

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 25, 2024

10:00 a.m.

CHRISTMAS DAY

WE ASSEMBLE IN GOD'S NAME

Let us prepare our hearts and minds to worship God.

VOLUNTARY

John Alexander, organ

WELCOME Jill Duffield

CALL TO WORSHIP Newton Cowan

Leader: For unto us a child was born,
For this world ... Jesus, who is Christ our Lord.

**All: Salvation was proclaimed,
Hope and freedom for all were promised.**

Leader: Jesus, Christ our Lord, meet us this day,
For we wait on you.
Renew the joy of our salvation.

(Silence is observed. The Christ candle is lit.)

**All: Jesus, Christ our Lord,
With your salvation, transform this world.**

OPENING PRAYER Jill Duffield

God of earth and heaven: when you brought your firstborn into the world, you sent your angel messengers, swift as the winds, and your servants, like flames of fire, to tell the glad news: Give us courage in the midst of all earth's shadows to praise you for the Light that overcomes; to sing the glory of your beloved Son, who came to life among us, full of grace and truth. Amen.

113 Angels We Have Heard on High

1 An - gels we have heard on high, sweet-ly sing-ing o'er the plains,
2 Shep-herds, why this ju - bi - lee? Why your joy - ous strains pro-long?
3 Come to Beth - le - hem and see him whose birth the an - gels sing;

and the moun-tains in re - ply ech - o - ing their joy - ous strains.
What the glad - some ti - dings be which in - spire your heaven - ly song?
come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ, the Lord, the new - born King.

Refrain

Glo - - - ri - a

in ex - cel - sis De - o! Glo - -

This French carol probably dates from the 1700s, though it was not printed until the following century. Because it uses a vernacular language for the narrative stanzas and Latin for the refrain, it belongs to a special category called "macaronic" or mixed-language texts.

ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o!

* HYMN OF PRAISE: No. 113 – Angels We Have Heard on High GLORIA

* CALL TO CONFESSION *and* PRAYER OF CONFESSIONNewton Cowan

**Lord of Christmas Peace,
we have done wrong.
We have tarnished the gift you gave freely.
We have buried you so deeply in our hearts, the world doesn't see you.
We have not followed Christ,
we have ignored your teachings,
we have lived lives of apathy
against your love,
we have built fences and fortresses to push people away,
and we have silenced the screams of those in need.
Forgive us, we pray.
Free us from our sin,
Free us from our captivity,
Free us to a life lived in Joy
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

A brief period of silence is reserved for personal confession.

* ASSURANCE OF PARDON

* THE PEACE

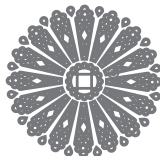
Leader: Since God has forgiven us in Christ, let us forgive one another.
The peace of Christ be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

* PASSING OF THE PEACE

* RESPONSE TO ASSURANCE OF PARDON: No. 121 – O Little Town of Bethlehem

ST. LOUIS



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!

Though he was famed during his lifetime as a great preacher, no sermon Phillips Brooks ever preached has been heard or read by as many people as have sung this carol he wrote in December 1868 for the Sunday School children of Holy Trinity Episcopal Church in Philadelphia.

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

A MOMENT OF GODLY PLAY FOR CHILDREN OF ALL AGES

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION Newton Cowan

THE WORD READ: *Luke 2:1-7*

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.

Congregation: Thanks be to God.

HYMN: No 147 – The First Nowell.....THE FIRST NOWELL
(verses 1, 2 and 6)

THE WORD READ: *Luke 2:8-14*Jill Duffield

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.

Congregation: Thanks be to God.

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,

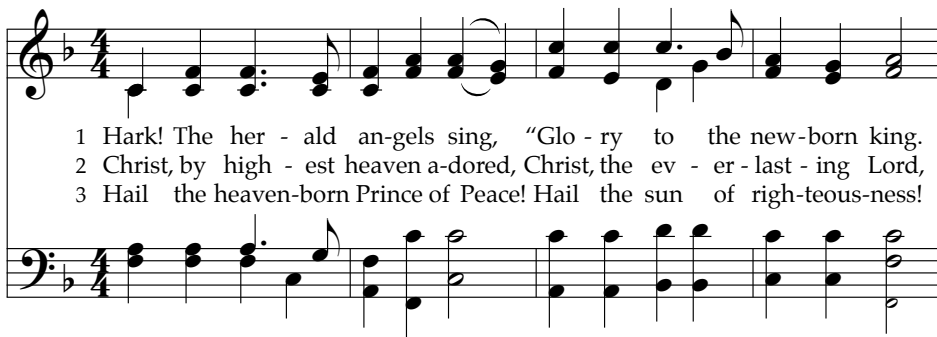
"Nowell" is the English form of the French "noel," a shout of joy formerly used at Christmas (as in Chaucer's "Franklin's Tale"), a clue that the word is older than its first printing. It may have Latin and French roots related to "born" (*natus / nē*) as well to "news" (*nova / nouvelle*).

born is the King of Is - ra - el.


