



LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN
Presbyterian Church

IN PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

Man's Maker was made man that he, Ruler of the stars, might nurse at his mother's breast; that the Bread might hunger, the Fountain thirst, the Light sleep, the Way be tired on its journey; that Truth might be accused of false witness, the Teacher be beaten with whips, the Foundation be suspended on wood; that Strength might grow weak; that the Healer might be wounded; that Life might die.

—St. Augustine

DECEMBER 22, 2024 • SANCTUARY SERVICE

* Congregation standing as you are able

Order of Worship

Prelude

“Gesu Bambino”

arr. Owen Griffin

When blossoms flowered 'mid the snows,
upon a winter night, was born the Child,
the Christmas Rose, the King of love and light.

Welcome and greetings

Wil Nettleton, pastor of mission & worship

* Call to worship

from 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 208

“O Come, All Ye Faithful”

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
come and behold him born the King of angels;

Refrain: O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

God of God, Light of Light;
lo, he abhors not the Virgin's womb:
very God, begotten, not created; *Refrain*

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above;
glory to God in the highest; *Refrain*

Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning:
Jesus, to thee be all glory giv'n;
Word of the Father, late in flesh appearing; *Refrain*

*Latin hymn attr. to John Francis Wade, 1751; music from John Francis Wade's Cantus Diversi, 1751; ADESTE
FIDELES*

* Prayer of adoration

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.

Hymn of confession 201, vv. 1, 4

“O Little Town of Bethlehem”

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie;
above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by:
yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting Light;
the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

O holy child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray;
cast out our sin and enter in; be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel.
text by Phillips Brooks, 1868; music by Lewis Redner, 1868, ST. LOUIS

Silent prayers of confession

Assurance of God's pardoning grace

based on Colossians 2

In Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and we have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority. When we were dead in our sins and in the uncircumcision of our sinful nature, God made us alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross. And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.

Once in royal David’s city stood a lowly cattle shed,
where a mother laid her baby in a manger for his bed:
Mary was that mother mild, Jesus Christ her little child.

He came down to earth from heaven who is God and Lord of all,
and his shelter was a stable, and his cradle was a stall:
with the poor, and mean, and lowly, lived on earth our Savior holy.

Not in that poor lowly stable, with the oxen standing by,
we shall see him, but in heaven, set at God’s right hand on high;
when like stars his children crowned all in white shall wait around.
text by Cecil Frances Alexander, 1848; music by Henry J. Gauntlett, 1849, IRBY

Lighting the candle of love

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.

John 1:14 and 1 John 4:9-12

Advent prayer

Leader: O Lord our Lord, you have shown us your infinite love in a way that defies comprehension—through the Incarnation. It is in Christ’s example of humility, presence, and sacrifice that we see what love is.

All: **You are the light of the world. Whoever follows you will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.**

Leader: Impress on our hearts how precious your love is. Help us to slow down and fully revel in the good news that we have been given the light of life.

All: **Teach us to walk in that light, as you are in the light, and give us deep and rich fellowship with one another. Fill us so full of your bountiful love that loving our neighbor becomes as natural as breathing. Amen.**

based on John 8 and 1 John 1

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

Offertory

"Whisper! Whisper!"

Chancel Choir

Whisper! Whisper! Tiny baby in a manger lay.
Whisper! Whisper! Baby born today.
Whisper! Whisper! Tiny baby, he sleep in the hay.
Whisper! Whisper! Baby born today.
Shout it out from the highest mountain.
Shout it out; hear what I say.
Shout it out to the hills and valleys.
Tiny baby is born today.

Whisper! Whisper! Tiny baby in a manger lay.
Whisper! Whisper! Baby born today.
Shout it out with a thousand voices.
Shout it out; let the music play.
Shout it out; go tell all the people.
Tiny baby is born today.

Whisper! Whisper! Tiny baby in a manger lay.
Whisper! Whisper! Baby born today.
Whisper! Whisper! Tiny baby, he sleep in the hay.
Whisper! Whisper! Baby born today.

Mary had a baby, yes, my Lord.
Glory, hallelu!

Whisper! Whisper! Tiny baby in a manger lay.
Whisper! Whisper! Baby born today.
Shout it out from the highest mountain.
Shout it out; hear what I say.
Shout it out to the hills and valleys.
Tiny baby is born today.

Whisper! Whisper! Tiny baby in a manger lay.
Whisper! Whisper! Baby born today.
Whisper! Whisper! Tiny baby, he sleep in the hay.
Whisper! Whisper! Baby born today. Whisper! Whisper!
text and music by Jay Althouse, 1993

*** 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 Matthew 1:18-25**

Brian Kvale

¹⁸Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly.

²⁰But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." ²²All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: ²³"Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel" (which means, God with us).

²⁴When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, ²⁵but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.

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

Prayer of preparation for the study of God's Word

Sermon

"The Birth of Jesus"

Chad Middlebrooks, pastor of discipleship

1. The moment of crisis: Joseph faces confusion. (vv. 18-19)
2. The moment of comfort: Joseph receives revelation. (vv. 20-23)
3. The moment of choosing: Joseph humbly trusts and obeys. (vv. 24-25)

Pastoral prayer

*** Hymn of response**

“The First Noël”

The first Noël the angel did say
was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
in fields where they lay keeping their sheep
on a cold winter’s night that was so deep.

Refrain: Noël, Noël, Noël, Noël, born is the King of Israel.

And by the light of that same star,
three wise men came from country far;
to seek for a King was their intent,
and to follow the star wherever it went. *Refrain*

Then let us all, with one accord,
sing praises to our heav’nly Lord
that hath made heav’n and earth of naught,
and with his blood mankind hath bought. *Refrain*
traditional English Carol, 17th cent.

