

WELCOME

ON THIS HOLY NIGHT, we engage one of the deep mysteries of our faith. In celebrating Christmas, we try to push away the cares of the moment and the rush of things to do. As we worship, we create a wide, sweet space to listen, pray, sing, and receive the gift of God's presence. No one will ever make sense of how God, the Infinite, was revealed in the finite. So we tell a story and simply wonder at it all. Welcome to a house of wonder.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

We welcome everyone to Westminster Church for these Christmas Eve services. We extend a special welcome to visitors and those who return for the holiday. If you live in the Wilmington area and do not have a church home, we hope you will consider uniting with our church family. To learn more about our community of faith, please contact the Rev. Sudie Niesen Thompson at sniesenthompson@wpc.org or (302) 654-5214 ext. 103.

Our Christmas decorations are labors of love by: Linda Watson; Clark and Donna Collins, Kevin and Chelsea Collins and their children Parker, Grayson and Warren; Jill Getty, Mary Field, Suzie Hurlock, Linda and Paul McGregor, Carol Mosher, Robin Rosser, Lois Underhill, Sue Weissinger and Susan Williamson. We extend our deep thanks to all who helped decorate our church for Christmas.

The trees in the Sanctuary and Rodney Chapel have been decorated with 160 beautifully handmade ornaments called Chrismons (Christ + Monogram). We hope these Christian symbols will prompt you to contemplate Christ and the meaning of Christmas. For more information, please see the December *Chimes* article on the Chrismons.

The Chancel flowers this evening are given to the glory of God and in loving memory of Charles M. Krick, Jr. and Ann E. Linderman by Sue and Bob Linderman.

Cover Image Credit: Nativity art by Darcy Lee Saxton

Church Office Holiday Hours: The church office will be closed on Monday, December 25. The church office will be OPEN December 26-29 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. All donations POSTMARKED on or before December 31, 2023 will be credited to your contribution record as received in 2023, so there is no need to physically drop off donations to receive credit. Secure online donations can be made until December 31 for 2023 year-end giving. If you need assistance with online giving, contact Colleen Falasco at cfalasco@wpc.org.

PASTORAL STAFF	The Rev. Dr. Gregor	v Knov Jones	Hood of Ctoff
PASTURALSTAFF	THE KEV. DI. GIESOI	y KIIOX JOILES	, meau oi Staii

The Rev. Sudie Niesen Thompson, Associate Pastor

The Rev. Jill Getty, Pastoral Care Assistant

MUSIC STAFF Dr. F. Anthony Thurman, Director of Music/Organist

Section Leaders: Rebecca Hughes, Margaret Mezzacappa, Teddy Austin, Jerry Polman

Emily Haas, Director of Music for Children and Youth Cole Walker, Choral Assistant for Children and Youth

VIDEOGRAPHERS Tanner Freeman, Rich Albert, Drew Holmes, George McAllister, Chip Pfleegor,

Roger Reinicker, Aaron Wemhoff, Sophia Wolff, and Deanna Sparling

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Kathleen Kennan, Director of Christian Education and Youth Ministry

STAFF

Sydney Walker, Associate Director of Youth Ministry

Grace Anderson, Youth Leader

Stephanie Burris-White, Director of Preschool Ministries

Beatrice Taylor, Nursery

SUPPORT STAFF Susan Alexander, Reception Area Supervisor

Mary Clark, Administrative Assistant

Paul Crothamel, Director of Facilities and Security Colleen Falasco, Director of Financial Operations Doug Gerdts, Manager of Accounting and Reporting Nicole Hughes, Director of Marketing and Communications

Cathy Lang, Administrative Assistant

Sextons: Robert King, Daniel Steele, Joan Truitt, John Young

THERE WERE THOUSANDS OF BABIES born that day all helpless dependent needful of love warmth and sustenance some would grow up to be kings queens leaders others slaves prostitutes beggars murderers and thieves most however would live ordinary lives among ordinary people and live and die whilst the world scarce noticed their existence But not you Who rose from the most ordinary to the extraordinary from stable to cross and beyond whilst the world tried its best to ignore you and failed

Author Unknown (from FaithandWorship.com)

Children's Pageant - 4:00 p.m.

Passages in **bold** print may be spoken by all. At the asterisk (*) please stand in body or rise in spirit.

Tower Chime Craig Checkel

CALL TO WORSHIP Sudie Niesen Thompson

With the angels, whose chorus announced Christ's birth,

we come to proclaim the good news.

