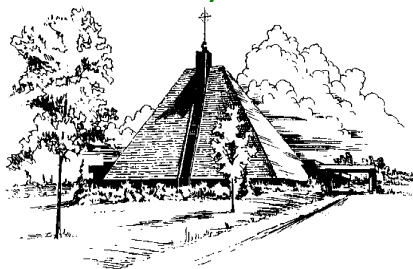




COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

CINNAMINSON, NEW JERSEY



1st SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS

10:00 AM

December 31, 2023

PRELUDE

"O Holy Night"

arr. Edstrom

GREETING AND OPENING PRAYER

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.

CALL TO WORSHIP

Praise the One who spoke and made everything!

Let the rivers ripple with joy; let the mountains stomp their feet.

Praise the One who adopts all of us as children!

Let old folks tell familiar stories; let little children swim with dolphins.

Praise God!

We will sing of God's glory; we will shout our joy to the heavens.

With prayer and praise, in scripture and in song, let us Worship the Living God!

HYMN

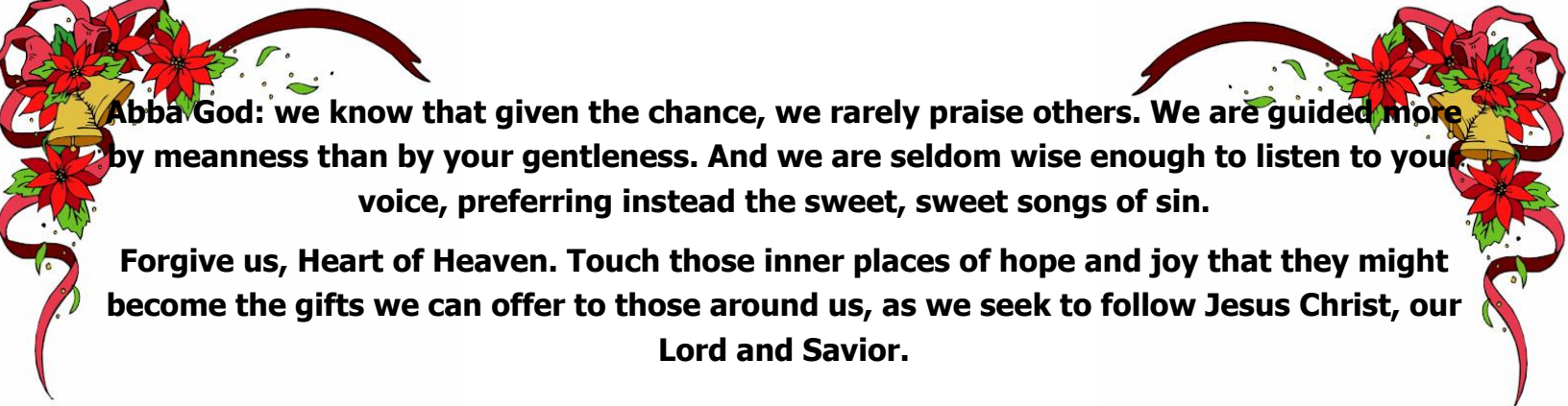
"Once in Royal David's City" (vss. 1,2)

(See page 12)

CALL TO CONFESSION

It is easy to become slaves to our passions, it is harder to live as God's children. Let us confess the easy choices we have made, so God can strengthen us to be faithful sisters and brothers of Christ.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION



Abba God: we know that given the chance, we rarely praise others. We are guided more by meanness than by your gentleness. And we are seldom wise enough to listen to your voice, preferring instead the sweet, sweet songs of sin.

Forgive us, Heart of Heaven. Touch those inner places of hope and joy that they might become the gifts we can offer to those around us, as we seek to follow Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior.

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:

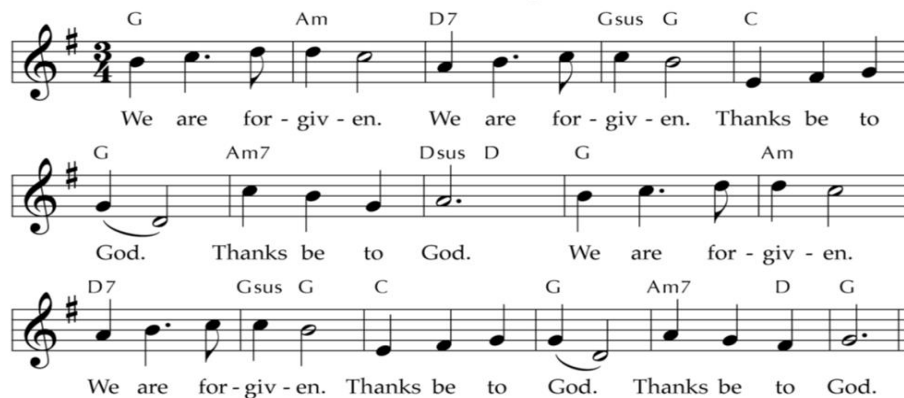
Hear the good news. the time is now; the place is here: God has redeemed us from sin; God has claimed us as the children of Hope.

Praise God, all people, for life is given to us anew; eternity is our home. Thanks be to God. Amen.

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.



SHARING OF PEACE

Since God has forgiven us in Christ, let us forgive one another. The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

And also with you.