The image shows a musical score for a vocal line. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff on top and a bass clef staff on the bottom. The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#). The melody is written in the treble staff, with lyrics underneath. The lyrics are 'born is the King of Is - ra - el.' The music features a mix of quarter and eighth notes, with some notes beamed together. The bass staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and single notes.

- 5 Then entered in those wise men three, 6 Then let us all with one accord
 full reverently upon their knee, sing praises to our heavenly Lord,
 and offered there in his presence that hath made heaven and earth of nough
 their gold, and myrrh, and and with his blood our life hath bought.
 frankincense. *Refrain*

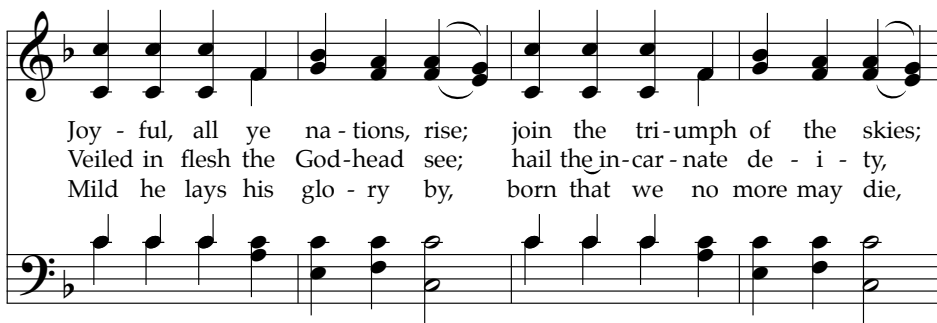
119 Hark! The Herald Angels Sing



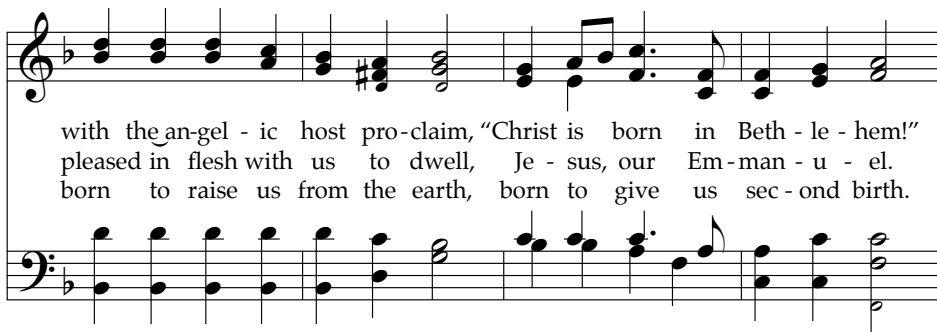
1 Hark! The her - ald an-gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born king,
2 Christ, by high - est heaven a-dored, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord,
3 Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the sun of righ-teous-ness!



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!"

The image shows a musical score for a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line is written in a treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat major or D minor). The piano accompaniment is written in a bass clef with the same key signature. The lyrics are: "Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, 'Glo - ry to the new-born king!'". The music consists of 12 measures. The vocal line starts with a dotted quarter note on G4, followed by eighth notes on A4 and Bb4, then a quarter note on C5, and continues with various rhythmic patterns and accidentals. The piano accompaniment provides harmonic support with chords and moving lines in the bass.

HYMN: No 119 – Hark! The Herald Angels Sing MENDELSSOHN

THE WORD READ: *Luke 2:15-16* Newton Cowan

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger.

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.

Congregation: Thanks be to God.

HYMN: No 114 – Away in a Manger..... CRADLE SONG

THE WORD READ: *Luke 2:17-20*Jill Duffield

When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.

Congregation: Thanks be to God.

HYMN: No 128 – Infant Holy, Infant Lowly W ŻŁOBIE LEŻY



Away in a Manger

114

Capo 5: (C) F (Am) Dm (C) F (Dm) Gm

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

(F) B \flat (G) C (C) F (Dm) Gm (F) B \flat (G) C

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.

(C) F (Dm) Gm

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,

(G) C (C) F (Dm) Gm (G) C (C) 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.

