

A Festival of Lessons & Carols

Sunday, December 15, 2024

8:45 a.m.

Third Sunday of Advent



First Presbyterian Church
of Athens

GATHERING IN THE NAME OF GOD

Welcome to all who are worshipping with us. As we enter a holy space this morning, **please silence your cell phone.** The nursery is available downstairs during both services for children birth to age four. **Children are invited to remain in the sanctuary for this special service. Children’s Church will resume next Sunday, December 22.**

- Greeting**
This is the day the Lord has made; **let us rejoice and be glad in it!**
- Prelude** *In dulci jubilo: Partita* James Vivian
- Words of Welcome**
- Moment for Mission** *Christmas Joy Offering*
- Lighting of the Advent Wreath** Murray Family
- Congregational Response** VENI EMMANUEL
O come, thou Key of David come, and open wide our heavenly home;
make safe the way that leads on high, and close the path to misery.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.
- *Hymn 49** *Once in Royal David’s City* IRBY
- *Bidding Prayer and 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.

HEARING THE WORD OF GOD

- First Lesson** Genesis 3:8-19 *Adam and Eve disobey God*
- Hymn 9** *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* VENI EMMANUEL
- Second Lesson** Isaiah 9:2, 6-7 *A great light in the darkness*
- Hymn 40** *Joy to the World!* ANTIOCH
- Third Lesson** Isaiah 11:1-9 *A little child will lead them*
- Organ Improvisation** *Lo, How A Rose E’er Blooming* John Coble
- Fourth Lesson** Luke 1:26-35, 38 *An angel appears to Mary*
- Hymn 27** *Gentle Mary Laid Her Child* TEMPUS ADEST FLORIDUM
- Fifth Lesson** Luke 2:1-7 *Mary gives birth in Bethlehem*
- Hymn 43** *O Little Town of Bethlehem* FOREST GREEN
- Sixth Lesson** Luke 2:8-16 *Angels announce the Messiah*
- Hymn 38** *It Came Upon the Midnight Clear* CAROL
- Seventh Lesson** John 1:1-14 *And the word became flesh*

RESPONDING TO THE WORD OF GOD

- Presentation of Our Tithes and Offerings**
You may mail your check, set up an automatic payment of your estimate of giving through your bank, or donate online using this QR code or at firstpresathens.org/giving. Thank you for your generosity.
- Offertory** *In dulci jubilo* Johann Michael Bach
- *Hymn 31** *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing* MENDELSSOHN
- *Blessing and Charge**
- *Postlude** *Toccata on Antioch* Craig Phillips



NOTES ON THE SERVICE

WORSHIP LEADERS

Dr. Ryan Baer, *Senior Pastor*
The Rev. Whitney Booth Lockard, *Associate Pastor*
Dr. John Coble, *Director of Music and Organist*

USHERS

John Simpson (head), Michelle Clendenen-Shaw

AUDIOVISUAL TECHNICIAN

Paulo Santos

SUNDAY MORNING MANAGERS

Aiden Dowling, Justin Winstanley

FLOWERS

The poinsettias are given to the glory of God.

TO AID IN WORSHIP

If you need to leave the sanctuary during the service, a live video feed is available in the Atrium and online on Facebook and YouTube.

Available in the Narthex or from an usher:

- **Personal hearing receivers** usable anywhere in the sanctuary
- **Large-print** hymnals, Bibles, bulletins, and hymnsheets
- **Sermons** from the previous six weeks

CONGREGATIONAL CARE

Prayer requests can be submitted to the church office, 706-543-4338, by the Prayer Request link on our church website (firstpresathens.org) or on the prayer cards in the Fellowship Pads.

A special word of welcome to our guests: thank you for joining us for worship this morning. Please fill out the Fellowship Pad so that we may be in touch. We are delighted you are here and look forward to seeing you again.

Nurseries for children 4 years old and younger, available from 8:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m., are located next to the Children’s Ministry Suite and are accessible down the stairs in the Atrium and through the glass door.

Intergenerational Sunday School Christmas Social
Today, 9:45 a.m., Fellowship Hall

Join our Sunday School classes as we celebrate Christmas! Everyone is welcome. Since the Chancel Choir rehearses during the Sunday School hour, it is difficult for members to fully engage in Sunday School, so this Social also celebrates our choirs and the exceptional music we hear and sing during worship.