Let us greet one another in Jesus' name!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

**Guide us, O God, by your Word and Spirit, that in your light we may see light, in your truth find freedom, and in your will discover your peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

FIRST READING GENESIS 1:26-28

God spoke: "Let us make human beings in our image, make them reflecting our nature So they can be responsible for the fish in the sea, the birds in the air, the cattle, And, yes, Earth itself, and every animal that moves on the face of Earth." God created human beings; he created them godlike, Reflecting God's nature. He created them male and female. God blessed them: "Prosper! Reproduce! Fill Earth! Take charge!

Be responsible for fish in the sea and birds in the air, for every living thing that moves on the face of Earth." Then God said, "I've given you every sort of seed-bearing plant on Earth And every kind of fruit-bearing tree, given them to you for food. To all animals and all birds, everything that moves and breathes, I give whatever grows out of the ground for food." And there it was. God looked over everything he had made; it was so good, so very good! It was evening, it was morning, Day Six.*

HYMN

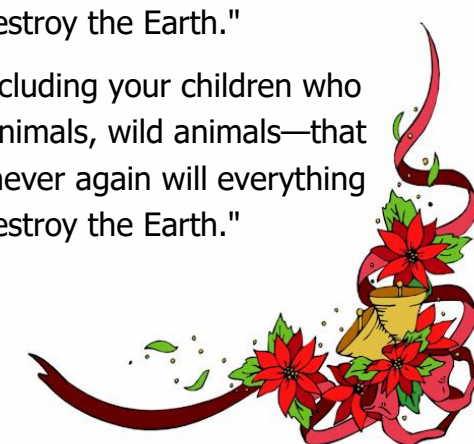
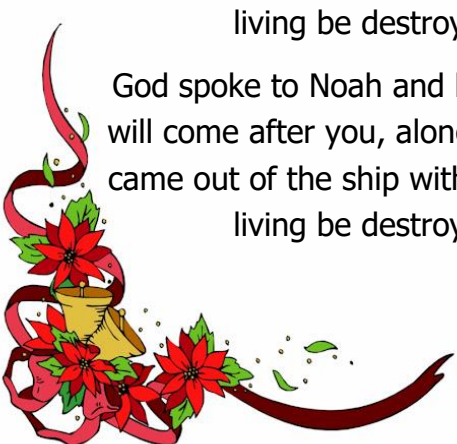
"In the Bleak Midwinter" (vss. 1,4)


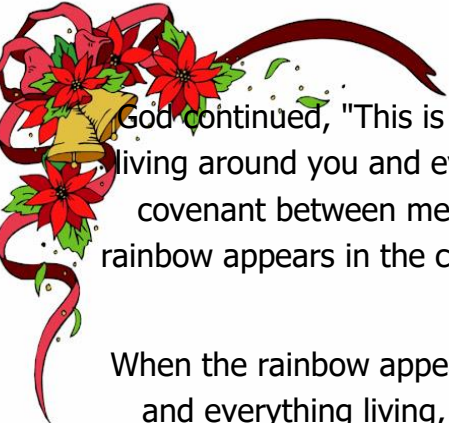
(See Page 13)

SECOND READING GENESIS 9:8-17

God spoke to Noah and his sons: "I'm setting up my covenant with you including your children who will come after you, along with everything alive around you—birds, farm animals, wild animals—that came out of the ship with you. I'm setting up my covenant with you that never again will everything living be destroyed by floodwaters; no, never again will a flood destroy the Earth."

God spoke to Noah and his sons: "I'm setting up my covenant with you including your children who will come after you, along with everything alive around you—birds, farm animals, wild animals—that came out of the ship with you. I'm setting up my covenant with you that never again will everything living be destroyed by floodwaters; no, never again will a flood destroy the Earth."





God continued, "This is the sign of the covenant I am making between me and you and everything living around you and everyone living after you. I'm putting my rainbow in the clouds, a sign of the covenant between me and the Earth. From now on, when I form a cloud over the Earth and the rainbow appears in the cloud, I'll remember my covenant between me and you and everything living, that never again will floodwaters destroy all life.

When the rainbow appears in the cloud, I'll see it and remember the eternal covenant between God and everything living, every last living creature on Earth." And God said, "This is the sign of the covenant that I've set up between me and everything living on the Earth."*

HYMN

"Still, Still, Still" (vss. 1,2)

(See page 14)

THIRD READING ISAIAH 9:2, 6-7

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. For those who lived in a land of deep shadows — light! Sunbursts of light! For a child has been born — for us! the gift of a son — for us! He'll take over the running of the world. His names will be: Amazing Counselor, Strong God, Eternal Father, Prince of Wholeness. His ruling authority will grow, and there'll be no limits to the wholeness he brings. He'll rule from the historic David throne over that promised kingdom. He'll put that kingdom on a firm footing and keep it going With fair dealing and right living, beginning now and lasting always. The zeal of God-of-the-Angel-Armies will do all this.*

HYMN

"O Little Town of Bethlehem" (vss. 1,4)

(See page 15)

FOURTH READING ISAIAH 11:1–3a; 4a; 6–9

A green Shoot will sprout from Jesse's stump, from his roots a budding Branch. The life-giving Spirit of God will hover over him, the Spirit that brings wisdom and understanding, The Spirit that gives direction and builds strength, the Spirit that instills knowledge and Fear-of-God. Fear-of-God will be all his joy and delight. He won't judge by appearances, won't decide on the basis of hearsay. He'll judge the needy by what is right, render decisions on earth's poor with justice.

