FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF BETHLEHEM

Traditional Worship Service
The Second Sunday of Advent

December 7, 2025

The Service for the Lord's Day

WE GATHER
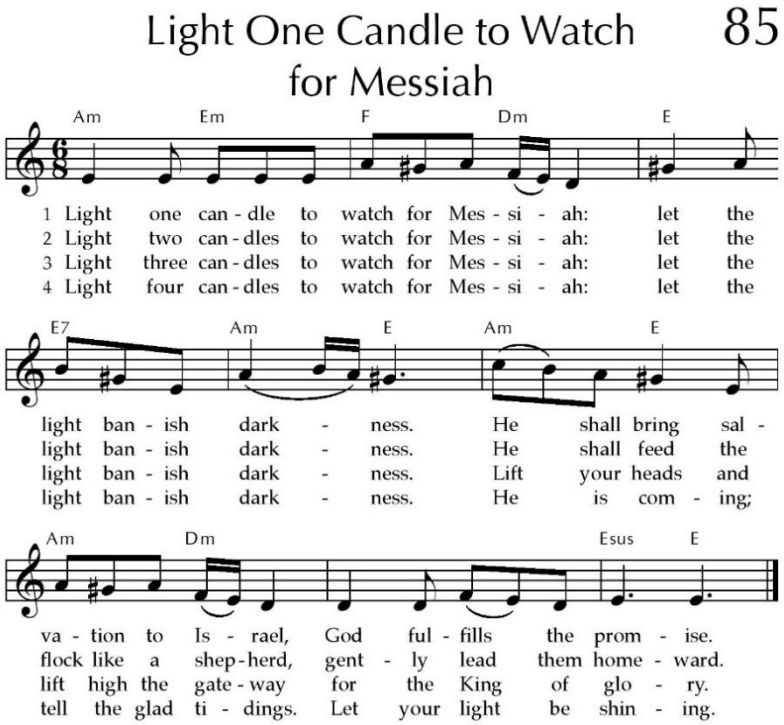
PRELUDE Prelude on a Theme of Orlando Gibbons, "The Angel's Song", Op. 105
Charles V. Stanford

WELCOME AND COMMUNITY LIFE

*ADVENT WREATH LIGHTING Jeanette Classens and Janet Stahl

In a world full of fear, where do you see glimmers of peace?
We see glimmers of peace in the quiet of early morning, when people shake hands, when loved ones say they're sorry, and when the church sings together.
You are right. Even in a fearful world, peace is all around us. Today we light the candle of peace as a reminder of this good news. May this flicker of light help us remember that even in a fearful world, peace is present. We only have to look for it.
Thanks be to God! Amen.

*SUNG RESPONSE
Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah (from *God to Glory*) – verse 2 TIF IN VELDELE



*Please stand as you are able

*PASSING OF THE PEACE

*GATHERING HYMN #9
O Come, O Come, Emmanuel VENI EMMANUEL

WE CONFESS

CALL TO CONFESSON

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

On-the-move God, we have every reason to hold onto hope. We have every reason to believe that spring will come, that flowers will bloom, that the sun will rise. And yet, too often hope slips through our fingers. With anxious hearts we cry out to you, "Will change ever come? Will things ever get better? Will I ever make a difference?" Soothe our wandering hearts and show us the places where the sun is shining. Show us the places where you are on the move. With open hearts we pray, amen.

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

Family of faith, in our honesty, **we are heard.**
In our worries, **we are held.**
In our failings, **we are forgiven.**
In our fear, **we are not alone.**
Friends, this is the good news of the gospel!
When we're running out of hope, God is still at work.
Thanks be to God! **Amen.**

WE LISTEN

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE
Hebrew Scripture: Isaiah 43:19-21 Pamela Swank
Gospel: Matthew 11:1-11

Leader: The word of the Lord;
People: Thanks be to God.

SERMON Rev. Karen Kinney

"Is It Worth It?"

WE RESPOND

MOMENT FOR SILENT REFLECTION

Reflect on this statement: *"Advent does not require us to manufacture hope. It invites us to bring our emptied hope to JESUS, TO ask the hard QUESTIONS, AND to listen again for signs of God's nearness."* How is the hope you bring worth it?

*SERMON HYMN

Looking Out a Prison Window (from *A Sanctified Art* – see insert) IRBY

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We have seen the valley. We have seen a sky without stars. We have seen the longest night, and *still* we believe. We believe in a with-us God. We believe in the hope of tomorrow. We believe that good news is louder than fear. We believe this good news is for all people. So even when our knees shake, even when our voice trembles, even when fear is all around us, we will hold onto that good news. We will reach for each other. We will look for God in our midst. We will sing songs of joy. We will proclaim: *Unto us, love is born.* We have seen the longest night, and we have seen unimaginable love. So *still*, we believe. Amen.

MINUTE FOR MISSION AND OFFERING

Call to Give

Offertory In the Bleak Midwinter Harold Darke

Chancel Choir

In the bleak midwinter, frosty wind made moan
Earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone
Snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow
In the bleak midwinter, long ago

Our God, Heaven cannot hold Him, nor Earth sustain
Heaven and Earth shall flee away when He comes to reign
In the bleak midwinter, a stable place sufficed
The Lord God Almighty, Jesus Christ

Enough for Him, whom Cherubim worship night and day
A breastful of milk and a mangerful of hay
Enough for Him, whom angels fall down before
The ox and ass and camel which adore

What can I give Him, poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb
If I were a wise man, I would do my part
Yet what I can, I give Him, give my heart
Give my heart

*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

THE LORD'S SUPPER

Invitation to the Lord's Table

The Great Thanksgiving

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.

