

PAXTON

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



In Too Deep by Nicolette Faison | A Sanctified Art LLC

*When you are afraid,
give me your hand*

December 21, 2025

WORSHIP FOR THE LORD'S DAY

Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 21, 2025

10:30 a.m.

PRELUDE

“In the Bleak Mid-Winter”
“Once He Came in Blessing”
“How Far Is It to Bethlehem”

-arr. G. Young
-arr. P. Manz
-arr. P. Manz

WORSHIP PREPARATION

**In preparing for our worship together please quiet yourself
and allow God's Spirit to ready your heart, mind, and soul.**

During this time, we invite you to sign the **guest book**, pass it down your row and back again and note friends and guests worshipping next to you. Please also complete a **prayer request card** at this time if you have a joy or concern for which you would like special prayers during the service. The ushers will collect them during the first hymn.

GREETINGS AND NEWS OF OUR COMMON LIFE

Praise the Lord!

The Lord's name be praised!

THE WORD GATHERS US

CALL TO WORSHIP

Advent is a time to celebrate God's love.

God's love is pure.

We celebrate by loving our neighbors as ourselves.

God's love is everlasting.

We celebrate by loving the Lord our God with all our hearts.

God's love is all-powerful.

We celebrate by spreading God's love to a world in need.

God's love is freely given to all.

* CANDLELIGHTING SONG – “Come, Lord Jesus, Come” -see music on page 6

***Come, thou long expected Jesus, born to set thy people free;
from our sins and fears release; let us find our rest in thee.***

* PRAYER FOR ADVENT LOVE (written by Joel Raney)

Gracious God, as we ponder your great and eternal love, we think of our own limited understanding. We think of the words of Nelson Mandela: “People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love.” Teach us to love as you have loved, and help us learn to share that love with the world around us. Amen.

* HYMN - 97 “Watchman, Tell Us of the Night”

* GOD'S PROMISE OF FORGIVENESS

* OUR RECOGNITION OF BROKENNESS (written by Sandra E. Graham)

God of grace, you send signs of love in people who care. But often we shut those people out. We turn away from your love when we need it the most. We deny your hope within us, and we keep ourselves isolated and afraid. Visit us with your salvation, for we await you in need.

(silent prayer) **Amen.**

* GOD'S ASSURANCE OF RECONCILIATION

* OUR GRATEFUL RESPONSE – No. 581

***Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
World without end. Amen. Amen.***

* PASSING THE PEACE

The peace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you. ***And also with you.***

THE WORD PROCLAIMS TO US

CONVERSATION WITH OUR CHILDREN

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

READING FROM THE PROPHETS Isaiah 41:5-10 (OT 818)

ANTHEM “What Child is This?” -arr. Grant Cochran

READING FROM THE GOSPELS Matthew 1: 18-25 (NT 1)

SERMON “A Hand to Hold”

HYMN – 129 “Lo, How a Rose E’er Blooming”

THE WORD INVITES US

OFFERING OF OUR GIFTS AND OURSELVES

Invitation for the Offering

* Response of Praise – No. 606

***Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.***

SCAN HERE
TO GIVE
VIRTUALLY



* Prayer of Dedication

OFFERTORY “The First Noel” -arr. W. Held

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD’S PRAYER† -Traditional (p. 35)

THE WORD SENDS US

* HYMN –143 “Angels, from the Realms of Glory”

* INVITATION TO CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP

* SENDING FORTH AND BLESSING

* POSTLUDE “God Rest You Merry” -arr. W. Held

The () indicates that those who are able may stand.
The words printed in ***bold face italics type*** are said by all.

CCLI#2707192

†Prayer by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

Please use your phone's camera to scan the QR code to visit our online giving page.

Directing our worship today: Preacher, Pastor Margaret Poteet;
Worship Assistant, Gary Myers; *Conversation with Our Children*, Michelle Sheppard;
Director of Music, Sue Beckley; Organist, Jeanne Bruce;
Director of Youth Music, Andrew Vinton

NEWS OF OUR COMMON LIFE

BREAKFAST FOR TWO The Stewardship Ministry invites you to help support our neighbors in need by contributing to our Little Free Pantry. You can sponsor a Breakfast for Two meal bag for just \$3. We encourage you to visit the parlor before or after worship today to share the gift of food this holiday season. For more information, please contact Cindy Mory at 717-460-1142.

INCIDENT REPORTS AT PAXTON When an incident happens involving a medical emergency or resulting in an injury the witness should assign someone to call 911 if necessary. The witness should also fill the Paxton Presbyterian Church Incident Report Form. The form is located around the building in EAP bins and can also be found in the office. Once completed please place the form in the Safety and Security mailbox outside of the office so the Safety and Security Committee can review what took place.