The wolf will romp with the lamb, the leopard sleep with the kid. Calf and lion will eat from the same trough, and a little child will tend them. Cow and bear will graze the same pasture, their calves and cubs grow up together, and the lion eat straw like the ox. The nursing child will crawl over rattlesnake dens, the toddler stick his hand down the hole of a serpent. Neither animal nor human will hurt or kill on my holy mountain. The whole earth will be brimming with knowing God-Alive, a living knowledge of God ocean-deep, ocean-wide.*

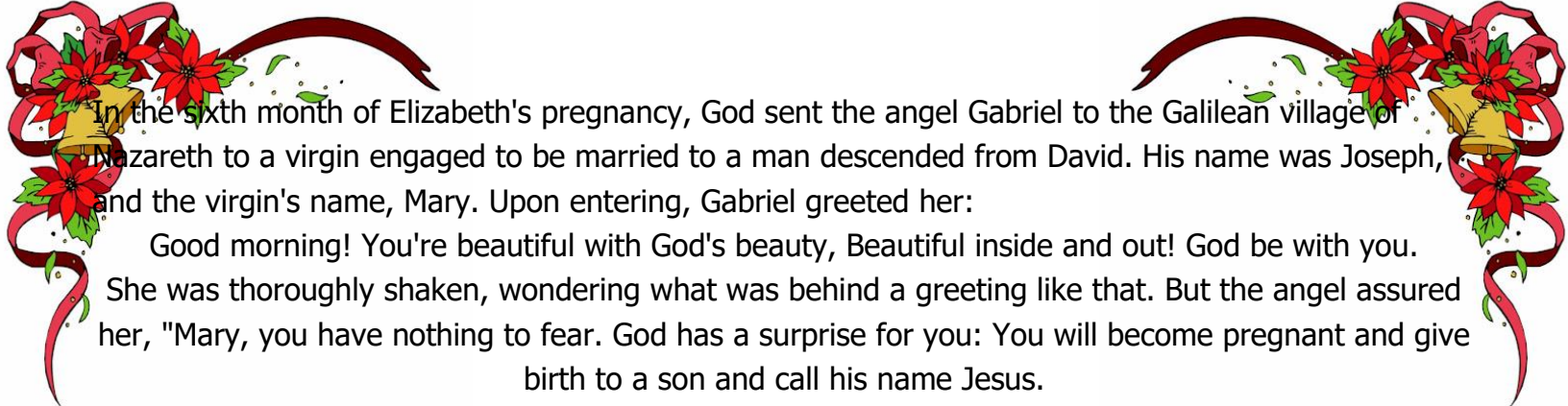
HYMN

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

(See page 16)

FIFTH READING LUKE 1:26–35; 38





In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to the Galilean village of Nazareth to a virgin engaged to be married to a man descended from David. His name was Joseph, and the virgin's name, Mary. Upon entering, Gabriel greeted her:

Good morning! You're beautiful with God's beauty, Beautiful inside and out! God be with you. She was thoroughly shaken, wondering what was behind a greeting like that. But the angel assured her, "Mary, you have nothing to fear. God has a surprise for you: You will become pregnant and give birth to a son and call his name Jesus.

He will be great, be called 'Son of the Highest.' The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David; He will rule Jacob's house forever no end, ever, to his kingdom."

Mary said to the angel, "But how? I've never slept with a man."

The angel answered, The Holy Spirit will come upon you, the power of the Highest hover over you; Therefore, the child you bring to birth will be called Holy, Son of God.

And Mary said, Yes, I see it all now: I'm the Lord's maid, ready to serve. Let it be with me just as you say. Then the angel left her.*

HYMN

"Gentle Mary Laid Her Child" (vss. 1,3)

(See page 17)

SIXTH READING LUKE 2:1; 3-7

About that time Caesar Augustus ordered a census to be taken throughout the Empire. Everyone had to travel to his own ancestral hometown to be accounted for. So Joseph went from the Galilean town of Nazareth up to Bethlehem in Judah, David's town, for the census. As a descendant of David, he had to go there. He went with Mary, his fiancée, who was pregnant. While they were there, the time came for her to give birth. She gave birth to a son, her firstborn. She wrapped him in a blanket and laid him in a manger, because there was no room in the hostel.*

HYMN

"Away in a Manger" (vss. 1,3)

