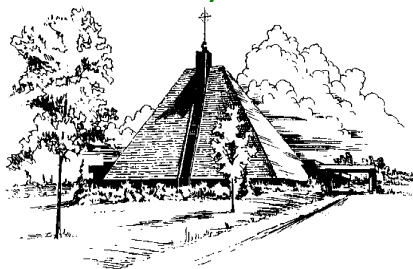




# COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

CINNAMINSON, NEW JERSEY



**CHRISTMAS EVE**

**4:00 PM**

**December 24, 2023**

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## **BELL CHOIR CONCERT**

### **THE PREPARATION**

"The First Nowell"  
"Deck The Halls"  
"What Child Is This"  
"Santa Clause is Coming to Town"

arr. Lamb and Ingram  
arr. Lamb and Ingram  
arr. Michael Coe  
arr. Ron Mallory

## **GREETING AND OPENING PRAYER**

Chuck Rosica

**Holy Spirit living within us, guide our hearts and minds as we welcome today all those who worship with us at Covenant Presbyterian Church. Give us discerning hearts so that everyone who crosses our threshold feels welcomed in the spirit of your love. Help us to recognize each person as an individual sent by you who will enrich our lives. And most of all, O God, let this be a place of love and acceptance of all your children; in the name of your child, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

## **CHORAL INTROIT**

"In Joyous Praise"

Larson

## **CALL TO WORSHIP**

With eyes wide open and our ears on edge,  
**We look for shepherds and listen for the songs of angels.**  
In the light of winter's moon, with the Cross lighting the way,  
**We gather outside the door of a mystery, wondering if we dare go enter.**  
With folks and friends we love, with strangers we have just met,  
**we gather, becoming the holy family for this time and in this place.**  
With prayer and praise, in scripture and in song, let us worship the Living God!

## **CHORAL ANTHEM**

"Three French Carols"  
Elisa Muzzillo - flute

arr. Pethel



## LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

Martin Family

Hope is assertive, peace is subversive, joy is provocative, and love is transformative. God tore open the heavens as hope became alive in us with the cry of the newborn babe. The heavenly host, the army of God, showed up and instead of declaring war, said "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace, goodwill to all." Joy was shared by parents and visitors in the midst of an empirical census and under the rule of an insecure puppet king. And love—love from God, love for one another—the Christ-child taught us that the greatest love is to lay down one's lives for one another, to set aside the things of this world that would tear us apart and instead look to what draws us together. This is the kind of love that still transforms the world when we share it. On this night, we light the Christ-candle, a reminder that hope, peace, joy, and love are not merely words for this season of the year, but promises of God that are alive in us for eternity, and that God's steadfast love endures forever.

Together, let us pray:

**O come to us, abide in us, our Lord, Emmanuel. God with us, make Your presence known to us, now and always. Shine bright in the shadows and despair, and may the warmth of Your love carry us forward. You changed the world forever that night long ago when You were born, and You are changing our lives, right now. On this Christmas Eve, we pray for Your transformative love to be renewed, for our own hope, peace, joy and love to be restored.**

**We ask for Your guidance in helping each of us live into Your reign on earth as it is in heaven, for Your reign is at hand, and it is coming. Lead us into ways of participating in Your reign now by doing justice, practicing compassionate love and kindness, and walking humbly with You, our Savior and Redeemer, the Living God, Jesus Christ. Amen.**

## HYMN

"It Came Upon the Midnight Clear" (vss. 1, 4, 5)

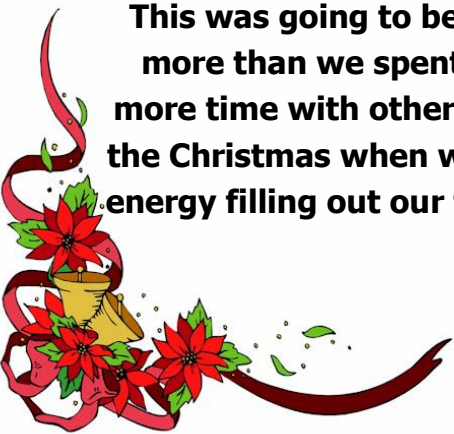
(See page 7)

## CALL TO CONFESSION

Advent is the time to prepare; Advent is the time to watch and wait; Advent is the time to open our hearts to God, as we pray together saying,

## PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**This was going to be the year, God of silent nights, when we were going to give away more than we spent, but we didn't. This was going to be the season when we spent more time with others, but we filled our calendars with meetings. This was going to be the Christmas when we wrote personal letters to friends and family, but spent too much energy filling out our to-do lists. This was going to be a truly holy season, but it just got to harried and hurried.**



Forgive us, Love Gifter, and draw us closer to the Baby born not into wealth and power, but into poverty and weakness; to the One who loves unconditionally and welcomes all; to the Child who gathers other children to him, to bless them and serve them; to the One who drew near to us, so we might be drawn to your heart – Jesus Christ, our Brother, our Lord.