With the shepherds, who stood in awe before his manger bed,

we come in wonder to worship him.

With the Wise Ones, who welcomed the newborn king with precious gifts,

we come with gifts of love and praise.

Come, let us adore him!

Let us worship the Lord!

*CAROL NO. 133 O Come, All Ye Faithful ADESTE FIDELES

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant;

O come ye; O come ye to Bethlehem!

Come, and behold him, born the King of angels!

O come, let us adore him;

O come, let us adore him;

O come, let us adore him; Christ, the Lord!

Sing, choirs of angels; sing in exultation; O sing, all ye citizens of heaven above! Glory to God, all glory in the highest! Refrain

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

Erin, Scott, Hudson, and Crosby Downing

"Good news of great joy," the angel said,

"for to you a Savior is born."

"Peace on earth," the choir said,

"for God reigns in the highest."

"Follow me," the star beckoned,

"for Hope was born in Bethlehem."

The Christ candle is lit.

The light shines in the darkness.

And the darkness will never overcome it.

ANTHEMS

Away in a Manger Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Westminster Children's Choir Please see page 8 for a list of participants.

Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her king; let every heart prepare him room, And heaven and nature sing, and heaven and nature sing, and heaven, and heaven and nature sing. He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the nations prove the glories of his righteousness and wonders of his love. and wonders of his love, and wonders, wonders of his love.

PRAYER Gregory Knox Jones

> Living God, on this holy night we gather to stand with shepherds, amazed at your glory; to sing with angels, rejoicing in your work; to wait with Joseph, trusting in your promise; to sit with Mary, cradling your love. May the good news of this night inspire us to tell the world of our great joy: Jesus Christ is born! Amen.

LESSONS AND CAROLS

Carol No. 140

Once in Royal David's City

IRBY

Once in royal David's city stood a lowly cattle shed, where a mother laid her baby in a manger for his bed: Mary was that mother mild;

Jesus Christ, her little child.

He came down to earth from heaven

who is God and Lord of all. and his shelter was a stable, and his cradle was a stall;

with the poor and meek and lowly, lived on earth our Savior holy.

THE JOURNEY AND THE BIRTH

Luke 2:1-7

Nativity: Kelly, Eric, and Charlotte Olsen

Carol No. 146

Gentle Mary Laid Her Child

TEMPUS ADEST FLORIDUM

Gentle Mary laid her child

Lowly in a manger;

There he lay, the undefiled

To the world a stranger.

Such a babe in such a place, Can he be the Savior?

Ask the saved of all the race

Who have found his favor.

Angels sang about his birth;

Wise men sought and found him; Heaven's star sone brightly forth,

Glory all around him

Shepherds saw the wondrous sight,

Heard the angels singing;

All the plains were lit that night,

All the hills were ringing.

THE ANGELS APPEAR

Luke 2:8-14

Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o'er the plains, and the mountains in reply echoing their joyous strains. Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong? What the gladsome tidings be which inspire your heavely song? Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Come to Bethlehem and see him whose birth the angels sing; come, adore on bended knee Christ, the Lord, the newborn King. Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!

THE SHEPHERDS GO TO BETHI FHEM.

Luke 2:15-20

There's a Star in the East CAROL No. 135

FOLLOW

Solo:

There's a star in the east on Christmas morn.

Rise up, shepherd, and follow.

It will lead to the place where the Christ was born.

Rise up, shepherd and follow. Refrain

Refrain, sung by all:

Follow, follow;

Rise up shepherd, and follow. Follow the star of Bethlehem. Rise up, shepherd, and follow

Solo:

If you take good heed to the angel's words, Rise up, shepherd, and follow. You'll forget your flocks; you'll forget your herds.

Rise up, shepherd and Follow. Refrain

THE MAGI FOLLOW THE STAR

Matthew 2:1-12

CAROL No. 151

We Three Kings of Orient Are

KINGS OF ORIENT

We three kings of Orient are; bearing gifts we traverse afar, field and fountain, moor and mountain, following yonder star. O star of wonder, star of night,

star with royal beauty bright, westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light!

Glorious now behold him arise, King and God and Sacrifice: Alleluia! Alleluia! sounds through the earth and skies.

Refrain

GIFTS FOR THE CHRIST CHILD

As the magi brought their gifts to the Christ child, tonight we offer ours to his work in the world. The entire Christmas Offering is given to those in need beyond our walls. Please see the back cover for details. Contributions intended for any other purpose (e.g. 2023 pledge) should be clearly noted.