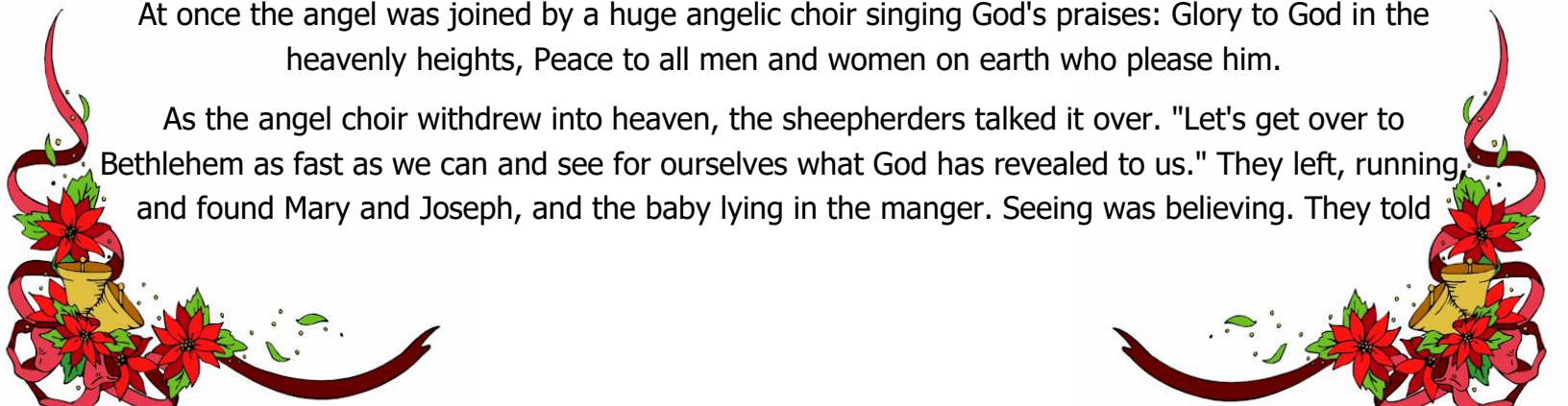
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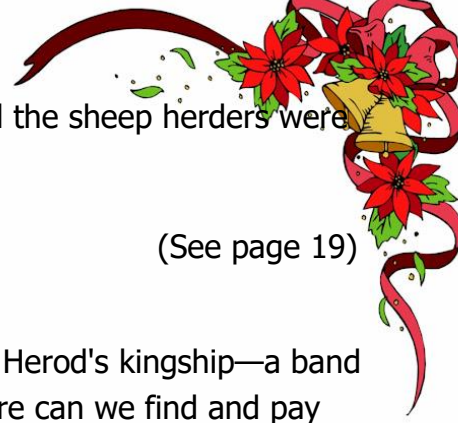
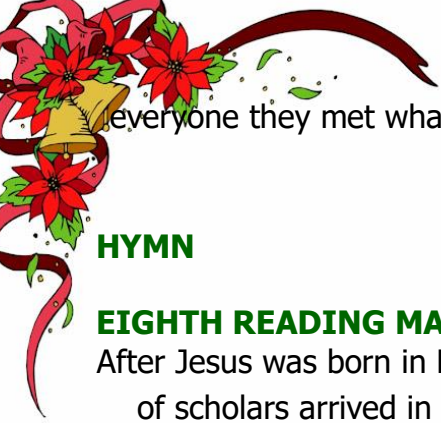
SEVENTH READING LUKE 2:8-16

There were sheep herders camping in the neighborhood. They had set night watches over their sheep. Suddenly, God's angel stood among them and God's glory blazed around them. They were terrified. The angel said, "Don't be afraid. I'm here to announce a great and joyful event that is meant for everybody, worldwide: A Savior has just been born in David's town, a Savior who is Messiah and Master. This is what you're to look for: a baby wrapped in a blanket and lying in a manger."

At once the angel was joined by a huge angelic choir singing God's praises: Glory to God in the heavenly heights, Peace to all men and women on earth who please him.

As the angel choir withdrew into heaven, the shepherders talked it over. "Let's get over to Bethlehem as fast as we can and see for ourselves what God has revealed to us." They left, running, and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger. Seeing was believing. They told





Everyone they met what the angels had said about this child. All who heard the sheep herders were impressed.*

HYMN

"The First Nowell" (vss. 1,6)

(See page 19)

EIGHTH READING MATTHEW 2:1-12

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem village, Judah territory— this was during Herod's kingship—a band of scholars arrived in Jerusalem from the East. They asked around, "Where can we find and pay homage to the newborn King of the Jews? We observed a star in the eastern sky that signaled his birth. We're on pilgrimage to worship him."

When word of their inquiry got to Herod, he was terrified—and not Herod alone, but most of Jerusalem as well. Herod lost no time. He gathered all the high priests and religion scholars in the city together and asked, "Where is the Messiah supposed to be born?"

They told him, "Bethlehem, Judah territory. The prophet Micah wrote it plainly: It's you, Bethlehem, in Judah's land, no longer bringing up the rear. From you will come the leader who will shepherd-rule my people, my Israel."

Herod then arranged a secret meeting with the scholars from the East. Pretending to be as devout as they were, he got them to tell him exactly when the birth-announcement star appeared. Then he told them the prophecy about Bethlehem, and said, "Go find this child. Leave no stone unturned. As soon as you find him, send word and I'll join you at once in your worship."

Instructed by the King, they set off. Then the star appeared again, the same star they had seen in the eastern skies. It led them on until it hovered over the place of the child. They could hardly contain themselves: They were in the right place! They had arrived at the right time!

They entered the house and saw the child in the arms of Mary, his mother. Overcome, they kneeled and worshiped him. Then they opened their luggage and presented gifts: gold, frankincense, myrrh.