Words of Institution

Sharing the Bread and Cup

Communion Music Interlude on PICARDY — Paul Manz

Unison Prayer after Communion

Loving God, in a world racked with fear, you gather us together. You set the table. You meet us here. You nourish our bodies as you nourish our spirits. You remind us that this is a joyful feast, and that fear cannot win every time. So with renewed courage, with renewed hope, with renewed conviction, send us out into the world. Help us to feed others as you have fed us. With gratitude we pray, amen.

*SENDING HYMN — #36

In the Bleak Midwinter — CRANHAM

*BENEDICTION

In a fearful world, may you look for God's spirit. May you reach for each other's hands. May you choose courage whenever you can. And in all things, may you remember that good news is louder than fear. In the name of the one who calls, the one who sends, and the one who journeys with—go in peace and be not afraid. Amen.

POSTLUDE The King Shall Come When Morning Dawns — arr. David N. Johnson
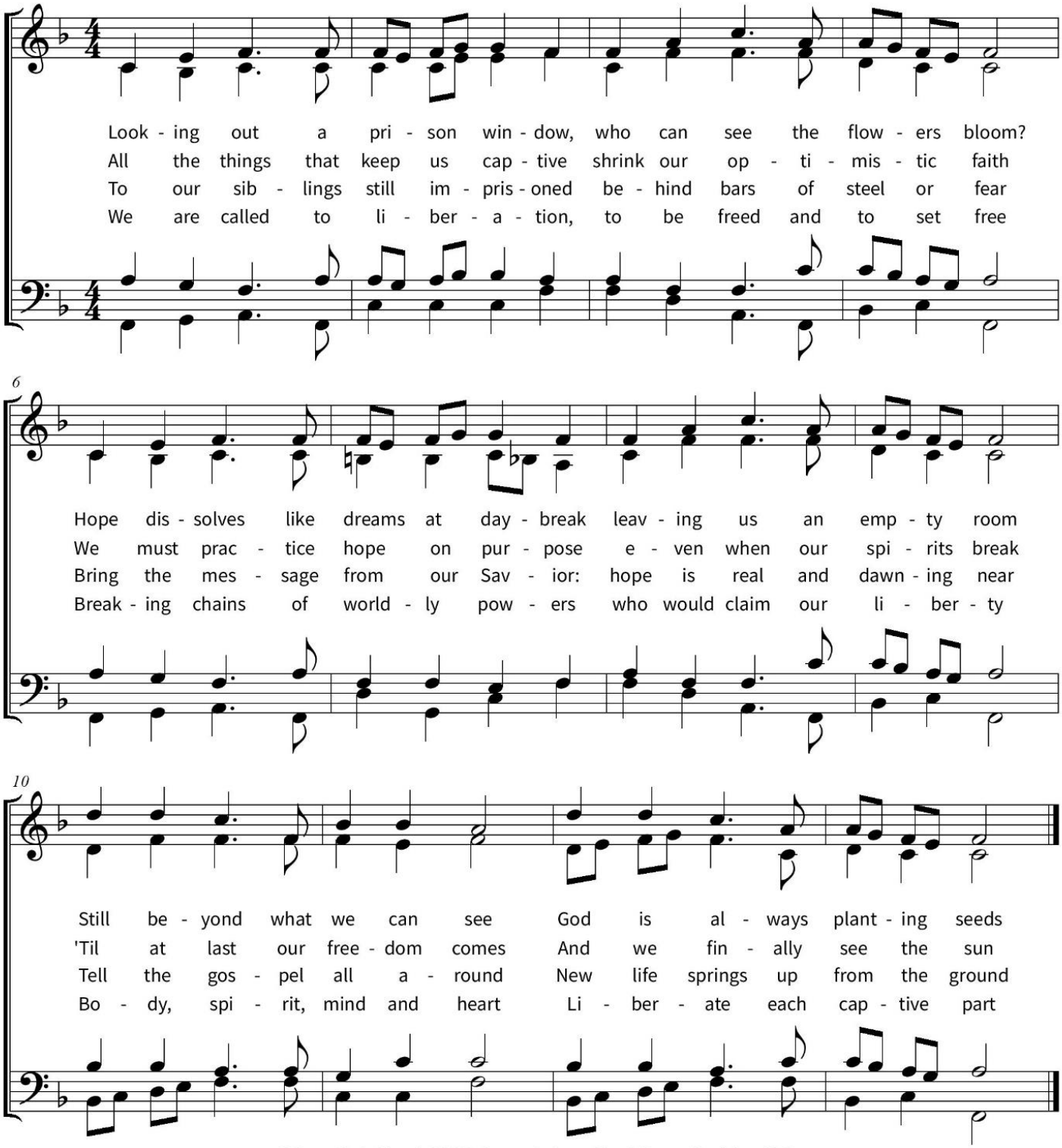
You're welcome to stay and enjoy the Postlude or to depart while the music is played.
Go in peace to love and serve the Lord!

Looking Out a Prison Window

IRBY 8.7.8.7.7.7

Words by Anna Strickland, 2025

Music by Henry Gauntlett, 1849



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