Poinsettia Dedication

If you wish to give a contribution in honor or memory of a loved one, please place your order by **tomorrow, December 16**. Each dedication is \$10. You may fill out the form and pay online (please go to tinyurl.com/FPCAPoinsettia or click on the link posted in the church website under FPC News & Updates for more instructions), mail it with a check to the church office, or contact the church at 706-543-4338 or frontdesk@firstpresathens.org with your dedications. Each dedication will be listed in the December 22 worship service bulletin.

In Memory of

In Honor of

Given by

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING

On **December 22**, we will have the opportunity to join with congregations from around the United States and give to our annual Christmas Joy Offering which will help support past, present, and future leaders in the Presbyterian Church. Please give generously.

OFFERING ENVELOPES

If you would like to have offering envelopes for 2025, please e-mail Jennifer Adams at jadams@firstpresathens or call the church office at 706-543-4338 by **December 27**.

Season of Wonder@First - Outreach and Volunteering Opportunities

Holiday Benevolence Market – thank you to all who attended the HBM in person at Covenant Presbyterian Church last Sunday. If you were not able to attend, you can still choose meaningful and symbolic gifts on the shopping lists of 30+ non-profit mission partners by December 31. You can find printed lists in the Atrium, church office, or online at tinyurl.com/HBMkt2024.

Holiday Meals on Wheels – help cover the cost of one or more meals on Christmas or New Year’s Day by making a financial contribution* **by December 31**. Thank you to all who volunteered to deliver meals on Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year’s Day. If you are interested in being a backup driver to deliver meals, please contact John Turner at johnlovickturner@yahoo.com.

** For financial contributions make your check to First Presbyterian Church and note cause in memo line, or give online at FirstPresAthens.org/giving and select appropriate fund in drop-down menu.*

Service of the Longest Night Thursday, December 19, 7:00 p.m.

Join us for the Service of the Longest Night. The service takes its name from the fact that in the Northern Hemisphere in December, there are more hours of darkness than light, and this service acknowledges that many in our community do not find this to be “the most wonderful time of the year.” We will pray with and for those in our community who may be hurting and grieving, while remembering that the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

A very special invitation to join us on Christmas Eve:

Tuesday, December 24

Family Service, 4:00 p.m.

Candlelight Services, 6:00 & 8:00 p.m. (prelude will begin 30 minutes before)

***Please bring a box of diapers (infant or adult) to benefit the Athens Area Diaper Bank.
We will receive an offering to support Jubilee Partners.***

Please note that all children are invited to take part on worship on Christmas Eve. Childcare will be provided between 3:30-7:30 p.m. We will livestream 4:00 and 6:00 p.m. services on Facebook and YouTube.

THIS WEEK

Sunday, December 15 - Third Sunday of Advent, Festival of Lessons and Carols

- 8:45 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. Services, Festival of Lessons and Carols
- 9:45 a.m. Intergenerational Sunday School Christmas Social, Fellowship Hall
- 12:00 p.m. Atrium Fellowship Refreshments
- 12:00 p.m. Nominations & Elections Committee Meeting, Moses Waddel Room
- 5:30 p.m. Youth Dinner, Fellowship Hall
- 6:00 p.m. Youth Group, The PIT

Monday, December 16

- 2:00 p.m. Lay Caller Meeting Hybrid, Staff Conference Room

Tuesday, December 17

- 1:00 p.m. Staff Meeting, Staff Conference Room
- 1:30 p.m. Knitting Purls, Parlor

Wednesday, December 18

- 6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal, Room 202

Thursday, December 19

- 5:30 p.m. Stated Session Meeting, Moses Waddel Room
- 7:00 p.m. Service of the Longest Night, Dr. Ryan Baer preaching, Sanctuary

Sunday, December 22 - Fourth Sunday of Advent, Christmas Joy Offering

- 8:45 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. Services, The Rev. Whitney Booth Lockard preaching
- 9:45 a.m. Sunday School
- 12:00 p.m. Atrium Fellowship Refreshments

LOOKING AHEAD

December 24 - Christmas Eve Services:

- 4:00 p.m. (Family Service),
- 6:00 and 8:00 p.m. (Candlelight Services), Dr. Ryan Baer preaching

December 25 - Meals on Wheels Delivery

December 29 - One Worship Service at 10:00 a.m., The Rev. Whitney Booth Lockard preaching

January 1 - New Year's Day, Meals on Wheels Delivery

January 5 - One Worship Service at 10:00 a.m., Dr. Ryan Baer preaching

EDUCATION – FAITH FORMATION

SUNDAYS FOR CHILDREN

Interim Director of Children and Youth Ministries:
Hannah Knight
Nursery Coordinator: Rita Raines

Nursery Play, 8:30 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.
Children's Playroom • Infants – 4 Year Olds
Little ones are invited to Nursery Play during worship and Sunday school. Children will enjoy playtime, Bible stories, and a light snack with church friends.

