

The Presbyterian Church at Tenafly



The Nativity by William Wilson at Trinity Church, Princeton

For Every Heart a Home

December 21st, 2025 at 10:30am
4th Sunday of Advent
Festival of Readings and Carols

Rev. Dr. Martin Ritchie
Ushers: Jim Crook and Brian Coats-Thomas
Coffee Hour: Diane Allen

Welcome to worship! If you are visiting or here for the first time and would like to stay in touch with us, please consider filling in one of the contact cards that you will find alongside the hymnals or you can use this QR code. These can be placed in the offering plate or handed to an usher. Church School for children happens during the 10:30am worship service. Ask one of the ushers for directions if you would like to take your child through to join in.



Prelude

Welcome, Sharing the Peace and Announcements

Rev. Dr. Martin Ritchie

***Processional Carol**

Once in Royal David's City

v. 1,2,4 and 6

Solo, Teddy Hart 1. 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.

Choir 2. 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 mean, and lowly, lived on earth our Savior holy.

All Sing 4. For he is our childhood's pattern, day by day like us he grew,
He was little, weak and helpless, tears and smiles like us he knew.
And he feeleth for our sadness, and he shareth in our gladness.

All Sing 6. Not in that poor lowly stable, with the oxen standing by,
We shall see him; but in heaven, set at God's right hand on high;
When like stars his children crowned all in white shall wait around.

Lighting the Advent Wreath

The MacKenzie Family

***Advent Song**

Hope is a Candle (see page 12)

v. 1-4

The Lord's Prayer

Solo *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* Will Farnham

Reading God's Fulfilment Isaiah 11:1-9 Jane Sharp

A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD. His delight shall be in the fear of the LORD. He shall not judge by what his eyes see or decide by what his ears hear, but with righteousness he shall judge for the poor and decide with equity for the oppressed of the earth; he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist and faithfulness the belt around his loins. The wolf shall live with the lamb; the leopard shall lie down with the kid; the calf and the lion will feed together, and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze; their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den. They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.

Choir *In Silence We Wait*

*In silence we wait for the day of God's mercy,
In silence we wait for Emmanuel to come.
In silence we wait for the gift for God's promise.
In silence we wait and pray.*

*Lord, hear our prayer: "Deliver your people.
Send us a Savior to show us the way!
Guide us in mercy, shepherd us in love."
In silence we wait and pray.*

*In darkness we wait for the light of the Christ child.
In darkness we wait for the Day Star to shine.*

*In darkness we wait for the glory of morning.
In darkness we wait and pray.*

*Lord, hear our prayer: "Deliver your people.
Send us a Savior to show us the way!
Guide us in mercy, shepherd us in love."
In silence we wait and pray.*

*In silence we wait.
In silence we pray.
Lord, send your Christ today. Amen.*

Reading

Annunciation Luke 1: 26-38

Mary Kuttner

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

Choir

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming, by Michael Praetorius

*Lo, how a rose e'er blooming from tender stem hath sprung!
Of Jesse's lineage coming as seers of old have sung.
It came, a blossom bright, amid the cold of winter,
When half spent was the night.*

*Isaiah 'twas foretold it, the Rose I have in mind,
With Mary we behold it, the Virgin Mother kind.
To show God's love aright, she bore to us a Savior,
When half spent was the night.*

*O flower, whose fragrance tender with sweetness fills the air,
Dispel in glorious splendor the darkness everywhere;
True man, yet very God, from sin and death now save us,
And share our every load.*

Reading

The Road to Bethlehem Luke 2: 1-7

Dori Persson

In those days a decree went out from Caesar 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 in the guest room.

***Hymn 121**

O Little Town of Bethlehem

Reading

The Shepherds Luke 2: 8-20

Jeanne Lambert

Now in that same 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!" 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. 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, and 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, just as it had been told them.

Choir

Sussex Carol by Elaine Hagenberg

*Christmas night all Christians sing, to hear the news the angels bring;
On Christmas night all Christians sing, to hear the news the angels bring,
News of great joy, news of great mirth, news of our merciful King's birth.*

*Then why should men on earth be sad, since our Redeemer made us glad;
Then why should men on earth be sad, since our Redeemer made us glad;
When from our sin he set us free, all for to gain our liberty*

*When sin departs before his grace then life and health come in its place.
When sin departs before his grace, then life and health come in its place;
Angels and men with joy may sing, All for to see the new born King.
All out of darkness we have light, which made the angels sing this night;
Then out of darkness we have light which made the angels sing this night,
"Glory to God in highest heav'n, Now and for evermore: Amen*

Reading

The Magi

Matthew 2: 1-9

Jon Teall

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, magi from the east came to Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star in the east and have come to pay him homage." When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him, and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it has been written by the prophet: 'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah, for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.'" Then Herod secretly called for the magi and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage." When they had heard the king, they set out, and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen in the east, until it stopped over the place where the child was.

Hymn 151We Three Kings***Reading**

Word Among Us John 1: 1-18

Rev. Dr. Martin Ritchie

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it. There was a man sent from God whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came into being through him, yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. (John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.' ") From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. It is the only Son, himself God, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

HymnO Come All Ye Faithful vs. 1,2, and 6*

1. 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!

2. God of God, Light of Light.
Lo! He abhors not the Virgin's womb;
Very God, Begotten, not created:
O come, let us adore him;
O come, let us adore him;
O come, let us adore him, Christ, the Lord!

6. Sing, choirs of angels; sing in exultation;
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God, all glory in the highest!
O come, let us adore him;
O come, let us adore him;
O come, let us adore him, Christ, the Lord!

Reflection

Rev. Dr. Martin Ritchie

Offering during which we hear the choir sing, *Gaudete*, traditional.

