



LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN

Presbyterian Church

IN PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

I behold a new and wondrous mystery. My ears resound to the shepherds' song, piping no soft melody, but chanting full forth a heavenly hymn. The angels sing. The archangels blend their voices in harmony. The cherubim hymn their joyful praise. The seraphim exalt his glory. All join to praise this holy feast, beholding the Godhead here on earth, and man in heaven. He who is above, now for our redemption dwells here below; and he that was lowly is by divine mercy raised up. —St. John Chrysostom

DECEMBER 28, 2025 • SANCTUARY SERVICE

* Congregation standing as you are able

Order of Worship

Prelude

Improvisation on “The First Nowell”
C. P. Burton

Welcome and greetings

Wil Nettleton, pastor of mission & worship

* **Call to worship**

from Isaiah 9

Leader: We praise the LORD Most High!

All: 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 207**

“Good Christian Men, Rejoice”

Good Christian men, rejoice, with heart and soul and voice;
give ye heed to what we say: Jesus Christ is born today;
earth and heav’n before him bow, and he is in the manger now.
Christ is born today! Christ is born today!

Good Christian men, rejoice, with heart and soul and voice;
now ye hear of endless bliss: Jesus Christ was born for this!
He hath opened heaven’s door, and man is blessed evermore.
Christ was born for this! Christ was born for this!

Good Christian men, rejoice, with heart and soul and voice;
now ye need not fear the grave: Jesus Christ was born to save!
Calls you one and calls you all to gain his everlasting hall.
Christ was born to save! Christ was born to save!

Medieval Latin carol; German melody, 14th cent., IN DULCI JUBILO

*** Prayer of adoration**

*** Affirmation of faith**

The Nicene Creed

We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of his Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father; by whom all things were made; who for us and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary, and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; he suffered and was buried; and the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father; and he shall come again, with glory, to judge both the living and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end.

And we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son; who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified; who spoke by the prophets; and we believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church; we acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins; and we look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Call to confession

1 John 1:5-9

This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

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

from 1 John 4:9-10, 15

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. If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in him and he in God.

* Hymn of assurance 211

“God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen”

God rest you merry, gentlemen, let nothing you dismay,
remember Christ our Savior was born on Christmas day,
to save us all from Satan's pow'r when we were gone astray;

Refrain: O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy,
O tidings of comfort and joy.

From God our heav'nly Father, a blessed angel came;
and unto certain shepherds brought tidings of the same:
how that in Bethlehem was born the Son of God by name. *Refrain*

“Fear not, then,” said the angel, “let nothing you affright;
this day is born a Savior of a pure virgin bright,
to free all those who trust in him from Satan's pow'r and might.” *Refrain*

The shepherds at those tidings rejoiced much in mind,
and left their flocks a-feeding, in tempest, storm, and wind:
and went to Bethlehem straightway, the Son of God to find. *Refrain*
English carol and melody, 18th century, GOD REST YOU MERRY

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

Offertory

“Thou Who Wast Rich beyond All Splendor” Instrumental meditation
arr. Harrison Oxley
(words for meditation may be found in your hymnal, #230)

*** 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 1:19–28**

Tucker Curtis

¹⁹And this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, “Who are you?” ²⁰He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, “I am not the Christ.” ²¹And they asked him, “What then? Are you Elijah?” He said, “I am not.” “Are you the Prophet?” And he answered, “No.”

²²So they said to him, “Who are you? We need to give an answer to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?” ²³He said, “I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, ‘Make straight the way of the Lord,’ as the prophet Isaiah said.”

²⁴(Now they had been sent from the Pharisees.) ²⁵They asked him, “Then why are you baptizing, if you are neither the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?” ²⁶John answered them, “I baptize with water, but among you stands one you do not know, ²⁷even he who comes after me, the strap of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie.” ²⁸These things took place in Bethany across the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

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

Prayer of preparation for the study of God’s Word

Sermon

“The Faithful Witness to Jesus”
Chad Middlebrooks, pastor of discipleship

Faithful witnesses to Jesus:

1. clearly answer their questioners. (vv. 19–21)
2. humbly clarify their identities. (vv. 22–23)
3. boldly point others to Jesus. (vv. 24–28)

Pastoral prayer

* Hymn of response 203

“Hark! the Herald Angels Sing”

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!”