OFFERTORY SOLO Gesù Bambino Pietro A. Yon

When blossoms flowered 'mid the snows upon a winter night Was born the Child, the Christmas Rose, the King of Love and Light. The angels sang, the shepherds sang, the grateful earth rejoiced, And at his blessed birth the stars their exultation voiced. O come let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

CHRISTMAS PRAYER

Holy One, on this holy night we kneel before your manger bed, amazed that you would put yourself in our hands. And we pray that you would open our hearts to receive your gift of grace.

Help us to be like Mary –

to bear Christ into this world with powerful praise and thoughtful love.

Help us to be like the angels -

to sing your glory and proclaim your peace to those the world thinks deserve it least.

Help us to be like the shepherds -

to respond to good news of great joy by telling others what we have heard and seen.

Help us to be like the wise ones -

to seek you out, to follow your star, to make of our lives a gift to you.

Holy One, on this holy night we kneel before your manger bed, amazed at the fullness of your love. Send us out with joy in our hearts to echo the angels' song:

to us is born a Savior, Christ the Lord!

CAROL No. 122

Silent Night, Holy Night!

STILLE NACHT

Children's Choir:
Silent night, holy night!
All is calm, all is bright
'round yon virgin mother and child!
Holy Infant, so tender and mild,
sleep in heavenly peace,
sleep in heavenly peace.

Sung by All:
Silent night, holy night!
Wondrous star, lend thy light;
With the angels let us sing,
Alleluia to our King:
Christ the Savior is born;
Christ the Savior is born.

(Service concludes on next page)

Go to bring light to those who sit in darkness,

and joy to those in despair.

Go with the songs of angels in your ears,

and the love of God in your hearts.

Go in wonder to share the good news:

Jesus Christ is born!

*CAROL No. 136

Go, Tell It on the Mountain

GO TELL IT

Go, tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere; go tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born!

Down in a lowly manger the humble Christ was born, and God sent us salvation that blessed Christmas morn. *Refrain*

Special thanks to Kara Francis, Robin Rosser, and Teresa Wemhoff for shepherding our shepherds, angels and animals.

Westminster Children's Choir

Stella Baddorf Hudson Downing Fionn Murphy
Amelia Blackford Penny Gnade Iona Thompson
Samuel Blackford Zetta Gnade Cooper Wemhoff
Jack Burkhardt Garrett Hoopes Griffin Wemhoff
Kaylea Donaghy Charlie McAllister

Service of Story and Song – 5:30 p.m.

Passages in **bold** print may be spoken by all. At the asterisk (*) please stand in body or rise in spirit.

Tower Chime Susan Spilecki

Prelude Rejoicing George Philip Telemann

THE BIRTH FORETOLD Isaiah 9:2, 6 Gregory Knox Jones

*CAROL No. 119

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

MENDELSSOHN

Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king.

Peace on earth and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled!"

Joyful all ye nations, rise;
join the triumph of the skies;
with the angelic host proclaim,
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

Hark! The herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn king!"

Christ, by highest heaven adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord, late in time behold him come, off-spring of the virgin's womb. Veiled in flesh the God-head see; hail the incarnate deity, pleased in flesh with us to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel. Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king!"

Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace!
Hail the sun of righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
risen with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by,
born that we no more may die,
born to raise us from the earth,
born to give us second birth.
Hark! The herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn king!"

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

Carol and Wheeler Neff

"Good news of great joy," the angel said,

"for to you a Savior is born."

"Peace on earth," the choir said,

"for God reigns in the highest."

"Follow me," the star beckoned,

"for Hope was born in Bethlehem."

The Christ candle is lit.

The light shines in the darkness.

And the darkness will never overcome it.

Living God –
On this joy-filled night,
we come to adore you
and to receive your gift of love.

In quiet celebration,
we join Mary in pondering the mystery in our hearts.
In resounding praise,
we raise our voices with the heavenly host:
Glory to God in the Highest Heaven!
And on earth, peace to all!

As we listen again to your story, enter our searching hearts, and illumine our wondering minds that we might know your hope, peace, joy, and love, and share these gifts with others. Amen.

LESSONS AND CAROLS

CAROL No. 140

Once in Royal David's City

IRBY

Once in royal David's city stood a lowly cattle shed, where a mother laid her baby in a manger for his bed: Mary was that mother mild; Jesus Christ, her little child. He came down to earth from heaven who is God and Lord of all, and his shelter was a stable, and his cradle was a stall; with the poor and meek and lowly, lived on earth our Savior holy.