Gaudete, Christus est natus,
ex Maria Virgine, Gaudete!

Tempus adest gratiae, hoc quod
optabamus, Carmina laetitiae devete
reddamus.

Deus homo factus est natura mirante,
Mundus renovatus est a Christo
regnante.

Ezechielis porta clausa pertransitur,
Unde lux est orta, salus invenitur.
Ergo nostra concio psallat iam in lustris,
Benedicat Domino, salus Regi nostro.

Rejoice, rejoice!

Christ is born Of the Virgin Mary –Rejoice!

The time of grace has come—what we have
wished for; Songs of joy let us give back
faithfully.

God has become man, with nature marvelling,
The world has been renewed by the reigning
Christ.

The closed gate of Ezekiel is passed through,
Whence the light is risen; salvation has been
found.

Therefore, let our assembly now sing in
brightness let it bless the Lord: greetings to our
King.

If you are visiting or would like to make an extra offering on top of your usual contribution to the church, you can use your smart phone to scan this QR code to make a donation by credit card (3% surcharge) or by debit card (no surcharge). Cash and check donations are always acceptable!

GENERAL OFFERING



Prayers at Christmas

Rev. Dr. Martin Ritchie, Jon Chan and Hanil Yoon

*Carol

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

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 Godhead see; hail the incarnate deity,
pleased as man with man 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 the sons of earth, born to give them second birth.
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king!"

Benediction with Sung Celtic Amen

Amen, Amen, Alleluia, Amen (x2)

Postlude

***Those who are able, please stand.**

Announcements

Christmas Worship

Christmas Eve 5pm – Family Carol Service
9pm – Festive prelude music for strings
9:30pm - Candlelight service



Sunday Dec. 28th 10:30am The *Gate of the Year* Service in the Chapel
(No Church School this Sunday)

Sunday Jan. 4th 10:30am Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in the Chapel

Livestreaming of Worship. Today's service is broadcast live online. You can watch the service again later via our website homepage if you wish to. Huge thanks to our entire technical team.

**The Church Office will be closed on Dec. 25th and 26th and Dec. 30th – Jan. 1st
We are open on Monday December 29th and Friday January 2nd.**

The Soup Squad. We are asking all soup makers to share a container of their home-made soup. Please arrange with Nancy in the office to drop off donations and help with labeling, the type of soup and the ingredients are needed. Many thanks for sharing your culinary skills!

PCUSA Christmas Joy Offering which distributes gifts equally to the assistance program of the Board of Pensions and to Presbyterian related schools and colleges, equipping communities of color, will be taken today. Letters and offering envelopes are available in the narthex and were mailed to those unable to pick up. They can be placed in the offering plate, handed to an usher or returned to the office. Thank you for your generosity. *Mission committee, Mary Jane Eimer and Gillian Iappelli*

The Presby Readers will be gathering Sunday, January 25th at 4pm at Carolyn and Al Rocco's home to discuss *Berry Pickers: A Novel* by Amanda Peters. All are welcome.

Nora Neus is back with us to talk about her new book, *24 Hours at the Capitol: An Oral History of the January 6th Insurrection*. Join us on Sunday January 11th at 4:30pm in the Sanctuary.

Scottish Night Saturday January 24th at 5pm in the Church House. An evening of food, poems, stories, and music to celebrate Scotland's national poet, Robert Burns. Sign up in the Narthex.

Regular Groups at PCAT

GROUP	WHEN	CONTACT
AA (Morning Glory)	Saturdays 10:30am JHH	Jay McSherry JayMcSherry@earthlink.net
Adventures in Faith	Wednesday 12pm Church House	Pastor Martin pastorpcat@gmail.com
Bell Choir	Tuesdays 3pm Room 203	Jim Millar Dirmusic@tenaflypresby.org

Choir	Sundays 9am	Jim Millar Dirmusic@tenaflypresby.org
Church School and Childcare	Sundays 10:30am	Sherrie Reilley reilleysherrie@gmail.com
Cro-Knitters	Tuesdays 2pm-4pm Lounge	Joan Roselle (201) 569-3819
English Second Language (ESL)	Tuesdays 10am-12pm Church House	Jun Motai Motaicoaching@gmail.com
Mommy/Daddy/and Me		Christina Chan Shanghai68@gmail.com
PresbyReaders	Meets monthly (Sundays at 4pm)	Mary Jane Eimer mjeimer@aol.com
Women's Group		Marilyn Coats-Thomas coathomas@aol.com or Christina Chan Shanghai68@gmail.com
Men's Group		Pastor Martin pastorpcat@gmail.com or Jim Crook rjamescrook@gmail.com

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Hope is a Candle

GALLOWAY TAM



1. Hope is a can - dle, once lit by the pro - phets,
2. Peace is a can - dle to show us a path - way,
3. Joy is a can - dle of mys - t'ry and laugh - ter,
4. Love is a can - dle whose light makes a cir - cle,
5. Christ is the light that the pro - phets a - wait - ed,



ne - ver con - sumed, though it burned through the years, dim in the day - light of threat - ened by gusts from our rage and our greed. Friend, feel no en - vy for mys - t'ry of light that is born in the dark; laugh - ter at hear - ing the where ev' - ry face is the face of a friend. Wi - den the cir - cle by Christ is the li - on, the lamb, and the child. Christ is the love and the



pow - er and priv - 'lege when they are gone, hope will shine on.
 those in the sha - dows vio - lence and force their dead end course.
 voice of an an - gel ev - er so near, cast - ing out fear.
 shar - ing and giv - ing God's ho - ly dare: love ev - 'ry - where.
 mys - t'ry and laugh - ter; can - dles make way! Christ is the day.