In a dream, they were warned not to report back to Herod. So they worked out another route, left the territory without being seen, and returned to their own country.*

HYMN

"We Three Kings" (vss. 1,5)

(See page 20)

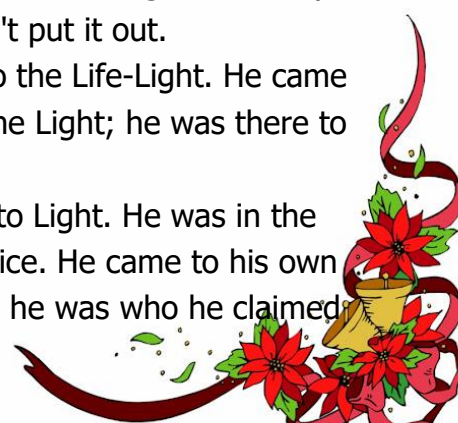
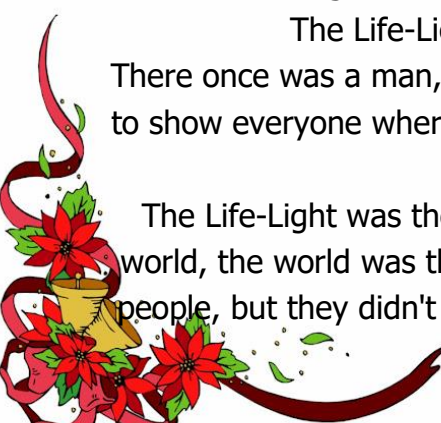
NINTH READING MATTHEW 1:1-14


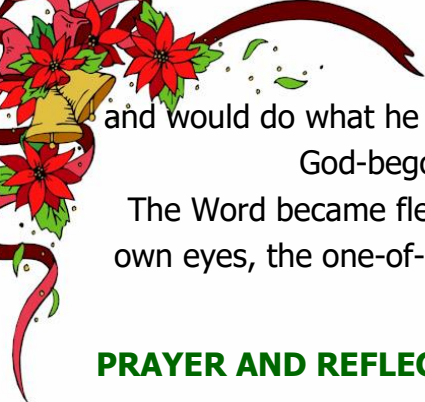
The Word was first, the Word present to God, God present to the Word. The Word was God, in readiness for God from day one. Everything was created through him; nothing—not one thing!—came into being without him. What came into existence was Life, and the Life was Light to live by.

The Life-Light blazed out of the darkness; the darkness couldn't put it out.

There once was a man, his name John, sent by God to point out the way to the Life-Light. He came to show everyone where to look, who to believe in. John was not himself the Light; he was there to show the way to the Light.

The Life-Light was the real thing: Every person entering Life he brings into Light. He was in the world, the world was there through him, and yet the world didn't even notice. He came to his own people, but they didn't want him. But whoever did want him, who believed he was who he claimed





and would do what he said, He made to be their true selves, their child-of-God selves. These are the
God-begotten, not blood-begotten, not flesh-begotten, not sex-begotten.

The Word became flesh and blood, and moved into the neighborhood. We saw the glory with our
own eyes, the one-of-a-kind glory, like Father, like Son, Generous inside and out, true from start to
finish.*

PRAYER AND REFLECTION

We pause to reflect on the message

If you wish, you may want to use the following breath prayer (or any of your choice). The words may
be said aloud or in silence

Breathe in: "I want to know you ...

Breathe out: "... and the power of your resurrection"

HYMN

"O Come, All Ye Faithful" (vss. 1,3)

(See page 21)

SHARING OF JOYS AND CONCERNS

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

For the peace from above, for the loving kindness of God, and for our salvation, let us pray to the
Lord

Lord, have mercy.

For the peace of the world, for the unity of the church of God, and for the well-being of all peoples,
let us pray to the Lord

Lord, have mercy.

For this gathering of the faithful, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to
the Lord:

Lord, have mercy.

For all the baptized, for all who serve in the church, for elders and pastors, let us pray to the Lord:

Lord, have mercy.

For the rulers of the nations as we pray for Joe our President, Cory and Robert our Senators, Philip
our Governor, Andy our Representative, and the Justices of the Supreme Court. Let us pray to the
Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For this town of Cinnaminson, for every city and community, and for those who live in them, let us
pray to the Lord:

Lord, have mercy.

For seasonable weather, and for abundant harvests for all to share, let us pray to the Lord:

Lord, have mercy.

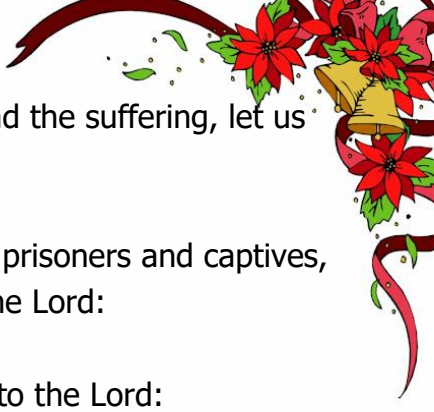

For the good earth which God has given us, and for the wisdom and will to conserve it, let us pray to
the Lord:

Lord, have mercy.

For those who travel by land, water, or air, or through outer space, let us pray to the Lord:

Lord, have mercy.





For the aged and infirm, for the widowed and orphaned, and for the sick and the suffering, let us pray to the Lord:

Lord, have mercy.