Godly Play, 9:45 a.m.–10:45 a.m.
Children's Ministry Suite • Pre-K – 5th Grade
Children are invited to Godly Play during the Sunday School hour. Godly Play is an innovative way of teaching and learning that helps children “discover” who God is rather than being “told” who God is. The structure and routine of Godly Play offer children a safe and nurturing space to explore, connect, wonder, and worship God.

Children and Worship, 8:45 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.
All children are welcome to remain in worship with their families every Sunday. Children's bulletins, Bibles, and books are available at the children's tables located in the Narthex and on both sides of the choir loft.

Children's Church, 11:00 a.m. Worship Service
Children, Pre-K – 2nd Grade are invited to Children's Church after the passing of The Peace. We will continue worshipping together in the Children's Ministry Suite by listening to God's Word, praying to God, and responding through art and worship.
***No Children's Church on the first Sunday of the month, Communion Sunday. All children are invited to remain in the sanctuary on this special Sunday to take part in worship and Communion with family.**

SUNDAYS FOR YOUTH

Interim Director of Children and Youth Ministries:
Hannah Knight
The PIT (basement level) • 6th – 12th Grade

Sunday School (9:45 a.m.) - offered for both middle and high school

Both middle and high school groups will be using the Living the Word curriculum, that closely follows the narrative lectionary that guides our worship each week. Middle and high schoolers will be split into separate rooms in the PIT for a time of study, discussion, and response.

Youth Group (5:30–7 p.m.)

Sunday night youth group is a safe space for youth to come as they are! We will begin with dinner together in the fellowship hall (please volunteer to provide a meal at tinyurl.com/FPCYouthDinner2024). At 6:00, both middle and high school groups will move down to the PIT where there will be games, Bible study, creative response time, and lots of laughs as we spend an intentional hour together. The theme for this year is “In Every Season,” rooted in Ecclesiastes 3:1–8. We will spend time diving into what it looks like to trust & see God in every season, and learning to be okay with asking questions about our faith.

For any questions, please contact Hannah at hannah@firstpresathens.org.

SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR ADULTS

9:45–10:40 a.m.

IN PERSON

Bible Basics • Moses Waddel Room
Bible Basics is a new intergenerational adult class designed to improve basic Bible knowledge and familiarity. This year, we are “walking through the Bible” – Genesis to Revelation – in an effort to lay a solid foundation for future Bible study. The class is appropriate for all experience levels from “Biblical neophytes” to those looking for a refresher.
Contacts: David Dantzler (jdaviddantzler@gmail.com) and Elaine Johnson (elaine@firstpresathens.org)

Builders • Room 301
This class is a space for all parents of children and youth to gather and share in the complexity of family life. Our time together will offer a blend of fellowship, parenting support, Bible study, and service.
Contacts: Dr. Ryan Baer (ryan@firstpresathens.org) or Rev. Whitney Booth Lockard (whitney@firstpresathens.org)

HYBRID (in person and over Zoom)

Del Dunn Sunday School Class • Room 308
An in-depth study and discussion of scripture, offering a collegial environment and welcoming all who seek to enrich their understanding of the Bible and its application to our daily lives.
Coordinator: Susan Landrum (slandrum@uga.edu)
Zoom ID: 380 330 5940, PW: 245449

New Voices • Room 310
The New Voices class is a discussion based class that is currently studying the parables of Jesus. This study is based on the book *Parables from the Backside*, by J. Ellsworth Kallas. All are invited to come study God's holy word with us!
Led by: Lewis Hudgins (lewisahudgins@gmail.com)
Zoom ID: 674 533 8902

Wayne F. Middendorf Men's Bible Class
Bride's Room, Tinsley Stern
The class features open and honest discussion in a nonjudgmental atmosphere about various aspects of Christianity. This year, the class will have a study and discussion of the course *Jesus and His Jewish Influences*, by Dr. Jodi Magness, professor at UNC Chapel Hill.
Contacts: Ian Hardin (ianhardin1@gmail.com), Jim Scanlon (ijtsanlon@yahoo.com)
Zoom ID: 883 5159 0923

Once in Royal David's City

49

IRBY 8.7.8.7.7

Cecil Frances Alexander, 1848; alt.

