



LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN
Presbyterian Church

IN PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

*The celebration of Advent is possible only to those who are troubled in soul,
who know themselves to be poor and imperfect,
and who look forward to something greater to come.*

—Dietrich Bonhoeffer

DECEMBER 14, 2025 • SANCTUARY SERVICE

* Congregation standing as you are able

Order of Worship

Prelude

“Marche du Veilleur du Nuit”

Charles-Marie Widor

(words for meditation may be found in your hymnal, #317)

Welcome and greetings

Frank Hitchings, senior associate pastor

* Call to worship

from Isaiah 60 and Luke 2

Leader: Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD rises upon you. See, darkness covers the earth and thick darkness is over the peoples, but the LORD rises upon you and his glory appears over you.

All: **Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests.**

* Hymn of praise 196

“Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus”

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.

Joy to those who long to see thee, Dayspring from on high, appear;
come, thou promised Rod of Jesse, of thy birth we long to hear!
O’er the hills the angels singing new, glad tidings of a birth:
“Go to him, your praises bringing; Christ the Lord has come to earth.”

Come to earth to taste our sadness, he whose glories knew no end;
by his life he brings us gladness, our Redeemer, Shepherd, Friend.
Leaving riches without number, born within a cattle stall;
this the everlasting wonder, Christ was born the Lord of all.

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.

text by Charles Wesley (1744) and Mark Hunt (1978); music by Rowland Pritchard, 1855, HYFRYDOL

*** Prayer of adoration**

Call to confession

from Romans 13 and Proverbs 28

The hour has come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed. The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. Clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature.

He who conceals his sins does not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them finds mercy.

Silent prayers of confession

*** Assurance of God's pardoning grace**

John 3:16-17

For 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.

*** Hymn of assurance 221, vv. 1, 2, 4, 5**

“Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming”

Lo, how a rose e'er blooming from tender stem hath sprung,
of Jesse's lineage coming, as men of old have sung.
It came, a flow'ret bright, amid the cold of winter, when half-spent was the night.

Isaiah 'twas foretold it, the rose I have in mind;
with Mary we behold it, the virgin mother kind.
To show God's love aright she bore to men a Savior, when half-spent was the night.

This flow'r, whose fragrance tender with sweetness fills the air,
dispels with glorious splendor the darkness ev'rywhere.
True man, yet very God; from sin and death he saves us and lightens ev'ry load.

O Savior, child of Mary, who felt our human woe;
O Savior, King of glory, who dost our weakness know,
bring us at length, we pray, to the bright courts of heaven and to the endless day.

German hymn, ca. 1500; music arr. Michael Praetorius, 1609, ES IST EIN' ROS' ENTSPRUNGEN

Advent candle lighting

from Psalm 130 and Psalm 126

Out of the depths I cry to you, O LORD; O Lord, hear my voice. Let your ears be attentive to my cry for mercy. If you, O LORD, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand? But with you there is forgiveness; therefore you are feared. I wait for the LORD, my soul waits, and in his word I put my hope. My soul waits for

the Lord more than watchmen wait for the morning, more than watchmen wait for the morning. O Israel, put your hope in the LORD, for with the LORD is unfailing love and with him is full redemption.

When the LORD brought back the captives to Zion, we were like men who dreamed. Our mouths were filled with laughter, our tongues with songs of joy. Then it was said among the nations, "The LORD has done great things for them." The LORD has done great things for us, and we are filled with joy. Restore our fortunes, O LORD, like streams in the Negev. Those who sow in tears will reap with songs of joy. He who goes out weeping, carrying seed to sow, will return with songs of joy, carrying sheaves with him.

Advent prayer

Leader: O Lord our Shepherd, in you is life, and that life is the light of men. Your light illuminates the darkness, and the darkness cannot overcome it.

All: **Even so, as we wait for your return, our hearts are cloaked in grief. We feel and see darkness in so many places and circumstances. O Lord, we grieve the devastation that sin has wrought in your good creation. We mourn the fractured relationships, the loss of loved ones and of health, the desolation of war and material poverty.**

Leader: Jesus, you said of yourself, "I have come into the world as light, so that whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness."

All: **O Lord, be near to us in the darkness, and remind our hearts that you will overcome it completely when you return. May that hope shape our lament this season as we eagerly await your coming. Amen.**

based on John 1 and 12

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

Offertory

"Sweet Little Jesus Boy"

Chancel Choir

Sweet little Jesus boy, they made you be born in a manger.
Sweet little Holy Child, we didn't know who you were.

