FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH OF BETHLEHEM

Traditional Service
Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 18, 2022

The Service for the Lord's Day

WE GATHER

PRELUDE Of the Father's Love Begotten arr. J. Burt Carlson

WELCOME
*Advent Wreath Lighting

In the waiting and the tension, you are teaching us the characteristics of true love, God:
Patience, Courage, Gentleness, Honesty, Kindness, Freedom.

As we light this candle, we celebrate the Love we experience in Christ. (*Light fourth Candle)*
We like to imagine that moment Love became incarnate: clear, still, peaceful;
Perfect conditions for Love's emergence; Perfect timing for Love's expansion.
It's in quiet that Love has its purest voice. It's in stillness that Love finds its rhythm.

And indeed, Love smiled upon us that day, its face beaming:
A tiny voice bawling out Love's insistence; a tiny heart beating out Love's cadence.
Shh, we can still hear it:
I love you. I love. I am Love.
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

*Please stand if you are able

*GATHERING HYMN #12

People, Look East BESANCON

1 People, look east. The time is near
Of the crowning of the year.
Make your house fair as you are able,
Trim the hearth and set the table.
People, look east and sing today:
Love, the guest, is on the way.

2 Furrows, be glad. Though earth is bare,
One more seed is planted there:
Give up your strength the seed to nourish,
That in course the flower may flourish.
People, look east and sing today:
Love, the rose, is on the way.

3 Birds, though you long have ceased to build,
Guard the nest that must be filled.
Even the hour when wings are frozen
God for fledging time has chosen.
People, look east and sing today:
Love, the bird, is on the way.

4 Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim
One more light the bowl shall brim,
Shining beyond the frosty weather,
Bright as sun and moon together.
People, look east and sing today:
Love, the star, is on the way.

CALL TO CONFESSON

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Holy God, we wish we were more like Mary, who admitted when she needed help and sought it out from those who loved her. We wish we were more like Elizabeth, who greeted Mary with laughter and joy and cared for her in body and spirit when she was in need. Forgive us for the ways in which we keep to ourselves, neither seeking nor offering help. Give us the courage of Mary and the grace of Elizabeth, so that we may offer blessings with joy, and our souls may magnify your love.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

WE LISTEN

CHILDREN'S SERMON

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE Luke 1:39-55 Bob Hunsicker

Leader: The word of the Lord;

People: Thanks be to God.

SERMON The Rev. J.C. Austin

"On the Threshold"

WE RESPOND

*SERMON HYMN #99

MY SOUL GIVES GLORY TO MY GOD — MORNING SONG

from *Glory to God*, See Insert

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (the Apostles' Creed)

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

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

"Laudamus Te", from Gloria RV 589 — Antonio Vivaldi

Madison Zahorsky and Maggie Pershyn, sopranos

Laudamus te	We praise you,
Benedicimus te	We bless you,
Adoramus te	We adore you,
Glorificamus te	We glorify you.

*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 #2

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus HYFRYDOL

1 Come, Thou long expected Jesus,
Born to set Thy people free;
From our fears and sins release us;
Let us find our rest in Thee.
Israel's Strength and Consolation,
Hope of all the earth Thou art;
Dear Desire of every nation,
Joy of every longing heart.

2 Born Thy people to deliver,
Born a child and yet a King,
Born to reign in us forever,
Now Thy gracious kingdom bring.
By Thine own eternal Spirit
Rule in all our hearts alone;
By Thine all sufficient merit
Raise us to Thy glorious throne.

*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE Fanfare for Christmas Joseph Bridge

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

Published by The General Board of Discipleship of The United Methodist Church, PO Box 340003, Nashville TN 37203.
Website www.gbod.org/worship

My Soul Gives Glory to My God 99

Song of Mary