Henry John Gauntlett, 1849
Harm. Arthur Henry Mann, 1919

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
Lord of all, And His shel - ter was a sta - ble,
us He grew; He was lit - tle, weak and help - less,
deem - ing love, For that Child so dear and gen - tle

In a man - ger for His bed. Ma - ry was that moth - er
And His cra - dle was a stall. With the poor, op - pressed, and
Tears and smiles like us He knew; And He feels for all our
Is 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.

Music: Harmonization by A. H. Mann, reprinted by permission of Novello and Company Limited.

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

VENI EMMANUEL LM with refrain

Latin, c. 12th century

Stanzas 1-2 trans. John Mason Neale, 1851; alt. 1854

Stanza 3 trans. Henry Sloane Coffin, 1916

Adapt. Thomas Helmore, 1854

Accomp. John Weaver, 1988

1. O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, And ran - som
 2. O come, Thou Day-spring, come and cheer Our spir - its
 3. O come, De - sire of na - tions, bind All peo - ples

cap - tive Is - ra - el, That mourns in lone - ly ex - ile
 by Thine ad - vent here; Dis - perse the gloom - y clouds of
 in one heart and mind; Bid en - vy, strife, and dis - cord

here Un - til the Son of God ap - pear.
 night, And death's dark shad - ows put to flight. Re-joyce! Re-joyce!
 cease; Fill the whole world with heav - en's peace.

Em - man - u - el Shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el!

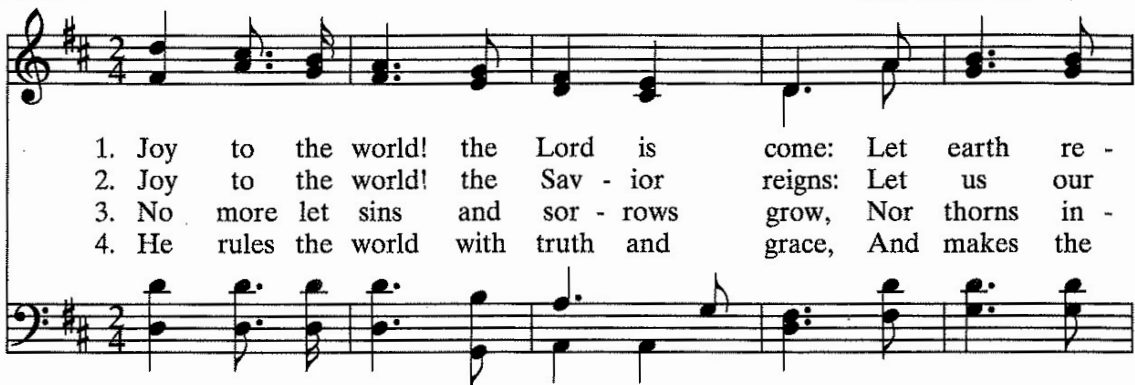
Joy to the World!

