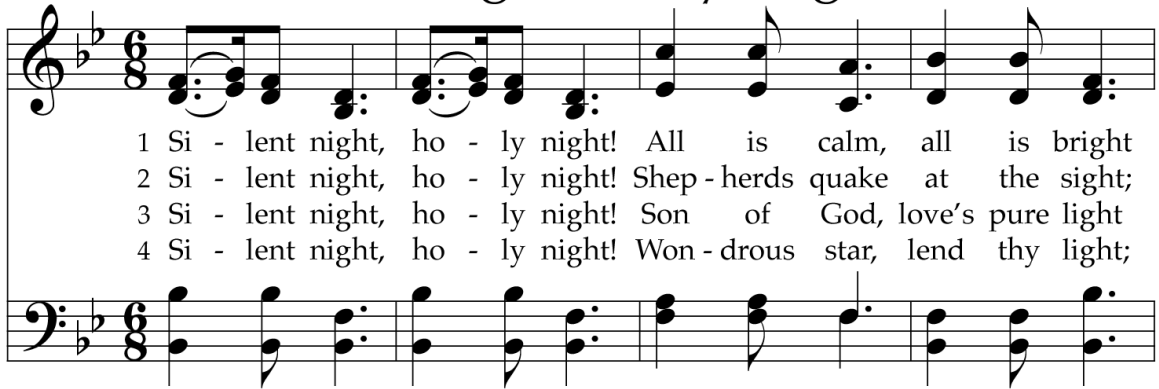
news of great joy, news of great mirth,
 when from our sin he set us free,
 heav - en and earth with joy may sing,
 "Glo - ry to God in high - est heaven;

(D) (G) (A) (G) (D)
 F B^b C B^b F

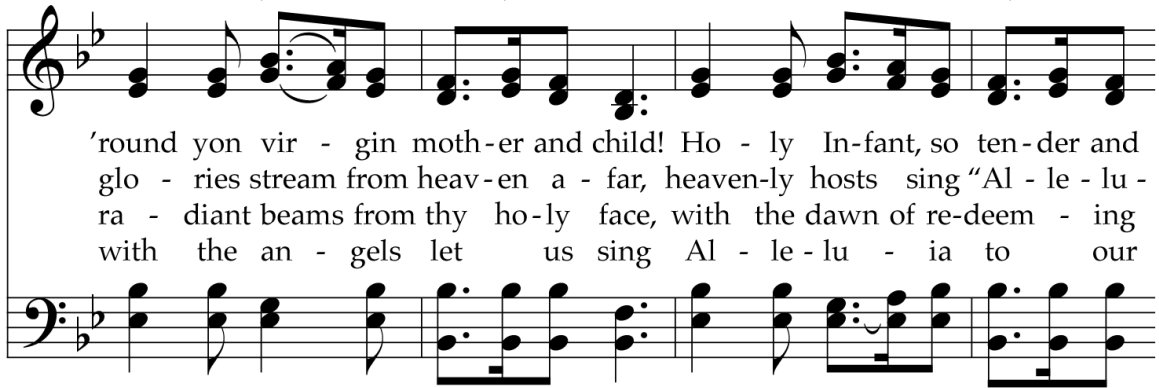


news of our mer - ci - ful King's birth.
 all for to gain our lib - er - ty?
 all for to see the new - born King.
 peace on earth and good - will. A - men!"

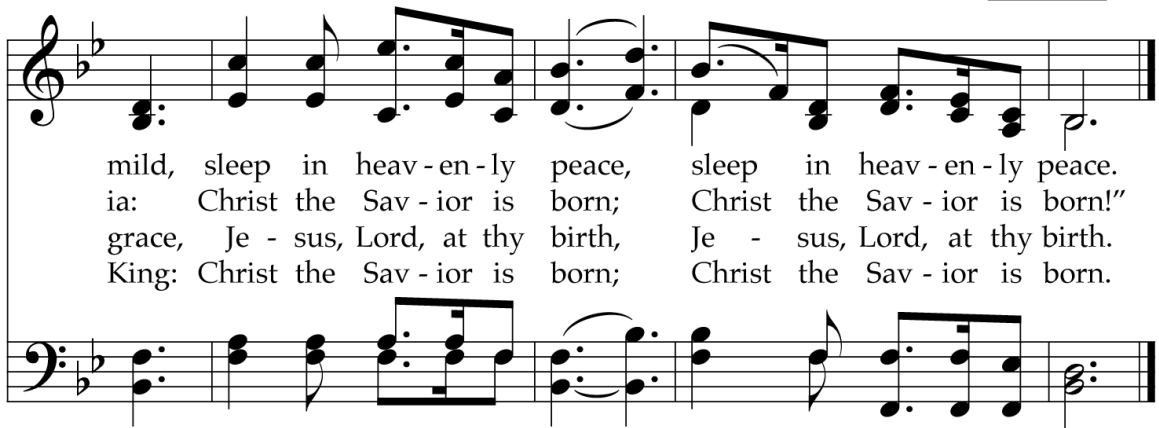
Silent Night, Holy Night! 122



1 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! All is calm, all is bright
2 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Shep - herds quake at the sight;
3 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Son of God, love's pure light
4 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Won - drous star, lend thy light;



'round yon vir - gin moth - er and child! Ho - ly In - fant, so ten - der and
glo - ries stream from heav - en a - far, heav - en - ly hosts sing "Al - le - lu -
ra - dian beams from thy ho - ly face, with the dawn of re - deem - ing
with the an - gels let us sing Al - le - lu - ia to our



mild, sleep in heav - en - ly peace, sleep in heav - en - ly peace.
ia: Christ the Sav - ior is born; Christ the Sav - ior is born!"
grace, Je - sus, Lord, at thy birth, Je - sus, Lord, at thy birth.
King: Christ the Sav - ior is born; Christ the Sav - ior is born.