THE JOURNEY AND THE BIRTH

Luke 2:1-7

Suzie Hurlock and Robert Moore

CAROL No. 128

Infant Holy, Infant Lowly

W ŻŁOBIE LEŻY

Infant holy, infant lowly, for his bed a cattle stall; oxen lowing, little knowing Christ the babe is Lord of all. Swift are winging angels singing, noels ringing, tidings bringing: Christ the babe is Lord of all! Christ the babe is Lord of all!

Flocks were sleeping; shepherds keeping vigil till the morning new saw the glory, heard the story, tidings of the gospel true.
Thus rejoicing, free from sorrow, praises voicing greet the morrow:

praises voicing greet the morrow: Christ the babe was born for you! Christ the babe was born for you!

THE SHEPHERDS AND THE ANGELS

Luke 2:8-14

Jill Getty

Angels from the realms of glory, wing your flight o'er all the earth. Ye who sang creation's story now proclaim Messiah's birth. Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn King.

Shepherds in the fields abiding, watching o'er your flocks by night, God with us is now residing, yonder shines the infant Light.

Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn King.

SHEPHERDS GO TO BETHLEHEM

Luke 2:15-20

Jill Getty

Carol No. 145

What Child Is This

GREENSLEEVES

What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet while shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing; haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary!

So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh; come, one and all, to own him.
The King of kings salvation brings; let loving hearts enthrone him.
Raise, raise the song on high.
The virgin sings her lullaby.
Joy, joy, for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mary!

THE KINGS FOLLOW THE STAR

Matthew 2:1-12

Luke Máthé and Kyle Carrick

CAROL No. 151

We Three Kings of Orient Are

KINGS OF ORIENT

We three kings of Orient are; bearing gifts we traverse afar, field and fountain, moor and mountain, following yonder star. O star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright, westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light!

Glorious now behold him arise, King and God and Sacrifice: Alleluia! Alleluia! sounds through the earth and skies. Refrain

GIFTS FOR THE CHRIST CHILD

As the magi brought their gifts to the Christ child, tonight we offer ours to his work in the world. The entire Christmas Offering is given to those in need beyond our walls. Please see the back cover for details. Contributions intended for any other purpose (e.g. 2023 pledge) should be clearly noted.

O holy night! the stars are brightly shining; It is the night of the dear Savior's birth. Long lay the world in sin and error pining, Till he appeared and the soul felt its worth. A thrill of hope the weary world rejoices, For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn! Fall on your knees! O hear the angel voices! O night divine! O night when Christ was born!

Truly he taught us to love one another;
His law is love and his gospel is peace.
Chains shall he break, for the slave is our brother,
And in his name all oppression shall cease.
Sweet hymns of joy in grateful chorus raise we;
Let all within us praise his holy name.
Christ is the Lord! Then ever, ever praise we
His pow'r and glory evermore proclaim!
He knows our need, to our weakness no stranger:
Behold your King! Before him lowly bend!

CELEBRATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

The Lord's Supper is open to all who trust in Christ. To receive communion by intinction, please approach the station on either the lectern or pulpit side, take a piece of bread and dip it in the chalice.

If you prefer packaged communion elements, you will find those in the bread basket.

Please return to your seat to partake of the packaged elements. If you are unable to come to a station, please tell an usher so that you may be served. Those sitting in the balcony will be served in their pews.

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

Set the table of grace,

and bring additional chairs.

Make a bountiful meal, because angels, magi, and shepherds, entire oceans, fields, and forests,

and everything that lives is coming to the arrival of the Prince of peace.

CAROL No. 123

It Came Upon the Midnight Clear

CAROL

It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old, from angels bending near the earth, to touch their harps of gold: "Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heaven's all-gracious King": the world in solemn stillness lay, to hear the angels sing.

For lo, the days are hastening on, by prophets seen of old, when with the ever-circling years shall come the time foretold, when peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling, and the whole world give back the song which now the angels sing.

THE GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Eternal God...

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.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE

PRAYER FOLLOWING COMMUNION

Astounding God, at this table, in this meal, we have been met by Christ – the reflection of your glory, the imprint of your being. As we go from this place may our lives be a joyful song, proclaiming the good news of your justice and peace for all the world. Amen.

CAROL No. 122

Silent Night, Holy Night!

STILLE NACHT

The ministers will light their candles from the Christ candle and then pass the light to the end of each pew.

Each person, in turn, shares the light with his/her neighbor.