For the poor and the oppressed, for those unemployed and the destitute, for prisoners and captives, and for all who remember and care for them, let us pray to the Lord:

Lord, have mercy.

For deliverance in times of affliction, strife, and need, let us pray to the Lord:

Lord, have mercy.

For blessings and mercies we have received and need:

Lord, have mercy.

For all your children to know the peace and joy of your supporting care, let us pray to the Lord

Lord, have mercy.

For all who have died in the hope of the resurrection and are at rest, let us give thanks to the Lord. Eternal God, ruler of all things in heaven and earth, accept the prayers of your people, and strengthen us to do your will; through Jesus Christ. Amen.

CALL TO STEWARDSHIP

Friends, may we not hide our gifts, but offer them to God with trust and hope, so all may join us on the journey to God's kingdom of grace and hope, peace and healing. The offerings for the work of the church will now be received.

OFFERTORY

"Away in a Manger"

arr. Edstrom

DOXOLOGY

"Praise God from Whom All Blessings"

#809

OFFERTORY PRAYER

By these gifts, Gracious God, may those who have so little be clothed with your abundant grace; may the hungry be fed with food that strengthens them and hope which gives them new life; may all who are searching find that they are your beloved children. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

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

HYMN

Hark! the Herald Angels Sing" (vss. 1,3)

(See page 22)

BENEDICTION

Go out into the world ... be with us all. Amen.

O Lord, may you this week open up doors for us to share your love!

POSTLUDE

"O Little Town of Bethlehem"

arr. Edstrom





MINISTERS: Marge Jeffries and Leslie Todd (Ushers)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. BIBLE STUDY WITH BOB!

To get the new year started, Pastor Bob invites you to join an online Bible Study to be presented over **Zoom on Wednesdays at 7pm**. Sign in from home! Dress however you like!

The Zoom app is available on computer, phones and iPads and can easily be downloaded from the App Store (Apple) or the Google Play App.

The sign in code for the meeting will be 897 8171 2968.

Unlike other Bible Studies you might have been part of, in this one we will be studying the great themes of the Bible which are found in almost every book.

January 3 - God
January 10 - The Messiah
January 17 - Holy Spirit
January 24 - Tree of Life
January 31 - Eternal Life
February 7 - Sacrifice and Atonement

We'll take a break starting on Ash Wednesday, February 14, as we join our neighboring churches in the celebration of Lent with soup, supper and worship.

Each meeting will feature a short video produced by an organization called the Bible Project (www.bibleproject.com). The BibleProject is a nonprofit, crowdfunded organization that produces 100% free Bible videos, podcasts, articles, classes, and educational Bible resources to help make the biblical story accessible to everyone everywhere.

We will discuss the ideas presented in each video for about 30-45 minutes and end with prayer. The studies will be recorded and uploaded to our website in case you missed it.

2. MESSAGE FROM THE DEACONS

The Deacons would like to thank everyone who chose tags from the Angel Tree and bought gifts. We wrapped and delivered everything right before Christmas. It was heartwarming to see the thoughtfulness with which everyone shopped for the two families. The Covenant congregation is very generous, and able to do great things for our neighbors.


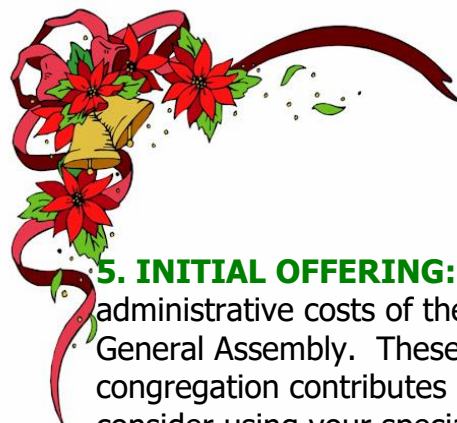
3. DAILY PRAYER

Covenant is now offering Daily Prayer videos narrated by our new Pastor, Bob! This is a wonderful way to begin each day in prayer. If you are not receiving them, please notify Bob, or Greg and you will be placed on the email list.

4. GIVING ENVELOPES

All 2024 envelopes are available. They are organized by number and located in the narthex.





5. INITIAL OFFERING: As a congregation in the Presbyterian Church (USA), we support the administrative costs of the Presbytery for Southern Jersey, the Synod of the Northeast and the General Assembly. These costs are shared equitably through per capita apportionment as each congregation contributes money based on the number of active members. Please prayerfully consider using your special envelope marked Initial Offering to help Covenant meet its giving responsibility for our connectional church. For 2024 we are requesting a contribution of \$40.00 per member to meet the per capita costs of the presbytery, synod and general assembly. Thank you.

6. FLOWER CHART



The flower chart is posted on the bulletin board for 2024. Sign your name on a specific date in order to dedicate flowers to a loved one.

7. YOUR PARTICIPATION IS NEEDED! Members are invited to participate in our services. Please contact Bonnie Cain or Greg DiBona if you are interested in reading scripture or leading our worship services. We are also in need of more volunteers to operate the camera and soundboard. Please contact the church office if you are interested.