**SILENT MEDITATION**

**LORD HAVE MERCY (3x)**

576 Lord, Have Mercy



Lord, have mer - cy.  
Christ, have mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy on us.

**WORDS OF ASSURANCE**

Hear the good news and be a peace with yourself:  
Into the valleys of our death, Jesus comes with life; into the shadows of our world, Jesus brings light;  
into the brokenness of our lives, Jesus brings forgiveness and peace.

**Thanks be to God for the gift of the Baby of Bethlehem, who brings joy and peace to us in these moments of forgiveness and in all the days to come. Amen.**

Please stand as you are able so we can praise God’s love for us all!

**WE ARE FORGIVEN (1x)**

FORGIVENESS  
447 We Are Forgiven



We are for - giv - en. We are for - giv - en. Thanks be to  
God. Thanks be to God. We are for - giv - en.  
We are for - giv - en. Thanks be to God. Thanks be to God.



**PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION**

**God, source of all light, by your Word you give light to the soul. Pour out on us the spirit of wisdom and understanding that our hearts and minds may be opened. Amen.**

**CHORAL ANTHEM**

“Gesù Bambino”  
Nina Zubaidi - violin

Peitro A. Yon

**ABC’S OF CHRISTMAS INTRO, A-E**

**HYMN**

“O Little Town of Bethlehem” (vss. 1,3)

(See page 8)

**ABC’S OF CHRISTMAS, F-G**

**HYMN**

“Hark the Herald Angels Sing” (vss. 1,2)

(See page 9)

**ABC’S OF CHRISTMAS, H-J**

**HYMN**

“Joy to the world” (vss. 1,4)

(See page 10)

**ABC’S OF CHRISTMAS, K-M**

**HYMN**

“O Come All Ye Faithful” (vss. 1, 4, 5)

(See page 11)

**ABC’S OF CHRISTMAS, N-O**

**HYMN**

“Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow”

#809

**ABC’S OF CHRISTMAS, P-T**

**HYMN**

“Rise Up Shepherd and Follow” (vss. 1-2)

(See page 12)

**ABC’S OF CHRISTMAS, U-Z**

**SPECIAL MUSIC**

“Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy”  
Flute - Elisa Muzzillo, Violin - Nina Zubaidi, Piano - Greg DiBona

Peter Tchaikovsky

**THE 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**





**CAROL BY CANDLELIGHT**

"Silent Night"

(See page 13)

(The organist will play through "Silent Night" once, then all are invited to join in singing. Raise your candles during the third stanza as a tribute to God's wondrous light.)

**BENEDICTION**

**POSTLUDE**

Away in a Manger

Traditional

Flute - Elisa Muzzillo, Violin - Nina Zubaidi, Piano - Greg DiBona

**MINISTERS:** Chris Todd and Sandi Pascone (Ushers)





# Poinsettias



## **GIVEN BY THE FOLLOWING FAMILIES**

Carol Ortlip with gratitude for her friends and family

Skip and Marge Jeffries in gratitude for members and friends of Covenant Church

Diane Steel in memory of her husband Robert Steel and her parents Marcia and Cliff Jones

Ron and Barbara Green in memory of their fathers Henry Green and Frank Hannum

Paul and Barbara VanTassel in memory of loved ones

Herskovitz family in memory of Mikey Ramos and Sy Herskovitz

Frank and Susan Reed in loving memory of Dorothy and Earle Harder

The DiBona family is loving memory of Nicholas and Angela Testa, and Anthony DiBona Sr

The Joffe family in memory of their departed loved ones

John and Carol Lovell – Merry Christmas to our Covenant family!

