LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN

Presbyterian Church

IN PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

Earth, strike up your music, birds that sing and bells that ring;
heaven hath answering music for all angels soon to sing.
Earth, put on your whitest bridal robe of spotless snow,
for Christmas bringeth Jesus, brought for us so low.
—Christina Rossetti, "Christmas Eve"

DECEMBER 17, 2023 • SANCTUARY SERVICE

** Congregation standing as you are able*

Order of Worship

Prelude "On Jordan's Banks the Baptist's Cry"
arr. Aaron David Miller

"On Jordan's banks the Baptist's cry announces that the Lord is nigh;
awake and hearken, for he brings glad tiding of the King of kings."

Welcome and announcements Wil Nettleton, pastor of mission & worship

*** Call to worship** based on Isaiah 9

Leader: The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned.

All: **We praise the Lord Most High! For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.**

Leader: Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end.

All: **He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.**

*** Hymn of praise 218,** vv. 1, 2, 5 "Angels, from the Realms of Glory"

Angels, from the realms of glory, wing your flight o'er all the earth;
ye who sang creation's story, now proclaim Messiah's birth:
Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn King.

Shepherds in the fields abiding, watching o'er your flocks by night,
God with man is now residing, yonder shines the infant Light:
Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn King.

All creation, join in praising God the Father, Spirit, Son;
evermore your voices raising to th'eternal Three in One:
Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn King.
text by James Montgomery, 1816, 1825; music by Henry Smart, 1867, REGENT SQUARE

*** Prayer of adoration**

Sacrament of baptism

Luisa and Drew Baxley Sr. bringing Andrew Shelton Baxley Jr.

Call to confession based on Titus 2

The grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope—the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. He gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, a people eager to do what is good.

Silent prayers of confession

Assurance of God's pardoning grace based on John 3 and Colossians 1

Leader: God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.

All: We joyfully give thanks to the Father, for he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

*** Hymn of assurance 213** "What Child Is This"

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 shepherds guard and angels sing:
haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary.

Why lies he in such mean estate, where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear; for sinners here the silent Word is pleading.
Nails, spear, shall pierce him through; the cross be borne for me, for you:
hail, hail the Word made flesh, the babe, the son of Mary.

So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh; come, peasant, king, to own him;
The King of kings salvation brings, let loving hearts enthrone him.
Raise, raise the song on high, the virgin sings her lullaby:
joy, joy for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mary.

traditional English carol, adapted by William C. Dix, ca. 1865; English melody, GREENSLEEVES

Lighting the candle of joy

Leader: There were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord."

All: **May the God of hope fill us with all joy and peace as we trust in him, so that we may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.**
from Luke 2:8-11, Romans 15:13

Worship in the giving of God's tithe and our offerings

Offertory "Hark! the Herald Angels Sing" Chancel Choir

Choir: Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King;
peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!"
Joyful, all ye nations, rise, join the triumph of the skies;
with th'angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

Christ, by highest heav'n adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord!
Late in time behold him come, offspring of the Virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see; hail th'incarnate Deity,
pleased with us in flesh to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel.
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

All: **Hail the heav'n-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings, ris'n with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by, born that man no more may die,
born to raise the sons of earth, born to give them second birth.
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"**
text by Charles Wesley, 1739; music by Felix Mendelssohn, 1840; arr. Dan Forrest © 2015 Beckenhorst Press, Inc. CCLI Lic. #152036

*** Doxology**

**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 and thanksgiving**

*** Scripture reading from Luke 1:5-25** Wil Nettleton

5In the days of Herod, king of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, of
the division of Abijah. And he had a wife from the daughters of Aaron, and
her name was Elizabeth. 6And they were both righteous before God, walking
blamelessly in all the commandments and statutes of the Lord. 7But they had no
child, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were advanced in years.

8Now while he was serving as priest before God when his division was on duty,
9according to the custom of the priesthood, he was chosen by lot to enter the
temple of the Lord and burn incense. 10And the whole multitude of the people
were praying outside at the hour of incense. 11And there appeared to him an
angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense. 12And
Zechariah was troubled when he saw him, and fear fell upon him. 13But the
angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard,
and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John.
14And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, 15for he
will be great before the Lord. And he must not drink wine or strong drink, and
he will be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb. 16And he
will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God, 17and he will go
before him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to
the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready for
the Lord a people prepared."

18And Zechariah said to the angel, "How shall I know this? For I am an old
man, and my wife is advanced in years." 19And the angel answered him, "I am
Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I was sent to speak to you and to
bring you this good news. 20And behold, you will be silent and unable to speak
until the day that these things take place, because you did not believe my
words, which will be fulfilled in their time." 21And the people were waiting for
Zechariah, and they were wondering at his delay in the temple. 22And when he
came out, he was unable to speak to them, and they realized that he had seen
a vision in the temple. And he kept making signs to them and remained mute.
23And when his time of service was ended, he went to his home.