Refrain: 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 as man with men to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel. *Refrain*

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. *Refrain*
text by Charles Wesley, 1739; music by Felix Mendelssohn, 1840; arr. William H. Cummings, 1856,
MENDELSSOHN

* Benediction

* Congregational response

“Threefold Amen”

* Postlude

“Angels, from the Realms of Glory”
arr. Edwin C. Johnson
(*words for meditation may be found in your hymnal, #218*)

Musicians for this week:

Joshua Knight – organ

Bob Schneider – trumpet

GIVING UPDATE THROUGH DECEMBER 16, 2025

Total 2025 Budget: \$5,633,000

2025 Gifts Received: \$5,132,682

Remaining Gifts Needed: \$500,318

Outstanding Pledge Balance: \$176,076

Thank you for your generosity in 2025. If you would like to give toward the 2025 budget, please note that your gift must be received or postmarked by December 31. Thank you for your support of the ministry and work of our church.

SUNDAY SCHOOL / 10:00-10:45 A.M. / BEGINS JANUARY 4

Elementary school:

Room 201: PreK

Room 200: Kindergarten

Room 204: 1st Grade

Room 301: 2nd Grade

Room 300: 3rd Grade

Room 202: 4th & 5th Grade

Youth:

Students in middle and high school will meet at the Jane Harris Youth Building.

Adult Electives:

January 4 - February 8

Our regular community Sunday School classes will resume on February 15 after elective classes have concluded. Details on room assignments to follow.

Engaging Artificial Intelligence & Technology from a Biblical Perspective (*Room 313*)

Together, we'll consider both the promises and the pitfalls of AI technologies and how these tools seek to shape our hearts. Come discover how disciples of Jesus can respond with discernment and faithful intentionality in a rapidly changing world.

Teacher: Jeff Humphries

The Gospel & Christianity - Part 1b (*chapel*)

By connecting rich theology with real-life faithfulness, this class will help you recognize how the Gospel speaks into every corner of daily life and grows us into the likeness of Jesus Christ. Teachers: Pastoral team

New Testament Eschatology (*Room 213*)

This elective will examine a number of passages to see what the Scriptures say about the "last days" and talk about how our theology of the end times should affect our lives today. Teacher: Dan MacDougall

Honoring Dependent Parents (*Room 312*)

This elective will explore what it means to honor parents when they become dependent. Key Scriptures and real-life situations will be examined and discussed.

Teacher: Bill Davis

Preparing for the Passion (*Room 211*)

Together, through interactive study, we will discover Jesus in ways that will lead us to worship, an enduring faith, and a longing to be more like him. Teacher: Robert Row

WEEKLY ANNOUNCEMENTS

LAST WEEK DURING THE HYMN OF RESPONSE, you were asked to bring your 2026 pledge card forward. If you were not prepared to turn in a pledge card at that time, you may bring it to the church office this week, or make your pledge online at lmpc.org/give or on Realm Connect. If you would like to give toward the 2025 budget, please note that your gift must be received or postmarked by December 31. Thank you for your support of the ministries and work of LMPC this year and in the year ahead!

THE CHURCH OFFICE will be closed on January 1 and 2 for New Year's Day.

SUNDAY SCHOOL RETURNS NEXT WEEK! Sunday School for children, youth, and adults will resume on January 4 at 10:00 a.m. Find a full list of classes and locations in today's bulletin and at lmpc.org/groups, where you may sort by category and age group. There is a new slate of adult electives. Remember that nursery and elementary children must be checked-in and out at one of our kiosks.

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 tablescaping, jewelry, ceramics, and more.

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