2026 OFFERING ENVELOPES 2026 Offering Envelopes are available. They may be picked up after worship or from the church office during the week.

AED/CPR TRAINING The Safety and Security Committee is having an AED/CPR Training course on Saturday, January 17, 2026, at 9am in the Great Room. This will be open to members, staff, ushers, and teachers who have not been certified in the last two years. The cost per person will be \$25.00, payable to Paxton Presbyterian Church due by January 5, 2026. Please RSVP with the church office and confirm that they have the correct email to contact you in case of inclement weather. Questions can be directed to Dave Elder at 717-979-1234.

CHRISTMAS PIZZA PARTY The Youth Fellowship Christmas party is today, December 21 from 11:30-1:30. All children are invited and a pizza lunch will be provided. Please RSVP to Michelle.

THE BELLS OF PAXTON Today is Bell Sunday! Help us fill the sanctuary with joyful ringing on the final verse of each hymn.

REMINDER Bulletins for Christmas Eve, and December 28 were printed on December 19. Any additional announcements will be added to the January Newsletter or the January 4 bulletin.

RING IN THE NEW YEAR WITH PANCAKES! A new year tradition, our youth will be serving up a yummy pancake breakfast on January 4th from 8:30-10am in Fellowship Hall. Regular pancakes, chocolate chip pancakes, gluten free pancakes, yogurt and fruit will be available.

JOY OFFERING The Christmas Joy Offering will be collected through December 28.

COMMUNION SUNDAYS In 2026 we will be moving communion to the FIRST Sunday of the month instead of the second Sunday of the month.

GOOD SAMARITAN FUND The Session recently voted to start a Good Samaritan Fund in order to keep a few grocery gift cards on hand in the office for those who might reach out to us needing immediate food or personal supplies. The offering we collect on Christmas Eve will go to supporting this fund for the coming year. We are grateful for your generous love of our neighbors in need.

THANK YOU ALL What a wonderful year the Free Little Pantry has experienced due to your generous spirits. So many folks have had something to eat in 2025 thanks to you. We are doing well with our supplies needing only fruit and toilet paper. Currently, we do not need tuna, peanut butter, or pasta. Thank you again and have a blessed Christmas.

Prayer Square

Please keep the following church members and friends in your prayers.

Members

Nancy Bingaman, Jim Brillinger, Brenda Brinkley, Bruce Cavanaugh, Friends and Family of Dave Foreman, Fran Gilchrist, Shirley Grunden, Don Hoopes, Nancy Hutchison, Larry and Annette Kilpatrick, Jim Knight, Penny Knight, Anita Laughery, Robert Martin, Nedra Maxwell, Joanne Miller, Donna Powers, Elsie Williams, Dave Wion, Kathie Zimmerman

Friends

Gamber Family, Dr. and Mrs. Kent Groff, Kate Humphrey, J Jackson, Joey Koch, Linda Molnar, Price Family, Frank Sallusti, Cliff Stern, Bill W.

If you would like to add someone to the Prayer Square please contact Janice at 717-418-1526 or momjakh@aol.com

ANTHEM

WHAT CHILD IS THIS?

-ARR. GRANT COCHRAN

What child is this who laid to rest, on Mary's lap is sleeping,
whom angels greet with anthems sweet while shepherds
watch are keeping? This, this is Christ the King, whom
shepherd guard and angels sing: haste, haste to bring him
laud, the Babe the son of Mary!

Come, Lord Jesus, Come

Congregational part

Words by
CHARLES WESLEY

Music by
JOEL RANEY



Come, thou long - ex - spect - ed Je - sus,
born_ to set thy peo - ple free; from our
sins and fears re - lease us;
let us find our rest in thee.

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CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES AT PAXTON

5:00 PM Family Service with our Children's Choir | 8:00 PM Traditional Service

Come join us in celebrating the wonder and hope of Christ's birth this Christmas Eve. All are welcome - families, friends, visitors, and neighbors - as we gather for carols, Scripture, and candlelight. May the light of Christ bring peace to your heart and home.