Following the service, you may keep your candle or deposit it in a box near the doors.

Silent night, holy night!
All is calm, all is bright
'round yon virgin mother and child!
Holy Infant, so tender and mild,
sleep in heavenly peace,
sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight;
glories stream from heaven afar,
heavenly hosts sing "Alleluia:
Christ the Savior is born;
Christ the Savior is born!"

Silent night, holy night!
Son of God, love's pure light
radiant beams from thy holy face,
with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

Silent night, holy night!
Wondrous star, lend thy light;
with the angels let us sing
Alleluia to our King:
Christ the Savior is born;
Christ the Savior is born.

(Service concludes on next page)

*CAROL NO. 134 Joy to the World ANTIOCH

Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her king; let every heart prepare him room, And heaven and nature sing, and heaven and nature sing, and heaven, and heaven and nature sing. He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the nations prove the glories of his righteousness and wonders of his love, and wonders of his love, and wonders, wonders of his love.

CANDLELIGHT COMMUNION SERVICE - 8:00 P.M.

Passages in **bold** print may be said by all. At the asterisk (*) please stand as you are able.

TOWER CHIME Susan Spilecki

CHORAL INTROIT

Carol of the Bells (Ukrainian Bell Carol) Leontovich arr. Peter J. Wilhousky

Hark! How the bells; sweet silver bells all seem to say "Throw cares away." Christmas is here bringing good cheer to young and old, meek and the bold. Ding, dong, ding, dong, that is their song, with joyful ring, all caroling. One seems to hear, words of good cheer, from everywhere filling the air. O, how they pound, raising the sound, o'er hill and dale, telling their tale. Gaily they ring, while people sing, songs of good cheer, Christmas is here! Merry, merry, merry, merry Christmas! Merry, merry, merry Christmas! On, on they send, on without end, their joyful tone to every home.

THE BIRTH FORETOLD

Isaiah 9:2, 6

*CAROL No. 133

O Come, All Ye Faithful

ADESTE FIDELES

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant;

O come ye; O come ye to Bethlehem!

Come, and behold him, born the king of angels!

O come, let us adore him;

O come, let us adore him;

O come, let us adore him; Christ, the Lord!

True God from true God, Light from light eternal,

Born of a virgin, a mortal he comes;

Very God, be-

gotten, not created!

Refrain

Sing, choirs of angels; sing in exultation;

sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!

Glory to God, all glory in the highest!

Refrain

Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning; Jesus, to thee be all glory given;

Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing!

Refrain

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

David Cole and Dave Brinkley

"Good news of great joy," the angel said,

"for to you a Savior is born."

"Peace on earth," the choir said,

"for God reigns in the highest."

"Follow me," the star beckoned,

"for Hope was born in Bethlehem."

The Christ candle is lit.

The light shines in the darkness.

And the darkness will never overcome it.

PRAYER OF ADORATION

God of new beginnings and surprising opportunities, we celebrate your coming into our lives.

By your birth you underscored your love for the world and the importance of life on earth.

Through your ministry you showed us how to live a God-filled life and called us to join you in healing the wounds of the world. Fill our hearts this night with your love and grace so that we may become conduits of your compassion for a world yearning for peace.

We pray in the name of the Prince of Peace. Amen.

SCRIPTURE LESSON Luke 2:1-7 Sudie Niesen Thompson

*CAROL No. 141

On This Day Earth Shall Ring

PERSONENT HODIE

On this day earth shall ring with the song children sing to the Lord, Christ our King, born on earth to save us; him the Father gave us. *Ideo-o-o, ideo-o-o, ideo gloria in excelsis Deo!*

His the doom, ours the mirth when he came down to earth Bethlehem saw his birth; ox and ass beside him from the cold would hide him. *Ideo-o-o, ideo-o-o, ideo gloria in excelsis Deo!*

God's bright star, o'er his head, wise men three to him led; kneel they low by his bed, lay their gifts before him, Praise him and adore him. Ideo-o-o, ideo-o-o, ideo gloria in excelsis Deo!

On this day angels sing; with their song earth shall ring, praising Christ, heaven's King, born on earth to save us; peace and love he gave us. *Ideo-o-o, ideo-o-o, ideo gloria in excelsis Deo!*

SCRIPTURE LESSON Luke 2:8-14 Jill Getty

ANTHEM What Sweeter Music John Rutter

What sweeter music can we bring Than a carol, for to sing The birth of this our heavenly King? Awake the voice! Awake the string! Dark and dull night, fly hence away, And give the honor to this day, That sees December turned to May. Why does the chilling winter's morn Smile, like a field beset with corn? Or smell like a meadow newly-shorn, Thus, on the sudden? Come and see The cause, why things thus fragrant be: 'Tis He is born, whose quickening birth Gives life and luster, public mirth, To heaven, and the under-earth.