Didn't know you'd come to save us, Lord, to take our sins away.
Our eyes were blind. We did not see, we didn't know who you were.

Long time ago, you were born in a manger low.
Sweet little Jesus boy.

The world treat you mean, Lord. Treat me mean too,
but that's how things are down here. We don't know who you are.

You have told us how; we sure are tryin'.
You have shown us how, even when you were dyin'.

Just seems like we can't do right. Look how we treated you.
But please, Sir, forgive us, Lord. We didn't know it was you.

Sweet little Jesus boy, they made you be born in a manger.
Sweet little Holy Child, we didn't know it was you.

text and music by Robert MacGimsey, 1934, arr. Larry Nickel ©1934 Carl Fisher, 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 John 1:10-13**

Kim Starke

¹⁰He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him.

¹¹He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him.

¹²But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

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

Prayer of preparation for the study of God's Word

Sermon

"When the Word Enters His World"
Aaron Tolson, pastor of youth ministries

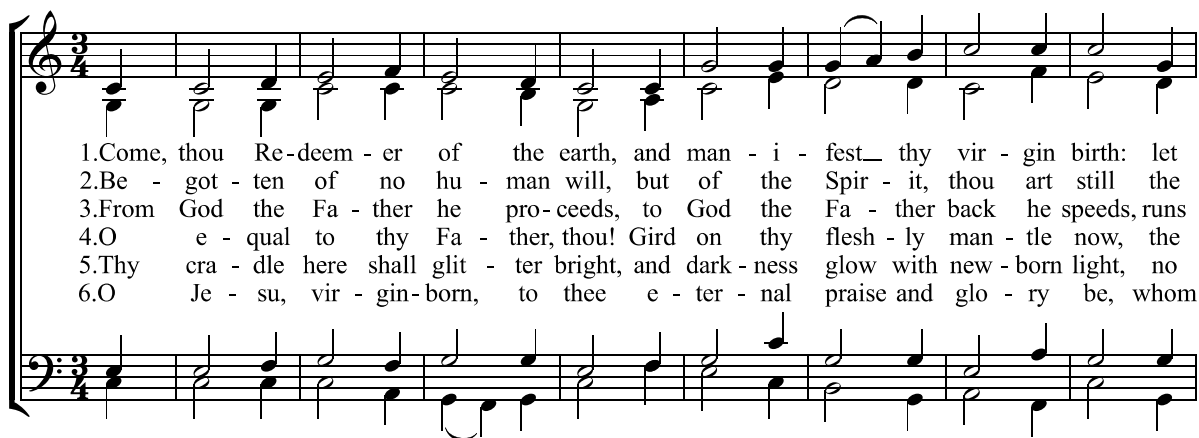
When the Word enters his world, he is:

1. unrecognized; we don't see him. (v. 10)
2. unwanted; we don't desire him. (v. 11)
3. undeterred; he still makes us his own. (vv. 12-13)

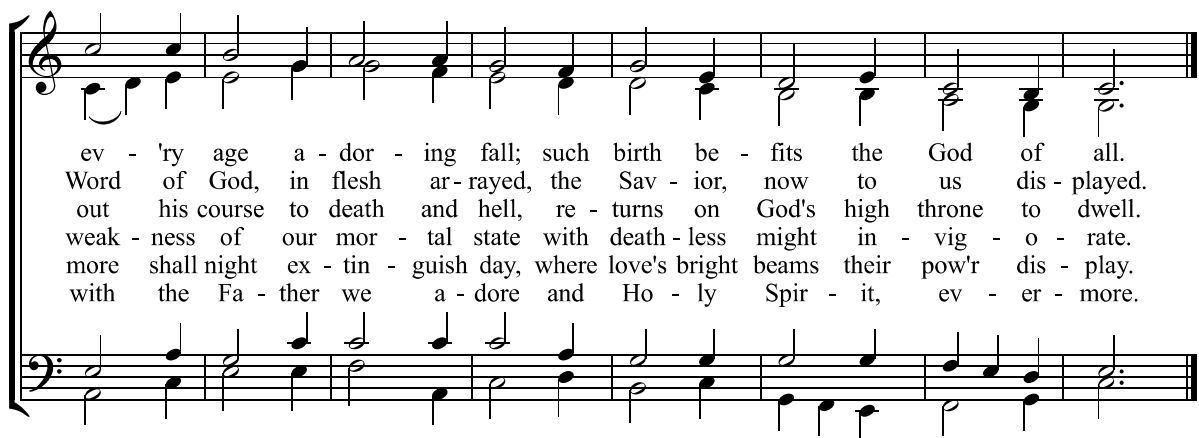
Pastoral prayer

* Hymn of response

“Come, Thou Redeemer of the Earth”