24After these days his wife Elizabeth conceived, and for five months she kept
herself hidden, saying, 25"Thus the Lord has done for me in the days when he
looked on me, to take away my reproach among people."

This is the Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Prayer of preparation for the study of God's Word

Sermon "Miraculous Births: John the Baptist"
Brian Salter, lead pastor

1. A familiar situation (vv. 5-7)
2. An angel's proclamation (vv. 8-17)
3. A father's disbelief (vv. 18-23)
4. A son conceived (vv. 24-25)

Pastoral prayer

*** Hymn of response 199,** vv. 1, 2, 5, 6 "See, amid the Winter's Snow"

See, amid the winter's snow, born for us on earth below,
see the tender Lamb appears, promised from eternal years.

Refrain: Hail, thou ever blessed morn! Hail, redemption's happy dawn!
Sing through all Jerusalem, Christ is born in Bethlehem.

Lo, within a manger lies he who built the starry skies:
he who, throned in height sublime, sits amid the cherubim. *Refrain*

Sacred infant, all divine, what a tender love was thine,
thus to come from highest bliss down to such a world as this! *Refrain*

Teach, O teach us, holy child, by thy face so meek and mild,
teach us to resemble thee, in thy sweet humility. *Refrain*
text by Edward Caswall, 1851; music by John Goss, 1870

*** Benediction**

*** Congregational response** "Threefold Amen"

*** Postlude** "O Hail This Brightest Day of Days"
J. S. Bach

Musicians for this week:

Joy Gibbons – director
Joshua Knight – organ, piano
Maddie Lee – piano
Nate Oster – timpani

Celebrating the baptism of Andrew Shelton Baxley Jr. at the 9:30 service in the sanctuary are his parents, Luisa and Drew Baxley Sr., and his grandparents, Catherine and Robert Crabtree.

Celebrating the baptism of Charles Bern Maclellan at the 11:00 service in the sanctuary are his parents, Caroline and Lee Maclellan, and his grandparents, Sylvia and John Walters and Lisa and Scott Maclellan.

Celebrating the baptism of Tilly James Cheek at the 9:30 service in the fellowship hall are her parents, Nellie and AJ Cheek, and her grandparents, Marty and Tim Johnson and Kathryn and Ben Cheek.

Celebrating the baptism of Scottie Phog Woodruff at the 11:00 service in the fellowship hall are his parents, Hope and Zach Woodruff, and his grandparents, Susan Smisson and Melissa and Rodney Woodruff.

The rosebud in the service today is for the birth of Milly Joy Thomas born to Sylvie and Noah Thomas on December 9.

RESULTS OF CONGREGATIONAL MEETING ON 12/10/23

We are glad to report that, after counting the ballots, we did have a quorum and the full slate of officer nominees was approved. On the same ballot, Elizabeth Doak was elected as a new director to serve a four-year term on the board of LMPC, Inc. The members approved to commence officer training for the class of 2027 are listed below:

ELDER NOMINEES

Trey Carr
Lea Courtney
Kelly Kapic
Steve Kaufmann
Keith Michaels
Avery Mixon
Marshall Rowe
Nathan Thompson
Joseph Wingfield
Rob Witcher

DEACON NOMINEES

Eric Chandler
William Darby
Cross Doster
Mark Ellis
John Holland
Ryan Lusk
Cal Marshall
Jeff Nix
Matthew Smisson
Mayes Starke
Newton Wiggins

WEEKLY ANNOUNCEMENTS

ON SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24, CHRISTMAS EVE, join us for our Lord's Day worship services at 3:00 p.m., 5:00 p.m., or 6:30 p.m. in the sanctuary. Nursery will be provided at 3:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m. only. The 5:00 p.m. service will be livestreamed. During these services, the offering taken will be for the mercy fund. The Mercy Fund Committee of Lookout Mountain Presbyterian Church assists those within our church membership in crisis or trial. Job loss, medical expenses, and natural disaster are just some of the needs addressed by this fund. If you would like to contribute, come prepared for that moment in the service.

WOMEN'S WINTER SUPPER is a great opportunity to connect with women across various ages and stages of life. Join us for a fellowship dinner at an individual home on Thursday, January 18 at 6:00 p.m. Bring your friends, and register on Realm Connect by January 15. Interested in hosting? Contact Caroline Scruggs, caroline@lmpc.org.

THE NEXT INTRO TO LMPC CLASS will be held January 19–21. We will meet Friday from 5:30 to 9:00 p.m., Saturday from 8:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., and Sunday during the Sunday school hour at 11:00 a.m. If you are an adult who wants to join the church, or you would like to learn about what we believe, this class is for you. Register on Realm Connect by January 8.