*** Benediction**

*** Congregational response**

“Threefold Amen”

*** Postlude**

Fanfare on “Hark! the Herald Angels Sing”
Gordon Young
(*words for meditation may be found in your hymnal, #203*)

Musicians for this week:

Joy Gibbons – choral director

Joshua Knight – organ

WEEKLY ANNOUNCEMENTS

BRING YOUR FAMILY OR SMALL GROUP AND GO CAROLING today at 1:30 p.m. at Morning Pointe at Happy Valley or 3:15 p.m. at Thrive at Brow Wood. Or, come to both! Please register on Realm Connect.

THE CHURCH OFFICE will be closed December 24, 25, and 26 for Christmas, and January 1 for New Year's Day. On Friday, December 27, the staff will be working off-site due to installation of fiber optic cable; you may call the church office number, 423-821-4528, for assistance.

ON TUESDAY, DECEMBER 24, join us for a Christmas Eve service at 3:00, 5:00, or 6:30 p.m. in the sanctuary. Nursery will be provided at 3:00 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.

LMPC'S MOTHER'S DAY OUT PROGRAM needs a teacher's aide and substitutes, starting in January. These are paid positions, for Tuesdays and Thursdays only. Please contact MDO Director Megan DeMoss, megan@lmpc.org, for more information.

WOMEN'S WINTER SUPPERS: Invite your friends and neighbors to dinner on Tuesday, January 21 at 6:00 p.m. Please register on Realm Connect by January 16. If you are interested in hosting, please email Caroline Scruggs at caroline@lmpc.org.

LMPC HAS A JOB OPENING for the position of Facilities Manager. See the job description at lmpc.org/jobs and direct all inquiries to margaretlowery@lmpc.org.

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

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS ARE GIVEN IN MEMORY OF:

Peggy Christine Ballenger by Lee and Ross Ballenger

Emery Balthrop by his family

John Bennett by Laura Bennett and family

Betsy Bookout by Carolyn and Bill Caulkins and Caroline and Larry Bentley

Dr. Richard J. Bowers by Mrs. Richard Bowers

Donnie Brock by Carolyn and Bill Caulkins

Mr. and Mrs. Winford Brock by Carolyn and Bill Caulkins

Greg Brown Sr. by Zane, Greg Jr., Lynn, and Ben Brown, Kaki and Jay Jenkins, and Katie and Don Morton

Mr. and Mrs. Hugh A. Brown by Zane, Greg Jr., Lynn, and Ben Brown, Kaki and Jay Jenkins, and Katie and Don Morton

Hardwick Caldwell Jr. by an anonymous donor

Thomas Martin Carr Jr. by Ann Henley and Doug Perry

Mr. and Mrs. Wilford Caulkins III by Carolyn and Bill Caulkins and Caroline and Larry Bentley

Atticus Bartholomew Centurion Doe by the Doe family

Konnie Erickson by Dave Erickson and Greta and Marc Erickson

Lynda Fray by David Fray and the Dan Wykoff family

Cash Ellerbe Godbold Jr. by Sarah and Jon Risley

Merilyn and Ross Hall by Stephanie and David Wharton

Evelyn and C. H. Halvorson by Marni and Steve Halvorson

Marian and Charles Harris III by Lee and Ross Ballenger

Ellie and Russ Heddendorf by Ruth Ann and Norm Leduc

Lizzy (Elizabeth) Bookout Hood by Carolyn and Bill Caulkins and Caroline and Larry Bentley

Dick Lindeman by his family

Aaron Madaris by Carolyn and Bill Caulkins

Jack McEwen by Merrile and John Stroud

Corinne G. McGee by her extended family

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

Betty and L.D. Miller Jr. by Mrs. Richard Bowers

Michael Mooney by his family

Beebe Phillips by Merrile and John Stroud

Taylor Phillips by Merrile and John Stroud

Scott Probasco Jr. by Zane, Greg Jr., Lynn, and Ben Brown, and Kaki and Jay Jenkins

Timothy Wenhui Risley by Sarah and Jon Risley

Jeff Stroud by Merrile and John Stroud

Mercy Crea Thomas by Lolli and Papa John King and Mamaw and Grandpa Thomas

Ellen Melinda Thompson by the Thompson family and the LMPC Communion Setup Committee

Barbara Ann Vermeer by Ann and Dan Vermeer

Chandler White by Ann and Dan Vermeer

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS ARE GIVEN IN HONOR OF:

Joy Gibbons by Stephanie and David Wharton

Janice and Wes Moore by Stephanie and David Wharton

Barb and Joe Novenson by Stephanie and David Wharton

Our family by Ann Henley and Doug Perry

Zach Walley by an anonymous donor

Peg and Bob Wharton by Stephanie and David Wharton

ADVENT 2024

CHRISTMAS CAROLING*

Sunday, December 22

1:30 p.m. Morning Pointe at Happy Valley

3:15 p.m. Thrive at Brow Wood

CHRISTMAS EVE

Tuesday, December 24

LESSONS AND CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT

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

5:00 p.m. also available by livestream

nursery available at 3:00 and 5:00 p.m. only

**register on Realm Connect*

GIVING UPDATE THROUGH DECEMBER 17, 2024

Annual Budget: \$5,860,000

2024 Giving YTD: \$4,555,279

Remaining Gifts Needed: \$1,304,721

Outstanding Pledge Balance: \$195,786

We're grateful for the generosity at LMPC so far in 2024. As we near the end of the year, please consider how you might contribute towards our mission of glorifying God by growing in grace and giving our lives away on the mountain, in the city, and around the world. Find ways to give at lmpc.org/give.