1. Come, thou Re-deem - er of the earth, and man - i - fest thy vir - gin birth: let
2. Be - got - ten of no hu - man will, but of the Spir - it, thou art still the
3. From God the Fa - ther he pro - ceeds, to God the Fa - ther back he speeds, runs
4. O e - qual to thy Fa - ther, thou! Gird on thy flesh - ly man - tle now, the
5. Thy cra - dle here shall glit - ter bright, and dark - ness glow with new - born light, no
6. O Je - su, vir - gin - born, to thee e - ter - nal praise and glo - ry be, whom



ev - 'ry age a - dor - ing fall; such birth be - fits the God of all.
Word of God, in flesh ar - rayed, the Sav - ior, now to us dis - played.
out his course to death and hell, re - turns on God's high throne to dwell.
weak - ness of our mor - tal state with death - less might in - vig - o - rate.
more shall night ex - tin - guish day, where love's bright beams their pow'r dis - play.
with the Fa - ther we a - dore and Ho - ly Spir - it, ev - er - more.

text by Ambrose, 4th cent., tr. J. M. Neale, 1851; Latin carol, 14th c., PUER NOBIS LM

* Benediction

* Congregational response

“Threefold Amen”

Musicians for this week:

Brett Hyberger – choral director

Joshua Knight – organ

WEEKLY ANNOUNCEMENTS

THANK YOU TO ALL who helped with this year's Boxes of Blessing project! More than 500 volunteers from 12 churches and agencies came together to pack 5,040 food boxes for those in need. These boxes were delivered to 28 area schools, ministries, and churches for distribution.

JOIN US AFTER THE SERVICE TODAY for a Stewardship Sunday presentation and discussion of the 2026 annual budget. Pledge cards will be distributed, which you may turn in completed next week on Sunday, December 21. You may also pledge using the form at lmpc.org/give, or on Realm Connect. Following this presentation, we will hold the nomination election for elders, deacons, and a director for the board of LMPC, Inc. Thank you for your support of the ministries and work of LMPC this year and in the year ahead!

COME TO OUR CHRISTMAS CONCERT TODAY at 5:00 p.m. and enjoy the sounds of the season with our Chancel Choir, Girls' Ensemble, Children's Choir, and Handbell Ensemble! We will gather in the sanctuary; nursery is provided.

TODAY IS THE LAST DAY to make a contribution toward Christmas flowers in memory or in honor of a loved one on Realm Connect.

ADVENT WEEKLY REFLECTIONS: Pick up the final Advent Weekly Reflection today. If you'd rather view this online, find it alongside each Sunday's resources at lmpc.org/sermons.

BRING YOUR FAMILY OR SMALL GROUP AND GO CAROLING on Sunday, December 21 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 NEXT INTRO TO LMPC membership class is scheduled to be held as a Sunday School elective from January 4 through February 22. If you are interested, please register on Realm Connect by December 23.

SACRED STUDIO, an in-town retreat at LMPC on January 23 and 24, will give women the opportunity to connect over good food, Gospel teaching, and creative workshops. Please register on Realm Connect by January 15 to make your studio selections (first come, first served). Studios include needlepoint, sourdough, watercolors, liturgical prayer, and more.

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

The rosebud in the service today is for the birth of Scott Carmichael Probasco, born to Laura and William Probasco on December 4.

CHRISTMAS EVENTS 2025

CHRISTMAS CONCERT

Sunday, December 14

5:00 p.m. in the sanctuary

nursery available

CHRISTMAS CAROLING

Sunday, December 21

Register on Realm Connect by December 20.

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

3:15 p.m. at Thrive Brow Wood

CHRISTMAS EVE*

Wednesday, December 24

LESSONS AND CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT

3:00 and 5:00 p.m. in the sanctuary

3:00 and 5:00 p.m. in the fellowship hall

nursery available

**The Session has approved an increase to four live services on Christmas Eve, similar to a typical Sunday schedule, in order to engage people graciously and make for a more hospitable experience as we worship together.*