8. BIBLE STUDY The Bible Study will be located in the lounge on Mondays at 11AM. All are welcome!

9. STEWARDSHIP: Total Income for 12/24: Total Income: \$2100.00, Envelope Giving: \$1315.00. Deacons: \$250.00.

MONTHLY MEETINGS AND SCHEDULES

- Women's Bible Study – Mondays 11:00 AM
 - Choir Rehearsal – Sundays 11:00 AM
 - Bell Rehearsal – Mondays 7:00 PM
 - Christian Education (Bonnie Cain and Amanda Rosica) – as needed
 - Deacons – 2nd Tuesday, 7:00 PM
 - Fellowship (Amanda Rosica) – 3rd Wednesday, 7:00 PM
 - Finance and Stewardship (Mike Martin) – 2nd Monday, 7:00 PM
 - Men's Breakfast -Tuesdays, 7:00 AM
 - Membership (Nancy Perritt) – as needed
 - Mission (Mary Lou Newborg) – as needed
 - Music and Worship (Leslie Todd) – November 19, after worship, lounge
 - Property Care (Chuck Rosica and Bob Jeffries) – determined by chairperson
 - Session – 4th Thursday, 7:30 PM
- 
- 



PRAYER LIST

Thank you to Pastor Bob for his thoughtful sermon and for Sandi Pascone leading us in scripture reading and announcements. Thank you to Leslie and Chris Todd for the reading and lighting of the Advent candles.

Thank you to Ann Rosica for tasty treats.

Please pray for an end to violence in our world, country and communities.

Please keep our Covenant families and friends in your prayers:

Treva - she is still at Total Rehab - prayers that she is feeling better and healing and will enjoy her family there

Betty Graham - she has been released from the hospital and is in the health care unit at the Evergreens where she will receive treatment and care for healing and recovery

Julia Slater - hip replacement surgery in a few weeks - prayers for good results

Mary Lou Newborg's friend, Tom - in the hospital following a serious fall that he will recover

Dick Craft - successful rehab following implant of pacemaker



B. Ann and Dave DuBois - dealing with health issues - feeling better

Terri and Ken Bell - prayers for comfort for Terri and strength for Ken

Janette Hutchinson - healing of injured knee

Greg's grandmother, Rita - healing from a fall

Bruce, Dawn and Erin - securing an apartment very soon and good care and treatment for Bruce for health issues



Once in Royal David's City 140

1 Once in roy - al Da - vid's cit - y stood a low - ly
 2 He came down to earth from heav - en who is God and
 3 Je - sus is our child - hood's pat - tern; day by day like
 4 And our eyes at last shall see him, through his own re -

cat - tle shed, where a moth - er laid her ba - by in a
 Lord of all, and his shel - ter was a sta - ble, and his
 us he grew; he was lit - tle, weak and help - less; tears and
 deem - ing love; for that child so dear and gen - tle is our

man - ger for his bed: Mar - y was that moth - er
 cra - dle was a stall; with the poor and meek and
 smiles like us he knew; and he feels for all our
 Lord in heaven a - bove; and he leads his chil - dren

mild; Je - sus Christ, her lit - tle child.
 low - ly, lived on earth our Sav - ior ho - ly.
 sad - ness, and he shares in all our glad - ness.
 on to the place where he is gone.

Like "All Things Bright and Beautiful" (see no. 20), this popular Christmas hymn was written by an Irish poet to illustrate for children the various articles of the Apostles' Creed. It is not known which of several English villages the composer had in mind when naming this tune.

In the Bleak Midwinter

144

1 In the bleak mid-winter, frost-y wind made moan;
 2 Our God, heaven can-not hold him, nor earth sus-tain;
 3 An-gels and arch-an-gels may have gath-ered there;
 4 What can I give him, poor as I am?

earth stood hard as i-ron, wa-ter like a stone;
 heaven and earth shall flee a-way when he comes to reign:
 cher-u-bim and ser-a-phim thronged the air;
 If I were a shep-herd, I would bring a lamb;

snow had fall-en, snow on snow, snow on snow,
 in the bleak mid-win-ter a sta-ble place suf-ficed
 but his moth-er on-ly, in her maid-en bliss,
 if I were a wise man, I would do my part;

in the bleak mid-win-ter, long a-go.
 the Lord God in-car-nate, Je-sus Christ.
 wor-shipped the be-lov-ed with a kiss.
 yet what I can I give him: give my heart.

Though this text describes winter weather in England rather than in Palestine, the poet is using familiar surroundings as a means of making the Nativity more immediate and personal. The tune name honors a Gloucestershire village near the composer's birthplace in Cheltenham.

Still, Still, Still

124

1 Still, still, still, he sleeps this night so chill! The vir - gin's
2 Sleep, sleep, sleep, he lies in slum - ber deep while an - gel

The first system of musical notation consists of a treble and bass staff in 4/4 time, key of B-flat major. The treble staff features a vocal line with lyrics and a piano accompaniment. The bass staff provides a harmonic foundation with chords and a melodic line.

ten - der arms en - fold - ing, warm and safe the child are hold - ing.
hosts from heaven come wing - ing, sweet - est songs of joy are sing - ing.

The second system continues the musical notation with the same vocal and piano parts. The lyrics describe the tender care of the child by the Virgin Mary and the angels.