We see him come, and know him ours, Who, with his sunshine and his showers, Turns all the patient ground to flowers. The darling of the world is come, And fit it is, we find a room To welcome him. The nobler part Of all the house here, is the heart

Which we will give him; and bequeath This holly, and this ivy wreath, To do him honour, who's our King, And Lord of all this revelling. What sweeter music can we bring, Than a carol for to sing The birth of this our heavenly King?—Robert Herrick, 17th Century

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Luke 2:15-20

CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

Gregory Knox Jones

*CAROL No. 119

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

MENDELSSOHN

Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king. Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!" Joyful all ye nations, rise; join the triumph of the skies; with the angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!" Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king!"

Christ, by highest heaven adored, Christ the everlasting Lord, late in time behold him come, offspring of the virgin's womb. Veiled in flesh the God-head see; hail the incarnate deity, pleased in flesh with us to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel. Hark! The herald angels sing "Glory to the newborn king!"

Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace!
Hail the sun of righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
risen with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by,
born that we no more may die,
born to raise us from the earth,
born to give us second birth.
Hark! The herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn king!"

CHRISTMAS OFFERING

The entire Christmas Eve Offering is given to those in need beyond our walls.

Please see the back cover for information on these ministries.

Contributions intended for any other purpose (e.g. 2023 pledge) should be clearly noted.

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

O Holy Night

Adolph Adam arr. John West

O holy night! The stars are brightly shining; it is the night of the dear Savior's birth! Long lay the world in sin and error pining till he appeared and the soul felt its worth. A thrill of hope the weary soul rejoices for yonder breaks a new and glorious morn! Fall on your knees! Oh, hear the angel voices! Oh, night divine when Christ was born!

Led by the light of faith serenely beaming, with glowing hearts by his cradle we stand. So, led by light of a star sweetly gleaming, here came the wise men from the Orient land. The King of kings lay thus in lowly manger, in all our trials born to be our friend. He knows our need, he guardeth us from danger; behold your King! Before the lowly bend

CELEBRATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

The Lord's Supper is open to all who trust in Christ. To receive communion by intinction, please approach the station on either the lectern or pulpit side, take a piece of bread and dip it in the chalice.

If you prefer packaged communion elements, you will find those in the bread basket.

Please return to your seat to partake of the packaged elements. If you are unable to come to a station, please tell an usher so that you may be served. Those sitting in the balcony will be served in their pews.

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

Tonight old dreams are surpassed as new dreams come to life.

Hope paves the way to joy and prayer leads to proclamation.

The Light of the World has come!

This light is a light for all, igniting a flame within our souls as we break bread together.

God is born among us and within us.

Glory to God in the highest!

May there be peace and goodwill to all.

CAROL No. 129

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

ES IST EIN' ROS

Sung by All:

Lo, how a rose e'er blooming from tender stem hath sprung; of Jesse's lineage coming, by faithful prophets sung, It came, a floweret bright, amid the cold of winter, when half spent was the night

Sung by Choir:

Isaiah 'twas foretold it, the rose I have in mind, with Mary we behold it, the virgin mother kind. To show God's love a right she bore for us a Savior, when half spent ws the night.

Sung by All:

This flower, whose fragrance tender with sweetness fills the air, dispels with glorious splendor the darkness everywhere. Enfleshed, yet very God, from sin and death he saves us and lightens every load.

THE GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Sudie Niesen Thompson

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Eternal God...

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.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE

PRAYER FOLLOWING COMMUNION

Christ among us, Light of the World, heal our brokenness and make us whole. Give us a new heart and a new song, that our prayers and deeds may be one. We ask it in the name of your Love-Made-Flesh, who lives and reigns with you now and forever. Amen.

CAROL No. 122

Silent Night, Holy Night!

STILLE NACHT

The ministers will light their candles from the Christ candle and then pass the light to the end of each pew.

Each person, in turn, shares the light with his/her neighbor.

Following the service, you may keep your candle or deposit it in a box near the doors.

Silent night, holy night!
All is calm, all is bright
'round yon virgin mother and child!
Holy Infant, so tender and mild,
sleep in heavenly peace,
sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight
Glories stream from heaven afar
Heavenly hosts sing "Alleluia:
Christ the Savior is born;
Christ the Savior is born.