David Landgraf in gratitude for the coming of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior

Michael and Jeanne Martin family in loving memory of Walter Howard Cowan, Jr., and Mickey and Bridget Martin

Bob and Kelly Higgs in loving memory of Dick and Vonnie Higgs, John and Kay Shaffer and Gil and Betty Damon

The Cain family in loving memory of Lois Wieder "Nana" who will always be in their hearts

The Peak family in loving memory of parents Peg and Frank Peak

Steve and Pat Salmon in loving memory of their grandmothers: Ellen Hare and Dorothy Salmon and Pat's mother Annetta Brindley

The Cinque family in loving memory of Ginny and Edy Mozzi and in gratitude for their granddaughter, Lennon Mae

Treva Grunigen in loving memory of her sister-in-law, Janice Coover

Nancy Trader in loving memory of her father, Gale Grunigen

The Slater Family in hopes of peace throughout the world during the Christmas Season and New Year

Craig & Julia Slater in gratitude of our families near and far

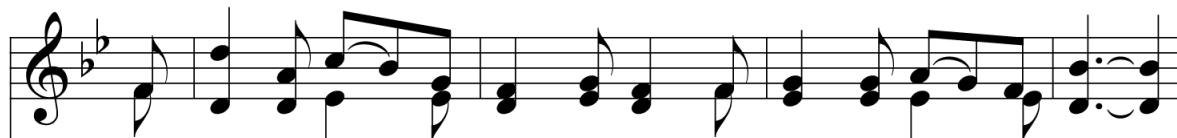
The Rosica family in gratitude for their family



# 123 It Came Upon the Midnight Clear



1 It came up-on the mid-night clear, that glo-rious song of old,  
 2 Still through the clo - ven skies they come, with peace-ful wings un - furled,  
 3 Yet with the woes of sin and strife the world has suf-fered long;  
 4 And you, be-neath life's crush-ing load, whose forms are bend-ing low,  
 5 For lo, the days are has-tening on, by proph-ets seen of old,



from an - gels bend - ing near the earth, to touch their harps of gold:  
 and still their heaven-ly mu - sic floats o'er all the wea - ry world:  
 be - neath the heaven-ly hymn have rolled two thou-sand years of wrong;  
 who toil a - long the climb-ing way with pain - ful steps and slow,  
 when with the ev - er - cir-cling years shall come the time fore - told,



"Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heaven's all-gra-cious King":  
 a - bove its sad and low - ly plains they bend on hov-ering wing,  
 and we at war on earth hear not the tid - ings that they bring;  
 look now, for glad and gold - en hours come swift - ly on the wing:  
 when peace shall o - ver all the earth its an - cient splen-dors fling,



the world in sol - emn still-ness lay, to hear the an - gels sing.  
 and ev - er o'er its Ba - bel sounds the bless-ed an - gels sing.  
 O, hush the noise and cease the strife to hear the an - gels sing!  
 O, rest be - side the wea - ry road, and hear the an - gels sing.  
 and the whole world give back the song which now the an - gels sing.

JESUS CHRIST: BIRTH

121 O Little Town of Bethlehem

1 O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, how still we see thee lie!  
 2 For Christ is born of Mar - y and, gath - ered all a - bove,  
 3 How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly, the won - drous gift is given!  
 4 O ho - ly child of Beth - le - hem, de - scend to us, we pray;

A - bove thy deep and dream-less sleep the si - lent stars go by.  
 while mor - tals sleep, the an - gels keep their watch of won - dering love.  
 So God im - parts to hu - man hearts the bless - ings of his heaven.  
 cast out our sin and en - ter in; be born in us to - day.

Yet in thy dark streets shin - eth the ev - er - last - ing light;  
 O morn - ing stars, to - geth - er pro - claim the ho - ly birth,  
 No ear may hear his com - ing, but in this world of sin,  
 We hear the Christ - mas an - gels the great glad ti - dings tell;

the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee to - night.  
 and prais - es sing to God the king, and peace to all on earth.  
 where meek souls will re - ceive him, still the dear Christ en - ters in.  
 O come to us; a - bide with us, our Lord Em - man - u - el!



# 119 Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

1 Hark! The her - ald an-gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born king.  
 2 Christ, by high - est heaven a-dored, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord,  
 3 Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the sun of righ-teous-ness!

Peace on earth and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled!"  
 late in time be-hold him come, off-spring of the vir-gin's womb.  
 Light and life to all he brings, risen with heal - ing in his wings.

Joy - ful, all ye na - tions, rise; join the tri-umph of the skies;  
 Veiled in flesh the God-head see; hail the in-car - nate de - i - ty,  
 Mild he lays his glo - ry by, born that we no more may die,

with the an-gel - ic host pro-claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"  
 pleased in flesh with us to dwell, Je - sus, our Em-man - u - el.  
 born to raise us from the earth, born to give us sec - ond birth.

Brought together in the mid-19th century, the text and tune of this familiar carol began in quite different forms. The text had ten stanzas and began, "Hark, how all the welkin rings." The tune was created for a festival celebrating Gutenberg's introduction of moveable type.

Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born king!"

134 Joy to the World

1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re - ceive  
 2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their songs  
 3 No more let sins and sor - rows grow, nor thorns in - fest  
 4 He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the na -

her king; let ev - ery heart pre - pare him room,  
 em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains  
 the ground; he comes to make his bless - ings flow  
 tions prove the glo - ries of his righ - teous - ness

and heaven and na - ture sing, and heaven and na - ture  
 re - peat the sound - ing joy, re - peat the sound - ing  
 far as the curse is found, far as the curse is  
 and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his  
 and heaven and na - ture sing,

and  
 sing, and heaven, and heaven and na - ture sing.  
 joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.  
 found, far as, far as the curse is found.  
 love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.  
 heaven and na - ture sing,

## O Come, All Ye Faithful

133

1 O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant; O come  
 2 True God from true God, Light from light e - ter - nal, born  
 3 Sing, choirs of an - gels; sing in ex - ul - ta - tion; sing,  
 4 Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this hap - py morn - ing; Je -

ye; O come ye to Beth - le - hem! Come, and be - hold him,  
 of a vir - gin, a mor - tal he comes; ver - y God, be -  
 all ye cit - i - zens of heaven a - bove! Glo - ry to God, all  
 sus, to thee be all glo - ry given; Word of the Fa - ther,

*Refrain*

born the King of an - gels!  
 got - ten, not cre - at - ed! O come, let us a - dore him; O come, let  
 glo - ry in the high - est!  
 now in flesh ap - pear - ing!

us a - dore him; O come, let us a - dore him, Christ, the Lord!

From its Roman Catholic origins, this 18th-century hymn has spread to worldwide use by many denominations in both Latin and vernacular versions. Once popular with a wide range of hymn texts, this tune is now firmly associated with this Christmas text from which it is named.

# There's a Star in the East

135

Rise Up, Shepherd, and Follow

1 There's a star in the east on Christ-mas morn. Rise up, shep-herd, and  
 2 If you take good heed to the an - gel's words, rise up, shep-herd, and

fol - low. It will lead to the place where the Christ was born.  
 fol - low. You'll for - get your flocks; you'll for - get your herds.

*Refrain*

Rise up, shep-herd, and fol - low. Fol - low, fol - low;

rise up, shep-herd, and fol - low. Fol - low the star of

Beth - le - hem. Rise up, shep-herd, and fol - low.

This African American spiritual, cast in a characteristic call-and-response style, provides a reminder that the good news of the Incarnation should lead Christians not only to awe and adoration but also to living and acting in ways that make God's purposes known to others.

# Silent Night, Holy Night! 122

1 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! All is calm, all is bright  
 2 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Shep - herds quake at the sight;  
 3 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Son of God, love's pure light  
 4 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Won - drous star, lend thy light;

'round yon vir - gin moth - er and child! Ho - ly In - fant, so ten - der and  
 glo - ries stream from heav - en a - far, heav - en - ly hosts sing "Al - le - lu - ra  
 ra - diant beams from thy ho - ly face, with the dawn of re - deem - ing  
 with the an - gels let us sing Al - le - lu - ia to our

mild, sleep in heav - en - ly peace, sleep in heav - en - ly peace.  
 ia: Christ the Sav - ior is born; Christ the Sav - ior is born!"  
 grace, Je - sus, Lord, at thy birth, Je - sus, Lord, at thy birth.  
 King: Christ the Sav - ior is born; Christ the Sav - ior is born.

## GERMAN

1 *Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht!*  
*Alles schläft, einsam wacht*  
*nur das traute, hochheilige Paar.*  
*Holder Knabe im lockigen Haar,*  
*schlaf in himmlischer Ruh,*  
*schlaf in himmlischer Ruh!*

## KOREAN

1 고요한밤 기록한밤  
 어둠에 묻힌밤  
 주의부모 앉아서  
 감사기도 드릴때  
 아기잘도 잔다  
 아기잘도 잔다

## SPANISH

1 *¡Noche de paz, noche de amor!*  
*Todo duerme en derredor,*  
*entre los astros que esparcen su luz,*  
*bella, anunciando al niño Jesús,*  
*brilla la estrella de paz,*  
*brilla la estrella de paz.*

The tradition that this carol's tune was created for guitar accompaniment at its first singing on Christmas Eve 1818 seems reliable, though a recent find shows that the text was about two years old. But there is no question that this is now a favorite Christmas carol worldwide.