Still, still, still, he sleeps this night so chill.
Sleep, sleep, sleep, he lies in slum - ber deep.

The third system concludes the piece with a final vocal phrase and piano accompaniment. The lyrics repeat the first two lines, emphasizing the stillness of the scene.

The great virtue of this Austrian carol is its sheer simplicity, which is reinforced by the re-use of the first two lines as the last two. This narrow scope makes the text into the verbal equivalent of a close-up photograph or painting, so that the sleeping child seems very near.

TEXT: Austrian carol; trans. George K. Evans, 1963

MUSIC: Austrian carol; arr. Walter Ehret, 1963

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STILL, STILL, STILL

3.6.9.8.3.6

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!



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,

Gentle Mary Laid Her Child 146

1 Gen - tle Mar - y laid her child low - ly in a man - ger;
 2 An - gels sang a - bout his birth; wise men sought and found him;
 3 Gen - tle Mar - y laid her child low - ly in a man - ger;

there he lay, the un - de - filed, to the world a strang - er.
 heav - en's star shone bright - ly forth, glo - ry all a - round him.
 he is still the un - de - filed, but no more a strang - er.

Such a babe in such a place, can he be the Sav - ior?
 Shep - herds saw the won - drous sight, heard the an - gels sing - ing;
 Son of God, of hum - ble birth, beau - ti - ful the sto - ry;

Ask the saved of all the race who have found his fa - vor.
 all the plains were lit that night; all the hills were ring - ing.
 praise his name in all the earth; hail the King of glo - ry!

This 20th-century Christmas text by an English-born Canadian clergyman was originally a poem called "The Manger Prince." It gains a certain antique flavor by being set to a late medieval song associated with springtime. (The tune name means "The flowering time is near.")

115

Away in a Manger

Capo 3: (D) F (G) B \flat (D) F

1 A - way in a man - ger, no crib for his bed,
 2 The cat - tle are low - ing; the poor ba - by wakes,
 3 Be near me, Lord Je - sus; I ask thee to stay

(A7) C7 (D) F

the lit - tle Lord Je - sus laid down his sweet head.
 but lit - tle Lord Je - sus, no cry - ing he makes.
 close by me for - ev - er and love me, I pray.

(G) B \flat (D) F

The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,
 I love thee, Lord Je - sus; look down from the sky,
 Bless all the dear chil - dren in thy ten - der care,

(A7) C7 (D) F (Em) Gm (A7) C7 (D) F

the lit - tle Lord Je - sus a - sleep on the hay.
 and stay by my side un - til morn - ing is nigh.
 and fit us for heav - en to live with thee there.

147

The First Nowell

1 The first Now-ell the an-gel did say was to cer-tain poor
 2 They look - ed up and saw a star shin-ing in the
 3 And by the light of that same star three wise men
 4 This star drew nigh to the north-west; o'er Beth - le -

shep-herds in fields as they lay, in fields where they lay keep-ing
 east be - yond them far; and to the earth it gave
 came from coun - try far; to seek for a king was their
 hem it took its rest, and there it did both stop

their sheep, on a cold win-ter's night that was so deep.
 great light, and so it con - tin - ued both day and night.
 in - tent, and to fol - low the star wher - ev - er it went.
 and stay, right o - ver the place where Je - sus lay.

Refrain

Now - ell, Now - ell, Now - ell, Now - ell,

"Nowell" is the English form of the French "noel," a shout of joy formerly used at Christmas (as in Chaucer's "Franklin's Tale"), a clue that the word is older than its first printing. It may have Latin and French roots related to "born" (*natus / né*) as well to "news" (*nova / nouvelle*).

151 We Three Kings of Orient Are

1 We three kings of O - ri - ent are; bear - ing gifts we tra - verse a - far,
 2 Born a King on Beth - le - hem's plain, gold I bring to crown him a - gain,
 3 Frank - in - cense to of - fer have I; in - cense owns a de - i - ty nigh;
 4 Myrrh is mine; its bit - ter per - fume breathes a life of gath - er - ing gloom;
 5 Glo - rious now be - hold him a - rise, King and God and Sac - ri - fice:

field and foun - tain, moor and moun - tain, fol - low - ing yon - der star.
 King for - ev - er, ceas - ing nev - er o - ver us all to reign.
 prayer and prais - ing glad - ly rais - ing, wor - ship - ing God Most High.
 sor - rowing, sigh - ing, bleed - ing, dy - ing, sealed in the stone - cold tomb.
 Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! sounds through the earth and skies.

Refrain

O star of won - der, star of night, star with roy - al beau - ty bright,

west - ward lead - ing, still pro - ceed - ing, guide us to thy per - fect light!

Although Christians had begun by the 2nd century to speak of these visitors from eastern countries (Matthew 2:1-12) as "kings," perhaps because of passages like Psalm 72:10 and Isaiah 60:3, it is more accurate to think of them as magi or astrologers, the scholars of their day.

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!

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.

JESUS CHRIST: BIRTH

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

The image shows a musical score for the hymn "Hark! The herald angels sing." It consists of two staves. The top staff is a vocal line in G major (one flat) and 4/4 time, with lyrics underneath. The bottom staff is a piano accompaniment in the same key and time, featuring a bass line and chords. The lyrics are: "Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, 'Glo - ry to the new-born king!'".