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN A SHORT-TERM OPPORTUNITY assisting with childcare during a Pioneers conference in Greece in March 2024, please contact Stephanie Young at stephanie@lmpc.org.

To find out more about happenings at LMPC, visit lmpc.org/events.

GIVING UPDATE THROUGH DECEMBER 13, 2023

Annual Budget: $5,641,820
Giving YTD: $4,136,932
Remaining Gifts Needed: $1,504,888 (27% of budget)
Outstanding Pledge Balance: $140,515
Unpledged Giving Need: $1,364,373

We're grateful for the generosity at LMPC so far this year. As we are currently behind last year's giving, please consider contributing toward the 2023 budget if you haven't yet this year. You can find multiple ways to give to LMPC at lmpc.org/give.

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS ARE GIVEN IN MEMORY OF:

Joe Andrews by Amy, Crawford, Anna Bradley, and Holland Collett

Belva Bailey by Donald Bailey Sr.

Peggy Christine Ballenger by Lee and Ross Ballenger

Nat Belz by Mary and Steve Kaufmann

Elizabeth (Betsy) Caulkins Bookout by Mr. and Mrs. Wilford Caulkins IV, Caroline Caulkins Bentley, Anne and Trey Carr, Caroline, Catherine, and Margaret Carr, Katie and Don Morton

Dr. Richard J. Bowers by Becky Bowers and family

Donnie Brock by Mr. and Mrs. Wilford Caulkins IV

Mr. and Mrs. Winford Brock by Mr. and Mrs. Wilford Caulkins IV

Greg Brown by Katie and Don Morton

Kaky and Hugh Brown by Katie and Don Morton

Hardwick Caldwell Jr. by Betsy Caldwell

Mr. and Mrs. Wilford Caulkins III by Mr. and Mrs. Wilford Caulkins IV, Caroline Caulkins Bentley, Katie and Don Morton

Charlie Cox by Mary and Steve Kaufmann

Ernestelle and Melvin Durrett by Lisa and Joe Hailey

Konnie Erickson by Dave Erickson

Hans Fleischner by Ann Henley and Doug Perry and family

Margaret (Mrs. George) Fontaine by Katie and Don Morton

Betty Fox by Ray Fox

Lynda Fray by David Fray, Kristin and Dan Wykoff, and family

Julia and Bill Hailey by Lisa and Joe Hailey

Merilyn and Ross Hall by Stephanie and David Wharton

Mr. and Mrs. C. H. Halvorson by Marni and Steve Halvorson

Ed Harker by Brenda Harker

B. Daniel Harnsberger by his children and grandchildren

Charles H. Harris III by Lee and Ross Ballenger

Don L. Hartman by Lynn Hartman and family

Richard H. Lindeman Sr. by his family

Aaron Madaris by Mr. and Mrs. Wilford Caulkins IV

The Very Rev. and Mrs. Norman Milbank by Marni and Steve Halvorson

McAuley Millen by Beth, McKinley, Anna-Blair, and Wright

Pat and Bob Monroe by their family

Gary "Pop" Morris by Beth, McKinley, Paul, Anna-Blair, and Wright

Alfred DeWitt Perry by his grandchildren, Ash, Della, Clara Parker, Kappy, and Hennie Perry

Anne and Peter Platt by Anne and Trey Carr, Caroline, Catherine, and Margaret Carr

Doug Sizemore by Evelyn Sizemore and Stephanie, Mike, and JD Nadeja

Edward Steckel by Ann Henley and Doug Perry and family

Irene Stone by Caroline and Hugh Morrow

Mercy Crea Thomas by the LMPC staff

Ellen Thompson by the Thompson family

Barb Vermeer by Dan Vermeer and family

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS ARE GIVEN IN HONOR OF:

Andrew, Anna Lee, Phoebe, Wisehart, and John Mitchell Mutter by Carol and Mitch Mutter

Justin, Kathryn, Eliza Belle, and Nora Mutter by Carol and Mitch Mutter

Matt, Sarah, and June Mutter by Carol and Mitch Mutter

Our Precious Small Group by Ann Henley and Doug Perry

Ann Henley and Doug Perry by Beth, McKinley, Anna-Blair, and Wright

Staff and Congregation of LMPC by Parke and Bob Fowler, Virginia and Mark Spykerman

Zach Walley by Betsy Caldwell

Peg and Bob Wharton by Stephanie and David Wharton

ADVENT 2023

CHRISTMAS CAROLING

Sunday, December 17

5:00 p.m. in the community

CHRISTMAS EVE*

Sunday, December 24

LESSONS AND CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT *nursery available at 3:00 and 5:00 p.m. only*

3:00, 5:00, and 6:30 p.m. in the sanctuary

**Please join us for one of these Lord's Day worship services; our morning services have been moved to these times.*