December 21 - 28

Sunday, December 21	9:00 AM	Sunday School	<i>Agape Park</i>
	10:30 AM	Worship	<i>Sanctuary</i>
	1:00 PM	Nepali Speaking Community Church	<i>Great Room</i>
Monday, December 22	9:15 AM	PPNS Holiday Concert	<i>Great Room</i>
Wednesday, December 24	5:00 PM	Christmas Eve Worship	<i>Sanctuary</i>
	8:00 PM	Christmas Eve Worship	<i>Sanctuary</i>
Thursday, December 25	ALL DAY	OFFICE CLOSED	
	12:00 PM	Nepali Christmas Worship	<i>Great Room</i>
Friday, December 26	ALL DAY	OFFICE CLOSED	
Sunday, December 28	10:30 AM	Worship	<i>Sanctuary</i>
	12:00 PM	Private Event	<i>Agape Park</i>
	1:00 PM	Nepali Speaking Community Church	<i>Great Room</i>

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

The office is open to the public

9:00am – 1:00pm, Monday through Friday

If you need to visit the office or building at another time, please call the office.

**THE CHURCH OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED DECEMBER 25 & 26 IN
OBSERVATION OF CHRISTMAS**

Paxton Presbyterian Church Staff

Pastor	x105	Margaret Poteet	pastor@paxtonchurch.org
Director of Faith Formation	x104	Michelle Sheppard	michelle.sheppard@paxtonchurch.org
Director of Music		Susan Beckley	
Organist		Jeanne Bruce	
Director of Youth Music		Andrew Vinton	
Office Administrator	x101	Abby Spencer	office@paxtonchurch.org
Financial Office/Treasurer	x102	John Palmer	treasurer@paxtonchurch.org
Nursery School Director	x103	Nicole Evenhuis	nurseryschooldirector@paxtonchurch.org
Custodian		Mary Bowers	

Board of Deacons

Tara Frank '25	Moderator	Merideth Staudenmaier '25	Secretary
Sally Appleby '25		Rich Lengler '26	
Jim Bruce '26		Diana Robertson '25	
Linette Burd '26		Deb Trephan '27	
Judy Frankford '27		Brenda Vinton '27	
Cheryl Holtzman '26		Bev Ziebell '27	

Stephen Ministry

Stephen Leaders	Gary Myers	Jane Sanford
Stephen Ministers	Karen Cirillo	Karen Herrold
	Cheryl Holtzman	Janice Hutchison
	Annette Kilpatrick	Nancy Lengler
	Steve Miller	Kathy Woodbridge

For a confidential referral please contact a Stephen Leader.

Session *Chair

Margaret Poteet	Moderator
Kitti Taylor	Clerk of Session
Karen Herrold '25*	Christian Education
Janice Hutchison '25*	Evangelism and Outreach
Nancy Lengler '26*	Budget and Finance
Judy Schmidt '27*	Mission
Gary Myers '26*	Nominating
Jay Kealey '26*	Personnel
Nino Giambrone '27*	Property Management
Craig Staudenmaier '25*	Stewardship
Sharon Webb '26*	Technology
Anita Laughery '27*	Worship and Music
Bob Frank '25	

At Paxton Presbyterian Church, we believe that every person is a beloved child of God, made in God's image and worthy of love, dignity, and belonging. Rooted in the grace of Jesus Christ and guided by the Holy Spirit, we seek to be a welcoming and affirming community for all people - no matter their race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, socioeconomic status, mental or physical ability, or religious background.



Watchman, Tell Us of the Night 97

*

 1 Watch-man, tell us of the night, what its signs of prom-ise are.
 2 Watch-man, tell us of the night; high-er yet that star as-cends.
 3 Watch-man, tell us of the night, for the morn-ing seems to dawn.

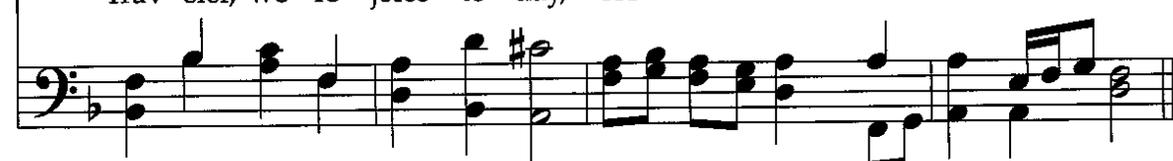


 Trav-eler, what a won-drous sight: see that glo-ry-beam-ing star.
 Trav-eler, bless-ed - ness and light, peace and truth its course por - tends.
 Trav-eler, shad-ows take their flight; doubt and ter-ror are with-drawn.



 Watch-man, does its beau-teous ray news of joy or hope fore - tell?
 Watch-man, will its beams a - lone gild the spot that gave them birth?
 Watch-man, you may go your way; has-ten to your qui - et home.



 Trav-eler, yes; it brings the day, prom-ised day of Is - ra - el.
 Trav-eler, a - ges are its own; see, it bursts o'er all the earth.
 Trav-eler, we re - joice to - day, for Em - man - u - el has come!