Silent night, holy night!
Son of God, love's pure light
radiant beams from thy holy face,
with the dawn of redeeming grace
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth;
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

Silent night, holy night!
Wondrous star, lend thy light;
with the angels let us sing
Alleluia to our King:
Christ the Savior is born;
Christ the Savior is born.

BENEDICTION

*Carol No. 134 Joy to the World antioch

Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her king; let every heart prepare him room, And heaven and nature sing, and heaven and nature sing, and heaven, and heaven and nature sing. He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the nations prove the glories of his righteousness and wonders of his love, and wonders of his love, and wonders, wonders of his love.

Participants

Westminster Children's Choir (4 p.m.) Westminster-by-Heart Storytellers (5:30 p.m.) Westminster Choir (8 p.m.)

<u>Instrumentalists</u>

Ted W. Barr, piano (5:30 and 8 p.m.) Harvey Price, timpani and percussion (5:30 and 8 p.m.) Chris Underwood, trumpet (5:30 p.m.)

Choristers

Teddy Austin, tenor (5:30 and 8 p.m.) Rebecca Hughes, soprano (5:30 and 8 p.m.) Margaret Mezzacappa, mezzo soprano (4, 5:30, and 8 p.m.) Jerry Polman, bass (5:30 and 8 p.m.)

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CHRISTMAS 2023 POINSETTIAS

In Loving Memory of:

Bill Albert

Carol and Gene Hopkins

Bernie Alexander and other loved ones

Toni D'Alessandris Mary Sue Lang

My parents, Grace and Richard Baker

Bill Deans and Ken Barnaby

Em and Jim Bercaw Wally and Jane Johnson

Mr. and Mrs. David Bernhard, Grandparents

Mr. Victor Lawryniuk, Grandparent

Mr. and Mrs. John R. Becker, Grandparents

Mr. John R. Becker, Uncle

Mrs. Marianne Wizgall, Dear Friend

Lewis and Pauline Black

Our parents and other loved ones

Betty and Bud Bryde and Frank and Fay Staats

Robert L. Checkel Maury Colbert

Helen Jeannette Cole

Deanna Hartman and Kim Hebebrand

Jo and Phil Collins
Dolly Windsor

Ana Jane Mercer and Phyllis Muir

David Downing, Ray and Dottie Barkes
Paul, Anna Mae, David, and Gregg Collins

Ed and Rita Falasco June Marie Fleming

Cheryl Tanverdi

Ethel and John A. Gavenonis, Sr.

Minnie and Zelino Vici

Jackie and Dean Gooderham

El Graef and Dr. and Mrs. Charles Graef

Mr. and Mrs. Philip Williams

Jack Graham, William Harron and Ebo Eberling

Nicholas Marcopulos

Elizabeth and Rodney Higgins

Our Parents

John and Dot Hunter

The Hurlock and Frie Families

Our Parents

Robert and Roberta Jolly

Anna Mae and Harry Robinson

Given By:

Rich and Taryn Albert Rich and Taryn Albert

The Alexander Family

Anonymous

Susan and Stella Baddorf

Gerry Baker

Fay Deans Barnaby

Nancy and Walter Bercaw Nancy and Walter Bercaw

Diane M. Bernhard

Diane M. Bernhard

Diane M. Bernhard

Diane M. Bernhard
Diane M. Bernhard

Lewis Black, Jr.

Nancy and Herb Boden

Gary and Sue Bryde

Jeanne Checkel and Family

Nancy Colbert

David Cole and Dave Brinkley

David Cole and Dave Brinkley

Donna and Clark Collins

Donna and Clark Collins

Heather and EJ Dealy
The Downing Family

Colleen and Marty Falasco

Colleen and Marty Falasco

Nancy Anne Fleming and Dan Weintraub

Gloria and William Galloway and Ata Tanverdi

The Gavenonis Family

The Gavenonis Family

Rob Gooderham and Eileen Maroney

Sally W. Graef

Sally W. Graef

The Harron Family

Cathy Higgins

Cathy Higgins

Tom and Carol Hogue

Beth, John and Amy Hunter

Suzie Hurlock

John and Dede Johnston

Richard Jolly and Charles Ingersoll Richard Jolly and Charles Ingersoll

Ann Enderle, Karl Kniel and Stokes Walesby

Eben C. Lang and Stephen Gemmell

Jerry Lee Loved Ones

Our parents, Charles M. Krick, Jr. and Ann E. Linderman

Marilyn Lockfeld Loved Ones

Our parents Mr. and Mrs. Ronald Daut Our parents Mr. and Mrs. Bascomb Love

Ted and Dolly Pollock
Don and Myra McFarland
Larry and Polly McPheeters
Robert and Evelyn Barto