This anonymous carol probably originated among Pennsylvania Lutherans in the late 19th century, giving rise to a mistaken assertion that it had been written by Martin Luther. This tune is also by an American but has become the one usually used in Canada and Great Britain.

TEXT: Stanzas 1–2, *Little Children's Book for Schools and Families*, c. 1885;

stanza 3, Gabriel's *Vineyard Songs*, 1892

MUSIC: William James Kirkpatrick, 1895

CRADLE SONG

11.11.11.11

(alternate tune: MUELLER, 115)

1 In - fant ho - ly, in - fant low - ly, for his bed a cat-tle stall;
2 Flocks were sleep-ing; shep-herds keep-ing vig-il till the morn-ing new

ox - en low - ing, lit - tle know-ing Christ the babe is Lord of all.
saw the glo - ry, heard the sto - ry, ti - dings of the gos-pel true.

Swift are wing-ing an - gels sing - ing, no - els ring-ing, ti-dings bring-ing:
Thus re - joic - ing, free from sor - row, prais-es voic-ing greet the mor - row:

Christ the babe is Lord of all! Christ the babe is Lord of all!
Christ the babe was born for you! Christ the babe was born for you!

The English text of this 13th- or 14th-century Polish carol does not try to tell a story but to offer verbal snapshots of the well-known Nativity narrative of Luke 2:6–20. The tune name quotes the opening of the Polish text and means “He lies in a cradle” or “In manger lying.”

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

INVITATION TO COMMUNIONNewton Cowan

GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVINGJill Duffield

Leader: Now, may Bethlehem's Child bless you!

All: And also bless you!

Leader: Now, may the children of God open their hearts.

All: We offer them to the One who loves us each and every morning.

Leader: Now, may we join in the songs of the angels.

All: We join our voices with those of every time and place.

Leader: In the silenced night of chaos,
creation rejoiced with the carols of wonders
you had composed, God of surprises:

as joy sparkled in the sky,

as rivers swarmed with fish,

as turtles plodded through meadows.

The Word gently gathered up earth's dust

and the Spirit breathed life into those

shaped in your image, so we might

be at peace and be with you in joy.

But we were tempted by sin's decorations

and death's commercials of life without you.

Time and again, you sent folks to call us home.

Miriam and Micah, Ruth and Habakkuk

spoke of your hopes for of us,

yet we found rebellion the better

road to take in our journey through the years.

Finally, you chose to offer yourself

in that Child born in a stable and on life's margins,

that little One who would strengthen all.

With those who gathered on that first morning,

with all who have celebrated with songs and service,

we sing carols of praise to you:

All: Holy, holy, holy are you, God of all turned away by the world.

Creation joins the angels in praising you.

Hosanna in the highest!

Blessed is the One who clears the Way for us to walk.

Hosanna in the highest!

Leader: In the silence of the night, God of holiness,
your Child crept in among us,
so small no one would notice,
so poor no one would care.
But those who are forgotten by the world,
like shepherds and people sleeping in makeshift shelters,
come to worship, and to tell us the good news.
Those who have no money to their name,
gift us with their hopes and love,
even as he did so long ago.
Those children who are overlooked by culture,
sing to us of the One given to us,
so we might find our way home;
of the One who gives himself to death,
so resurrection love might destroy sin's power,
and we might be swaddled in grace.

On this morning when we celebrate his birth,
in the days to come when we follow him to Jerusalem,
we sing carols of that mystery we call faith:
**All: Christ was born, so we might have life;
Christ died, so we might have forgiveness;
Christ was raised, so we might have resurrection;
Christ will be born again, to gather us together with him.**

Leader: In the silence of these holy moments,
pour out your Spirit upon
those gathered on this morning
and on the gifts of the Feast of Joy.
As we are welcomed here,
may we remember and include
all rejected by the world.
As we are fed by the bread,
may we be strengthened
to go and bring tangible hope
to all who are famished by despair.
As we drink from grace's cup,
nourish us, so we may go
to overflow with love and peace
for everyone we meet in every season.

And when all history and time ends in silence,
and we are gathered with our siblings

around the feast of the lamb,
we will join the angels in singing carols to your forever,
God in Community, Holy in One. Amen.

**All: 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.**

WORDS OF INSTITUTION.....Newton Cowan

COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE
MUSIC DURING COMMUNION

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNIONJill Duffield

* CAROL OF RESPONSE: No 110 – Love Has Come BRING A TORCH

* CHARGE AND BLESSINGJill Duffield

* CAROL OF SENDING: No 143 – Angels, from the Realms of Glory..... REGENT SQUARE

VOLUNTARY

John Alexander, organ



TODAY'S WORSHIP LEADERS

*Jill Duffield, Senior Pastor
Newton Cowan, Associate Pastor for Pastoral Care
John Alexander, Director of Music and Principal Organist*

* Let us rise in body or spirit.