*May be sung antiphonally.

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming 129

1 Lo, how a rose e'er bloom-ing from ten - der stem hath sprung,
 2 I - sa - iah 'twas fore - told it, the rose I have in mind;
 3 This flower, whose fra-grance ten - der with sweet-ness fills the air,

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.
 dis - pels with glo - rious splen - dor the dark-ness ev - ery-where.

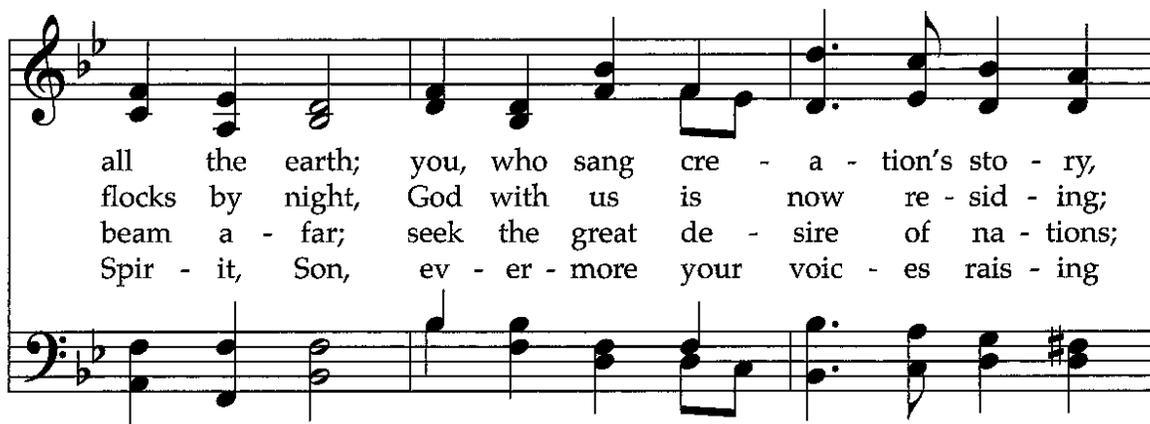
It came, a flower - et bright, a - mid the cold of
 To show God's love a - right she bore for us a
 En - fleshed, yet ver - y God, from sin and death he

win - ter, when half spent was the night.
 Sav - ior, when half spent was the night.
 saves us and light - ens ev - ery load.

143 Angels, from the Realms of Glory



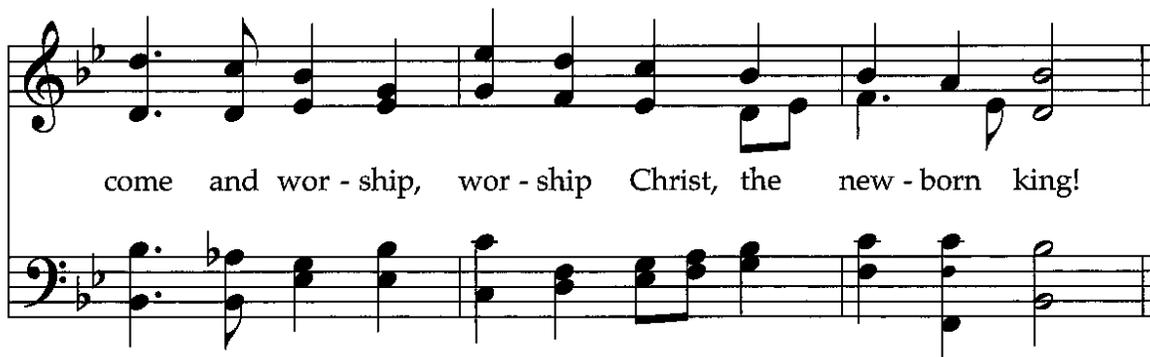
1 An - gels, from the realms of glo - ry, wing your flight o'er
2 Shep - herds, in the fields a - bid - ing, watch - ing o'er your
3 Sag - es, leave your con - tem - pla - tions; bright - er vi - sions
4 All cre - a - tion, join in prais - ing God the Fa - ther,



all the earth; you, who sang cre - a - tion's sto - ry,
flocks by night, God with us is now re - sid - ing;
beam a - far; seek the great de - sire of na - tions;
Spir - it, Son, ev - er - more your voic - es rais - ing



now pro - claim Mes - si - ah's birth:
yon - der shines the in - fant light: come and wor - ship,
you have seen his na - tal star:
to the e - ter - nal Three in One:



come and wor - ship, wor - ship Christ, the new - born king!