ANTIOCH CM with repeat

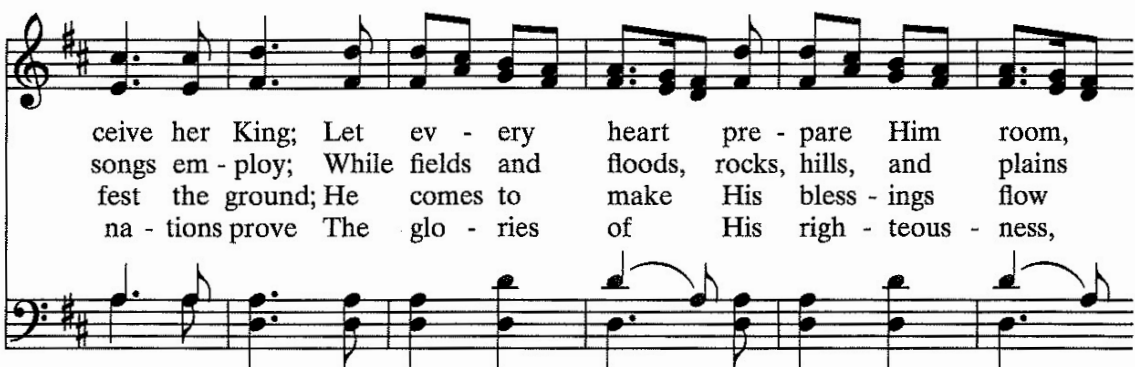
Attr. George Frederick Handel, 1742

Arr. Lowell Mason, 1836

Isaac Watts, 1719; alt.



1. Joy to the world! the Lord is come: Let earth re -
 2. Joy to the world! the Sav - ior reigns: Let us our
 3. No more let sins and sor - rows grow, Nor thorns in -
 4. He rules the world with truth and grace, And makes the



ceive her King; Let ev - ery heart pre - pare Him room,
 songs em - ploy; While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
 fest the ground; He comes to make His bless - ings flow
 na - 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,

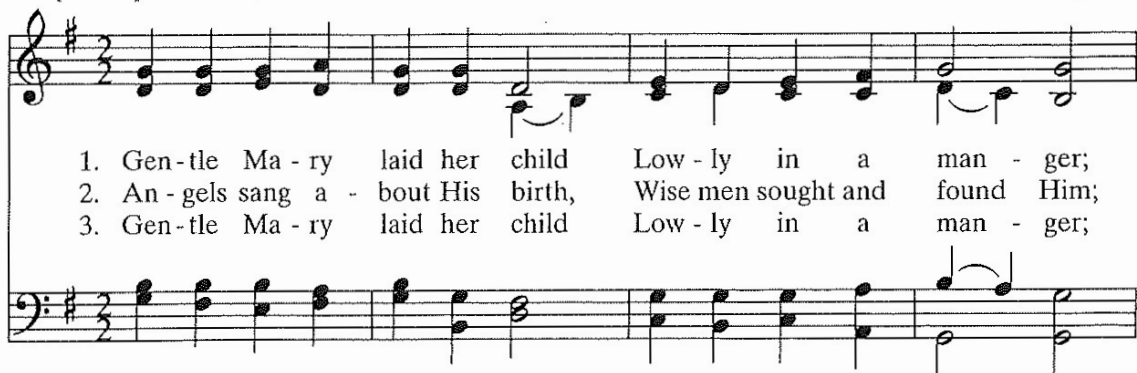
Gentle Mary Laid Her Child

27

TEMPUS ADEST FLORIDUM 7.6.7.6 D

Joseph Simpson Cook, 1919

Piae Cantiones, 1582
Arr. Ernest C. MacMillan, 1930



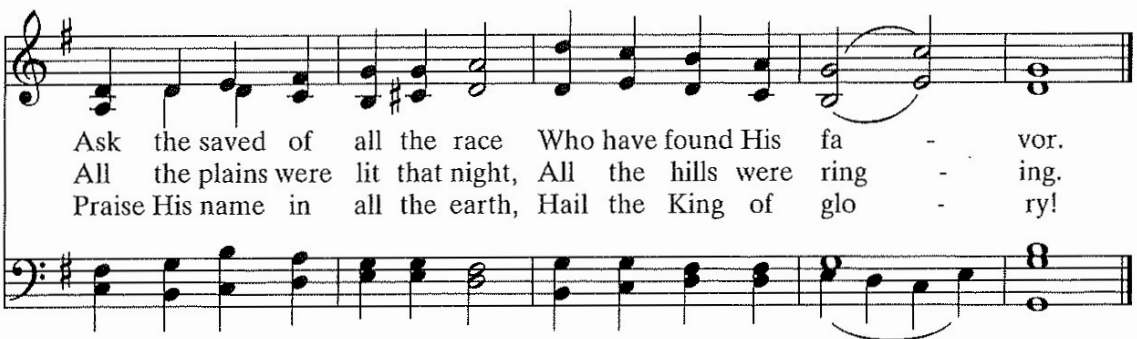
1. Gen-tle Ma - ry laid her child Low - ly in a man - ger;
2. An - gels sang a - bout His birth, Wise men sought and found Him;
3. Gen-tle Ma - ry laid her child Low - ly in a man - ger;



There He lay, the un - de - filed, To the world a stran - ger.
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 stran - ger.