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Love Has Come

110

Capo 3: (D) (Bm7) (Em7) (A)
 F Dm7 Gm7 C

1 Love has come: a light in the dark - ness!
 2 Love is born! Come, share in the won - der.
 3 Love has come and nev - er will leave us!

(D) (Bm7) (Em) (A7) (D)
 F Dm7 Gm C7 F

Love shines forth in the Beth - le - hem skies. See, all
 Love is God now a - sleep in the hay. See the
 Love is life ev - er - last - ing and free. Love is

(A) (D) (Bm) (D) (A) (G) (D)
 C F Dm F C B \flat F

heav - en has come to pro - claim it; hear how their song of
 glow in the eyes of his moth - er; what is the name her
 Je - sus with - in and a - mong us. Love is the peace our

(Em7) (F \sharp 7) (G) (A) (Bm) (A7)
 Gm7 A7 B \flat C Dm C7

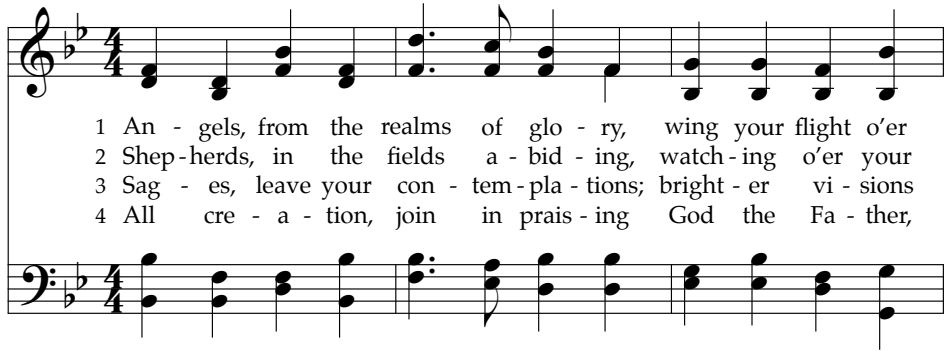
joy a - ris - es: Love! Love! Born un - to you, a
 heart is say - ing? Love! Love! Love is the name she
 hearts are seek - ing. Love! Love! Love is the gift of

(D) (A) (G) (A) (D) (A) (A7) (Dsus) (D)
 F C B \flat C F C C7 Fsus F

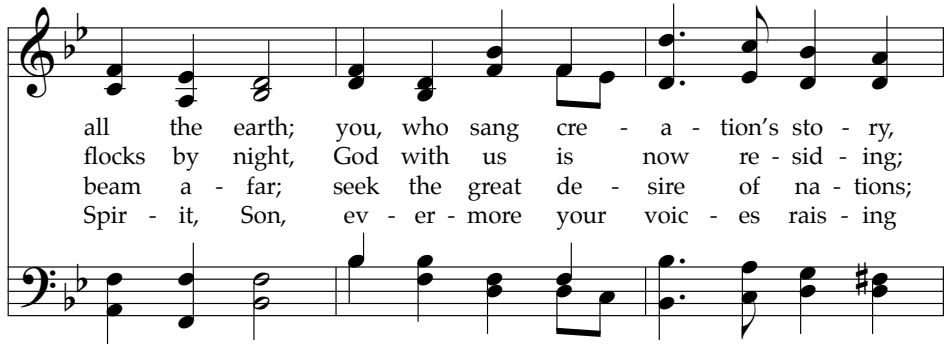
Sav - ior! Love! Love! Glo - ry to God on high.
 whis - pers. Love! Love! Je - sus, Em - man - u - el.
 Christ - mas. Love! Love! Praise to you, God on high!

Here is a chance to sing a familiar French carol tune with new words, the most important clearly being "Love." The senses "seen and heard" (as in Acts 4:20 and elsewhere) organize the first two stanzas, while the third holds the summary statement: "Love is the gift of Christmas."

