FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH OF BETHLEHEM

Traditional Service
Third Sunday of Advent

December 11, 2022

The Service for the Lord's Day

WE GATHER

PRELUDE Prelude on "Picardy" arr. Alec Rowley

WELCOME
*Advent Wreath Lighting

God, all kinds of feelings pass through us in this life:
From happiness to sorrow and everything in between.

We can look around and see all kinds of reasons not to feel joyful
until we learn that joy is not felt; joy is found.

We straighten our spines, posturing ourselves toward joy;
Needing constant rediscovery until it becomes part of our nature.

Joy in transformation, joy in growth;
Joy in meeting, joy in parting;
Joy in journeying, joy in waiting.

As we light this candle, we celebrate the Joy we experience in Christ,
This is the joy that wells up within us:

the intentional song, the thoughtful gift,
The word of comfort, the broken thing mended,
The belly and the heart filled.

*Please stand if you are able.

This is the joy given to us:
To love and be loved,
To sacrifice and be blessed,
To be lost and found.

Joyful, Joyful!
Rejoice, Rejoice! Let us worship God!

ADVENT WREATH LIGHTING RESPONSE

Keep Your Lamps Trimmed and Burning — KEEP YOUR LAMPS

Verse 1, See Insert

PASSING OF THE PEACE

*GATHERING HYMN — #20

Watchman, Tell Us of the Night — ABERYSTWYTH

1 Watchman, tell us of the night,
What its signs of promise are.
Traveler, o'er yon mountain's height,
See that glory-beaming star.
Watchman, does its beauteous ray
Aught of joy or hope foretell?
Traveler, yes; it brings the day,
Promised day of Israel.

2 Watchman, tell us of the night;
Higher yet that star ascends.
Traveler, blessedness and light,
Peace and truth its course portends.
Watchman, will its beams alone
Gild the spot that gave them birth?
Traveler, ages are its own;
See, it bursts o'er all the earth

3 Watchman, tell us of the night,
For the morning seems to dawn.
Traveler, darkness takes its flight,
Doubt and terror are withdrawn.
Watchman, let thy wanderings cease;
Hasten to your quiet home.
Traveler, lo! the Prince of Peace,
Lo! the Son of God is come!

CALL TO CONFESSON

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God of mercy, a million times a day we have the opportunity to be gracious, to assume the best in others, to give the benefit of the doubt. A million times a day we could choose the better way, but so often we don't. Fear and greed kick in. Assumptions and insecurities take the wheel. Comparison and critique lead the charge. Forgive us for forgetting that we are descendants of Joseph. Forgive us for forgetting that grace and mercy are in our blood. Forgive us for forgetting that all belong to you. Give us the courage to love even bigger than before, and the wisdom to choose a better way.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

WE LISTEN

CHILDREN'S SERMON

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE Matthew 1:18-25 — Judy Smullen and Choir Altos

Leader: The word of the Lord;

People: Thanks be to God.

SERMON — The Rev. J.C. Austin

"Dealer's Choice"

WE RESPOND

*SERMON HYMN — #9

O Come, O Come Emmanuel — VENI EMMANUEL

1 O come, O come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear.

Refrain:
Rejoice! Rejoice!
Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

2 O come, Thou Day-spring, come and cheer
Our spirits by Thine advent here;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
And death's dark shadows put to flight.
(Refrain)

3 O come, Desire of nations, bind
All peoples in one heart and mind;
Bid envy, strife, and discord cease;
Fill the whole world with heaven's peace.
(Refrain)

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (From The Confession of 1967)

In Jesus Christ, God was reconciling the world to God's own self. Jesus Christ is God with humanity. He is the eternal Son of God, who became human and lived among us to fulfill the work of reconciliation. He is present in the church by the power of the Holy Spirit to continue and complete his mission. This work of the Triune God is the foundation of all confessional statements about God, humanity, and the world. Therefore, the church calls all people to be reconciled to God and to one another.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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.

CALL FOR OFFERING

Call to Give

Offertory Gabriel's Message — Benedict Sheehan

Chancel Choir

Gabriel's message does away
Satan's curse and Satan's sway,
out of darkness brings our Day:
So, behold,
All the gates of heaven unfold.

He that comes despised shall reign;
he that cannot die, be slain;
death by death its death shall gain:
So, behold,
All the gates of heaven unfold.

Art by art shall be assailed;
to the cross shall Life be nailed;
from the grave shall hope be
hailed: So, behold,
All the gates of heaven unfold.

Weakness shall the strong confound;
by the hands, in grave clothes wound,
Adam's chains shall be unbound.
So, behold,
All the gates of heaven unfold

By the sword that was his own,
by that sword, and that alone,
shall Goliath be o'erthrown:
So, behold,
All the gates of heaven unfold.

*Doxology #592

Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow OLD HUNDREDTH

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

*Prayer of Dedication

*SENDING HYMN #6

Jesus Comes with Clouds Descending HELMSLEY

1 Jesus comes with clouds descending;
See the Lamb for sinner slain!
Thousand, thousand saints attending
Join to sing the glad refrain:
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!
Christ the Lord returns to reign!