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!

O Little Town of Bethlehem

FOREST GREEN CMD

English folk melody

Phillips Brooks, 1868

Arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1906

1. O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, How still we see thee lie!
 2. For Christ is born of Ma - ry; 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 tid - ings 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!

This tune in a higher key, 292

Music: Arrangement from the *English Hymnal*, 1906. Used by permission of Oxford University Press.

It Came Upon the Midnight Clear

38

CAROL CMD

Edmund Hamilton Sears, 1849

Richard Storrs Willis, 1850



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. And ye, be-neath life's crush-ing load, Whose forms are bend-ing low,
 4. For lo, the days are has-tening on, By proph-et bards fore - told,




From an - gels bend - ing near the earth, To touch their harps of gold:
 And still their heav-en-ly mu - sic floats O'er all the wea - ry world:
 Who toil a - long the climb-ing way With pain - ful steps and slow,
 When with the ev - er - cir - cling years Comes round the age of gold;




"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,
 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 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.



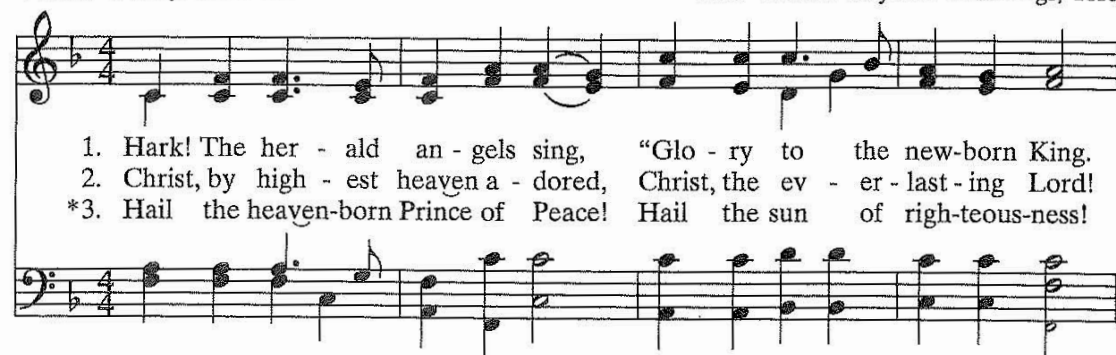
Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

MENDELSSOHN 7.7.7.7 D with refrain

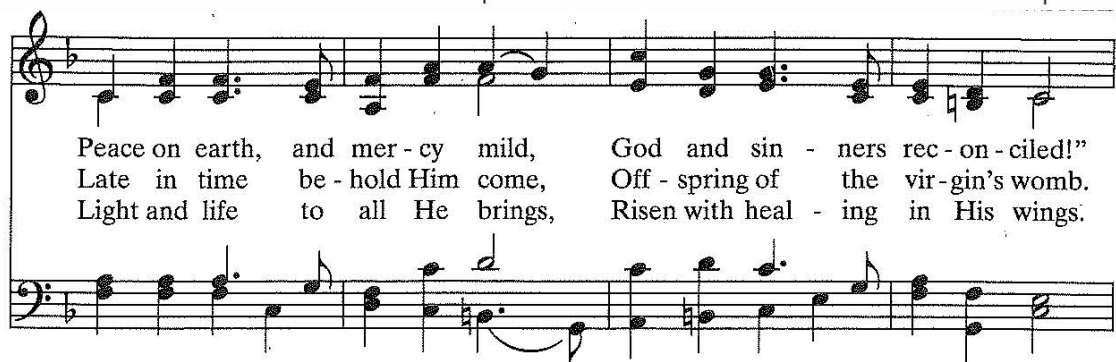
Felix Mendelssohn, 1840

Charles Wesley, 1739; alt.