143 Angels, from the Realms of Glory



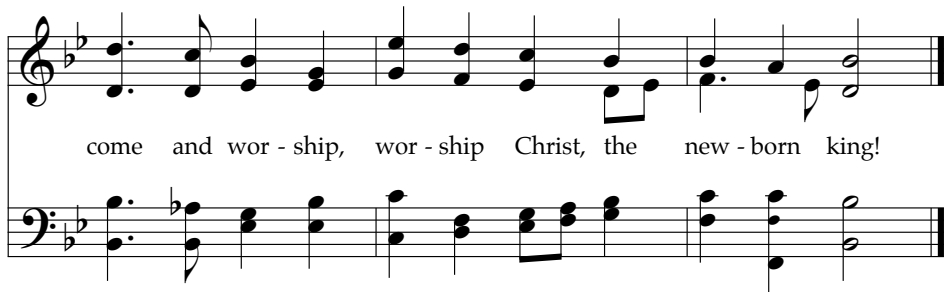
1 An - gels, from the realms of glo - ry, wing your flight o'er
2 Shep - herds, in the fields a - bid - ing, watch - ing o'er your
3 Sag - es, leave your con - tem - pla - tions; bright - er vi - sions
4 All cre - a - tion, join in prais - ing God the Fa - ther,



all the earth; you, who sang cre - a - tion's sto - ry,
flocks by night, God with us is now re - sid - ing;
beam a - far; seek the great de - sire of na - tions;
Spir - it, Son, ev - er - more your voic - es rais - ing



now pro - claim Mes - si - ah's birth:
yon - der shines the in - fant light: come and wor - ship,
you have seen his na - tal star: come and wor - ship,
to the e - ter - nal Three in One:



come and wor - ship, wor - ship Christ, the new - born king!

This familiar carol was first published as a poem in the Christmas Eve 1816 issue of a newspaper the author edited in Sheffield, England. The tune name celebrates the location of a prominent Presbyterian Church in London, sometimes called the "Presbyterian cathedral."

WE WELCOME YOU to the worship of God and to our community of faith.
We are a church of growing disciples believing that worship
is at the center of all we are and do as Christians.

We seek to be God's changemakers for good in the world.
FPC is a Matthew 25 church, and our creation care and hunger
ministries have been recognized by the Presbyterian Church USA.



ABOUT TODAY'S FLOWERS: The poinsettias that adorn the sanctuary are to the glory of God and to honor or memorialize family, friends and loved ones as we celebrate Advent.



TAKING ATTENDANCE: The QR code, left, directs you to an online form; just open your smartphone camera, hold it over the code, and follow the prompts. If you do not have a smartphone, you can pick up a physical copy of an attendance card as you enter the Life



Center or Sanctuary. If using the paper form, place it in the offering at the end of the service. On the back of the card is a prayer request form. Your submitted prayers will be prayed for by staff members and kept in strict confidence.

CHILDREN OF ALL AGES ARE WELCOME IN THE SANCTUARY during all worship services. Worship activities are available at the entrances. Nursery and Sunday school for all ages will resume on January 5.

FIND FIRST PRESBYTERIAN ON SOCIAL MEDIA – Members are sharing great photos, comments and more! Follow and Like us on **Facebook** (search "First Presbyterian Church of Greensboro"), **YouTube** ("fpcgreensboro") and **Instagram** ("1stpresgso") to get more of our posts in your newsfeed.

PASTOR ON CALL: When church offices are closed and you have an emergency, call 336.908.8615. Leave a message with your phone number and the pastor on call will be in touch with you.

FOR MORE INFO ON CHURCH SCHOOL, UPCOMING SERVICES, AND OTHER EVENTS • Check out the "Coming Up" insert in your bulletin • Subscribe to our e-news and Sunday preview emails at fpcgreensboro.org/connect • Visit fpcgreensboro.org/digital-formation

WAYS TO GIVE: In addition to the in-person offering, you may also give by mail, web, app, or text. Scan the QR code *at top right* to make a pledge, or scan the QR code *at bottom right* to give to the offering online (be sure to choose whether this is a one-time or recurring gift, and to which fund it should be applied). You can also go to fpcgreensboro.org/give/web-app-text to download the FellowshipOne Giving mobile app (Apple  or Android ) and for instructions for giving via text. You may also mail your gift to the church at 617 N. Elm St., Greensboro, NC 27401. Go to fpcgreensboro.org/give for more ways to give.

PLEDGE HERE



OTHER GIFTS HERE



HOLIDAY WEEK 2024 AT FIRST PRES

**WEDNESDAY,
DECEMBER 25
AND THURSDAY,
DECEMBER 26:
Church offices
closed.**

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 29: *First Sunday of Christmas*
One sanctuary service, 10 am. Jill Duffield preaches. Scriptures: *Samuel 2:18-20* and *Luke 2:41-52*. Will also be livestreamed, link here at our home page, [FPCGREENSBORO.ORG](https://fpcgreensboro.org). **Church school at 9 am:** *Jill Duffield leads the YMBC and Agape classes in Redhead Hall. No church school or programming for children or youth.*

**WEDNESDAY,
JANUARY 1, 2025:
Church offices
closed.**