FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH OF BETHLEHEM

Traditional Worship
The Third Sunday of Advent

December 15, 2024

The Service for the Lord's Day

WE GATHER

PRELUDE "Greensleeves" from *Four Carol Preludes* Richard Purvis

WELCOME

*ADVENT WREATH LIGHTING Linda Filipovits, Laura Huffard, Joanne Kelhart, Judy Smullen

One: In a weary and worn world, how do we begin again? Where do we start?

All: Let us start small. Let us begin with what is right in front of us. Let us do the good that is ours to do, and let us do it with joy!

One: Yes, let us begin with joy. Today we light the candles of hope, peace, and joy.

All: May these lights remind us of what could be. May these lights inspire action. May the warmth of these lights fill us with joy.

One: May it be so! Amen.

*ADVENT WREATH LIGHTING RESPONSE #3
Comfort, Comfort You My People (Verse 3) PSALM 42

3 Make ye straight what long was crooked,
Make the rougher places plain:
Let your hearts be true and humble,
As befits God's holy reign,

For the glory of the Lord
Now o'er earth is shed abroad;
And all flesh shall see the token
That God's word is never broken.

*Please stand if you are able

*PASSING OF THE PEACE

*GATHERING HYMN #1

Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus STUTTGART

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.

2 Israel's strength and consolation,
Hope of all the earth Thou art;
Dear desire of every nation,
Joy of every longing heart.

3 Born Thy people to deliver,
Born a child and yet a King,
Born to reign in us forever,
Now Thy gracious kingdom bring.

4 By Thine own eternal Spirit
Rule in all our hearts alone;
By Thine all sufficient merit
Raise us to Thy glorious throne.

WE CONFESS

CALL TO CONFESSON

PRAYER OF CONFESSION AND ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Liberating God, there are days when the world can feel like it's crumbling. There are days when I doubt that I can make a difference. I ask myself, "What could these two hands do? What could this one voice say?" Shake me free of my own paralysis and self-doubt. Remind me that I am not called to fix everything. I am simply called to do the good that is mine to do. With hope in my heart and a fire in my bones, I pray. Amen.

WE LISTEN

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE Luke 3:7-16 Linda Filipovits

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

SERMON Rev. Lindsey Altvater Clifton

"Words for the Beginning: Do the Good that is Yours to Do"

WE RESPOND

MOMENT FOR REFLECTION

SERMON HYMN #13

Prepare the Way, O Zion BEREDEN V

1 Prepare the way, O Zion,
your Christ is drawing near!
Let every hill and valley
a level way appear.
Greet One who comes in glory,
foretold in sacred story.
Oh blest is Christ that came
in God's most holy name.

2 He brings God's rule, O Zion;
he comes from heaven above.
His rule is peace and freedom,
and justice, truth, and love.
Lift high your praise resounding,
for grace and joy abounding.
Oh blest is Christ that came
in God's most holy name.

3 Fling wide your gates, O Zion;
your Savior's rule embrace.
His tidings of salvation
proclaim in every place.
All lands will bow before him,
their voices will adore him.
Oh blest is Christ that came
in God's most holy name.

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

One: John the Baptist's followers once asked him, "What shall we do?" Church, knowing the state of the world, what is your answer?

All: In the Spirit of Jesus Christ, we say: Do not be discouraged by the weight of the world. Instead, hold fast to hope. Roll up your sleeves. Feed the hungry. Tend the garden. If you have two coats, give one away. Do the good that is yours to do. In doing so, you will see God. For this we believe: small acts of love can make a difference. Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND 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.

OFFERING

Call to Give

Offertory Sir Christemas William Mathias

Chancel Choir

Nowell, nowell.
Who is there that singeth so,
I am here, Sir Christèmas.
Welcome, my lord Sir Christèmas!
Welcome to all, both more and less!
Come near, come near, come near,
Nowell, nowell.

Dieu vous garde, beaux sieurs,
Tidings I you bring:
A maid hath borne a child full young,
Witch causeth you to sing:
Nowell, nowell.

Christ is now born of a pure maid,
Born of a pure maid;
In an ox-stall he is laid,
Wherefore sing we at a brayde:
Nowell, nowell.

Buvez bien, buvez bien
Par toute la compagnie.
Make good cheer and be right merry,
And sing with us now joyfully
Nowell, nowell.

*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

Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn *(*from *Glory to God;* see insert*)* REJOICE, REJOICE

*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE Elevation Sur le Noel Alexander Guilmant

Flowers are given by Darla and Glenn Rossetti in memory of their parents

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

107 Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn



1 A - wake! A - wake, and greet the new morn, for an - gels
2 To us, to all in sor - row and fear, Em - man - u -
3 In dark - est night his com - ing shall be, when all the
4 Re - joice, re - joice, take heart in the night. Though dark the



her - ald its dawn - ing. Sing out your joy, for soon he is
el comes a - sing - ing; his hum - ble song is qui - et and
world is de - spair - ing, as morn - ing light so qui - et and
win - ter and cheer - less, the ris - ing sun shall crown you with



born, be - hold! the Child of our long - ing. Come as a ba - by
near, yet fills the earth with its ring - ing; mu - sic to heal the
free, so warm and gen - tle and car - ing. Then shall the mute break
light; be strong and lov - ing and fear - less. Love be our song and



weak and poor, to bring all hearts to - geth - er, he o - pens
bro - ken soul and hymns of lov - ing - kind - ness. The thun - der
forth in song, the lame shall leap in won - der, the weak be
love our prayer and love our end - less sto - ry; may God fill



wide the heaven - ly door and lives now in - side us for - ev - er.
of his an - thems rolls to shat - ter all ha - tred and vio - lence.
raised a - bove the strong, and weap - ons be bro - ken a - sun - der.
ev - ery day we share and bring us at last in - to glo - ry.