2 Every eye shall then behold You
Robed in awesome majesty;
Those who jeered and mocked and sold You,
Pierced and nailed You to the tree,
Shamed and grieving, Shamed and grieving,
Shamed and grieving, Shall their true Messiah see
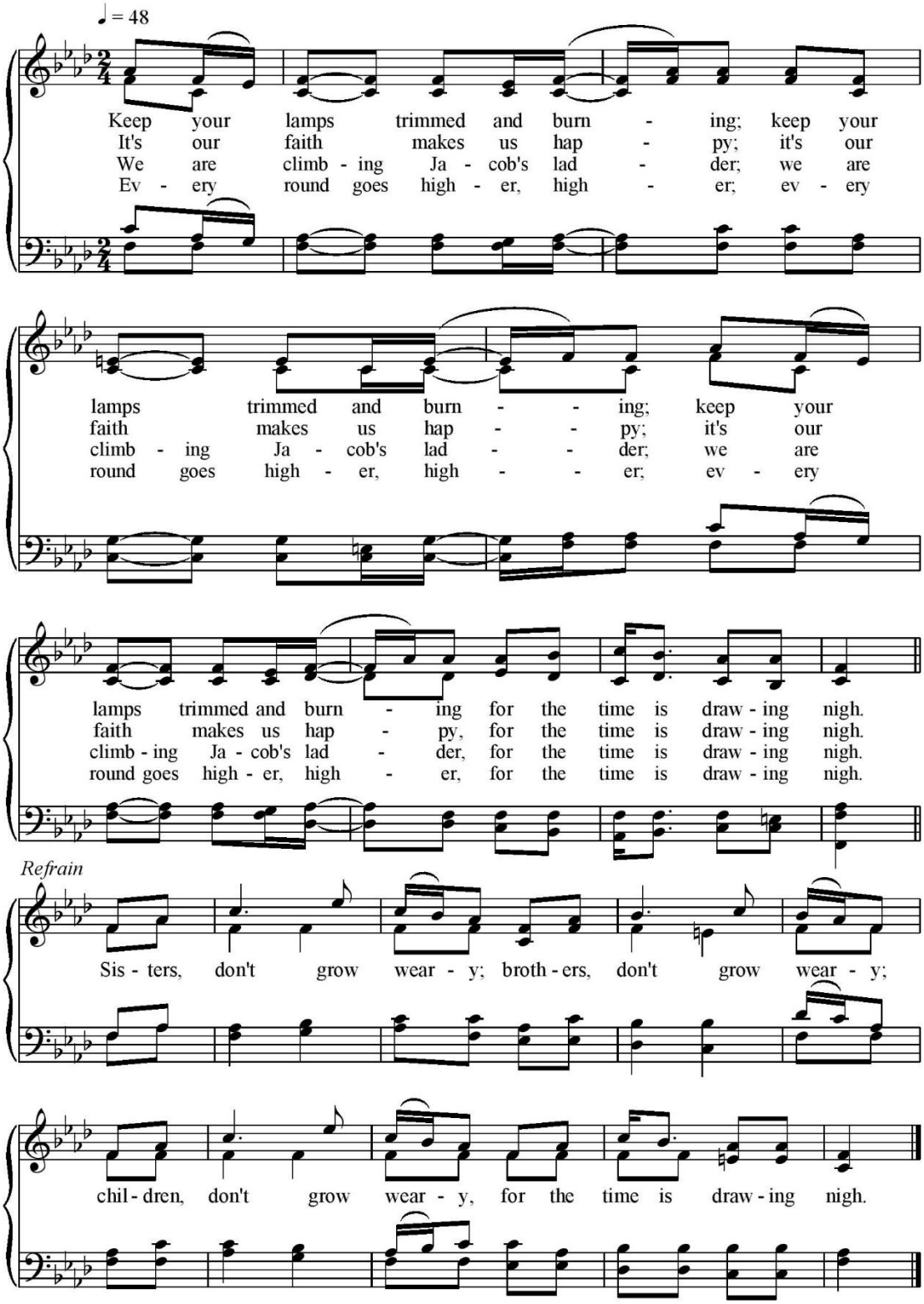
3 Yes, Amen! Let all adore You
High on your eternal throne;
Crowns and empires fall before You,
Claim the kingdom for Your own:
Come, Lord Jesus, Come, Lord Jesus,
Come, Lord Jesus, Everlasting Christ, come down!

*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE The King Shall Come When Morning Dawns arr. David N. Johnson

The Advent Wreath liturgy today is adapted from *Call and Response: Litanies for Congregational Prayer*, by Fran Pratt.

Keep Your Lamps Trimmed and Burning



WORDS: African American Spiritual (Matthew 25:1-13; Genesis 28:10-17)
MUSIC: African American Spiritual

KEEP YOUR LAMPS
7.7.7.7 with refrain

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