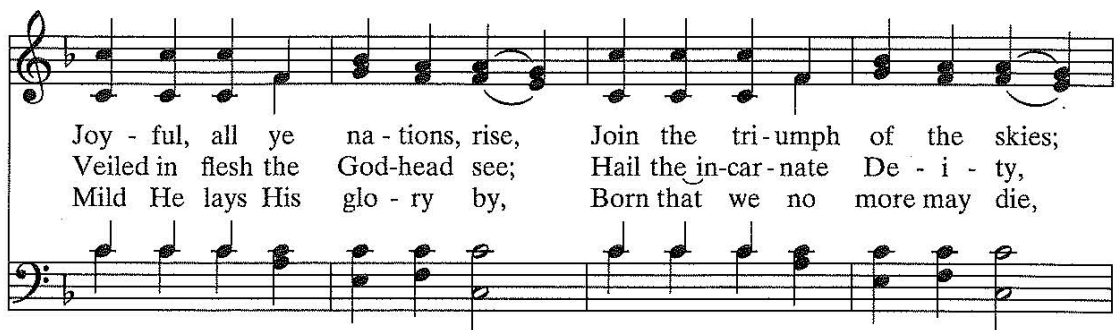
Arr. William Hayman Cummings, 1855



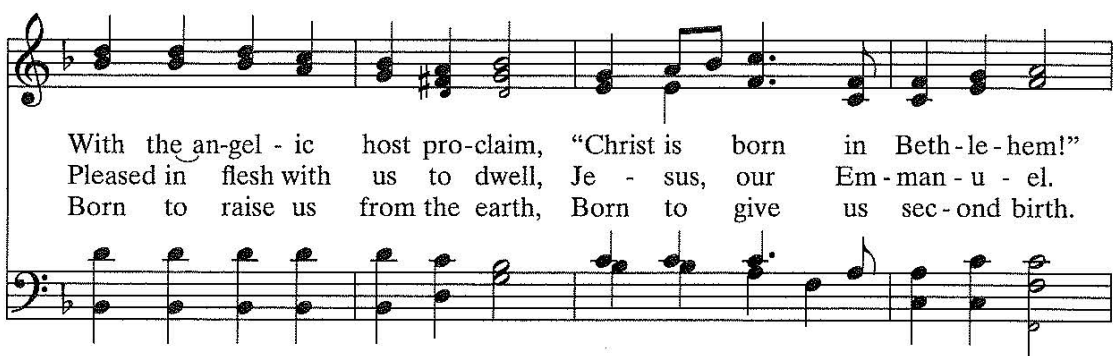
1. Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born King.
 2. Christ, by high - est heaven a - dored, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord!
 *3. Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the sun of righ-teous-ness!



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.



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

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH SESSION

Ryan Baer, Moderator Pat Waldrip, Clerk of Session

CLASS OF 2025

Shannon Brooks
Phyllis Crowell
Denise Horton
Paul Lee
Sharon Neff
Bruce Middendorf
Randy Riner
Chuck Toney

CLASS OF 2026

Lindsay Griffeth
Dan Nadenicek
Karen Phillips
Ethelyn Simpson
Jeffrey Trapnell
Pat Tritt
John Turner
Pat Waldrip

CLASS OF 2027

Susan Baldwin
Bill Bushnell
Amy Cowsert
Matt Crim
Jay Holloway
Tom Lane
Joan Pinson
Paige Simmons

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH STAFF

Dr. Ryan Baer, *Senior Pastor* (ryan@firstpresathens.org)
The Rev. Whitney Booth Lockard, *Associate Pastor* (whitney@firstpresathens.org)
The Rev. Margaret Davis, *Parish Associate* (margaret@firstpresathens.org)
Dr. John Coble, *Director of Music and Organist* (jcoble@firstpresathens.org)
Ms. Hannah Knight, *Interim Director of Children and Youth Ministries* (hannah@firstpresathens.org)
Mrs. Elaine Johnson, *Director of Weekday School* (elaine@firstpresathens.org)
Mrs. Lucy Bell Johnson, *Office Administrator* (lbell@firstpresathens.org)
Mr. Paulo Santos, *Director of Communications* (paulo@firstpresathens.org)
Ms. Jennifer Adams, *Church Accountant* (jadams@firstpresathens.org)
Mrs. Joli Winstanley, *Receptionist* (frontdesk@firstpresathens.org)
Mrs. Marcy Fabris, *Weekday School Administrative Assistant* (wds@firstpresathens.org)
Ms. Rita Raines, *Nursery Coordinator*
Mrs. Charlotte Chromiak, *Children's Music Assistant* (charlotteposs@gmail.com)
Mrs. Madeline Van Dyck, *Parish Nurse*
Mr. Wayne Brock, *Sexton*