Jeffrey Bross

Carrie Peters and Ray Peters

Martha Patrick, George Patrick and Barry Broadwater

Don Mattson

Jack and Janet Foster

Sara Jane Evans and Charles Pfleegor

Our parents Estelle and Jim Sherman and Spencer Qualls

Jean Reynard J. Morton Gregg Fred Schmitt

Bruce Z. Shaeffer

Ann, Jay, Bobo, Grammy, Dottie and Bernie

Janet and Bob Eissner
Jane and Dave Stabler
Dorothy and Paul Steen

Barbara Hoover

Fred and Betty Thurman

Lowell Underhill My Parents

Peter John Wayne

Stephen Wemmers and Sally Wemmers

Rick Zumsteg Chris Waisanan Barbara Hoover Fred Schmitt

Rich's parents Dick and Lynn Williams Linda's parents John and Louise Fortner

Joseph F. Zultewicz

Kali Kniel Cathy Lang

Virginia Lee and Family
Virginia Lee and Family
Sue and Bob Linderman
Beth and Bill Lockfeld
Margie Lounsbury
Cindy and Robert Love
Cindy and Penny McFarland

John and Penny McFarland
John and Penny McFarland
Susan and Jon McPheeters
Susan and Jon McPheeters

Stephanie Muscara and Megan Olveren

The Patrick Family
The Patrick Family
Chris and Lynne Perkins

Anne Foster and Chip Pfleegor Anne Foster and Chip Pfleegor

Spencer J. and Kristine Sherman Qualls

Janice and Dave Reynard
Patti (Gregg) and Bob Ridout
Julie Schmitt and Family

Robin Shaeffer

Jerry and Sue Spilecki

Eissner and Stabler Families Stabler and Zellmer Families

Barbara Steen

Judy and Paul Stoffer

Ted Barr and Tony Thurman

The Underhill Family Linda Budd Watson

Hannah Wayne and Family

Craig Wemmers
Westminster Choir
Westminster Choir
Westminster Choir
Westminster Choir
Rich and Linda Williams

Rich and Linda Williams

Jessica Zultewicz and Alex Shephard

In Honor of:

Sara Dubberly
Our grandchildren Benjamin and Scarlett
Richard T. Jolly
Jill Getty, Tara Lee and Jerry Spilecki
Ellen and Doug Clarke
The Perkins Girls
Joyce Cardwell Qualls
Henry Cooper Ramage

Given By:

Paula Dubberly
Wes and Beth Emmons
Charles Ingersoll
Sue Lease and the Grief Support Group
Pattie Morgan Miller
Chris and Lynn Perkins
Spencer J. and Kristine Sherman Qualls
Margo and Gary Ramage





- John 1:5

Dear Members and Friends of Westminster,

Our Christmas Offering bolsters the work of Christ as we empower our brothers and sisters worldwide, shelter and support individuals and families experiencing homelessness, and work for justice and peace. Every dollar you give goes beyond our walls to ministries that share the love of God with those in need. This year, your gifts will be distributed to:

- ♦ Church in the World Projects (30%) Global programs in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Guatemala, and Palestine that promote peace, provide humanitarian assistance, and offer sustainable income opportunities for those in poverty, education and empowerment for women and girls.
- ❖ Friendship House (25%) A Wilmington organization supporting those facing houselessness (loss of one's physical residence) and homelessness (loss of community) through programs which include the Clothing Bank, Empowerment Centers, Code Purple, Code Orange, Financial Assistance, and Transitional Housing.
- ♦ New Life Furnishings (15%) A ministry of Westminster that provides furniture and household goods to individuals with limited resources who are moving from transitional housing and programs into independent living.
- → Delaware Center for Justice (15%) Upholds a long tradition of strong, non-partisan policy advocacy, with a focus on support for victims of violence, transitional programs for men and women moving out of incarceration, and connecting children with parents who are detained.
- ◆ Center for Structural Equity (15%) A Wilmington non-profit, founded in 2020, offering youth programs, workshops, resources, and social activities that foster growth, cultivate social justice values, and build a foundation for a more equitable society. Many of its participants have been affected by violence.











Thank you for your generous support of Christ's work!