

# FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Main Street at Washington ~ Greenwood, Mississippi

Established 1846



## CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT COMMUNION CELEBRATION

December 24, 2023 ~ 5:30 p.m.

Large Print Hymnals and Bibles, and Hearing Devices are available in the back of the sanctuary.  
At the end of the service, please return these to the back table.

# THE CHURCH GATHERS ...

Please silence all cell phones.  
No unauthorized photography or recordings allowed.  
\*The congregation is invited to stand.  
✦ Seating of those arriving after worship has begun.

## ... TO WORSHIP AND SING

PRELUDE **Shepherd's Noel** J. Wayne Kerr

SOLO **O Holy Night** Adophe Adam  
Shannon Melton, soloist

\*CALL TO WORSHIP **John 1:1-14** Elder Thomas Gregory III

\*ENTRANCE OF THE CHRIST CANDLE Andrew and Kelli Stainback,  
Eliza Jane, Laura, and Lott

✦\*PROCESSIONAL HYMN 133 **O Come, All Ye Faithful** ADESTE FIDELES

\*PRAYER OF ADORATION Dr. Andrew Chaney

ANTHEM **Before the Marvel of This Night** Carl Schalk

Before the marvel of this night adoring, fold your wings and bow, then tear the sky apart with light and with your news the world endow. Proclaim the birth of Christ and peace, that fear and death and sorrow cease: Sing peace, sing peace, sing gift of peace, sing peace, sing gift of peace! Awake the sleeping world with song, this is the day the Lord has made. Assemble here, celestial throng, in royal splendor come arrayed. Give earth a glimpse of heav'nly bliss, a teasing taste of what they miss: Sing bliss, sing bliss, sing endless bliss, sing bliss, sing endless bliss! The love that we have always known, our constant joy and endless light, now to the loveless world be shown, now breaking upon its deathly night. Into one song compress the love that rules our universe above: sing love, sing love, sing God is love, sing love, sing God is love!

HYMN 121 (seated) **O Little Town of Bethlehem** ST. LOUIS

HYMN 115 (seated) **Away in a Manger** MUELLER

HYMN 117 (seated) **While Shepherd's Watched Their Flocks** WINCHESTER OLD

## ... TO HEAR GOD'S WORD

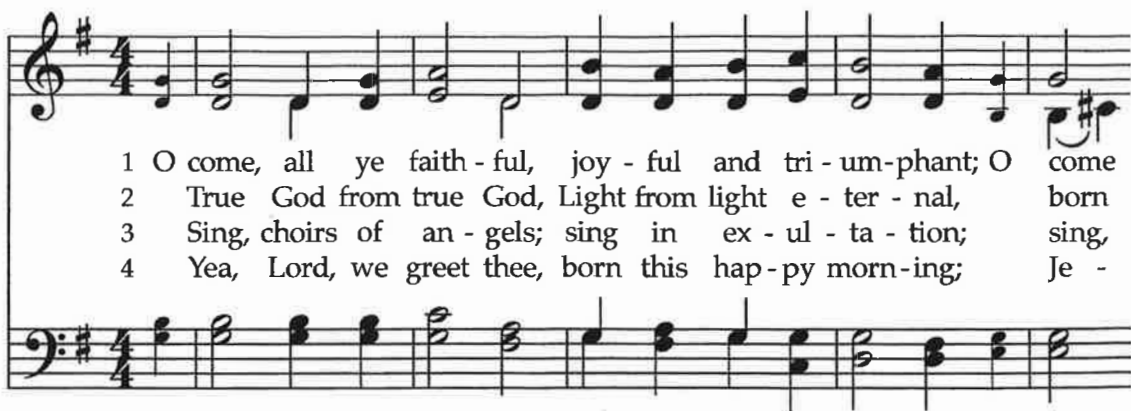
PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE **Luke 2:8-20**

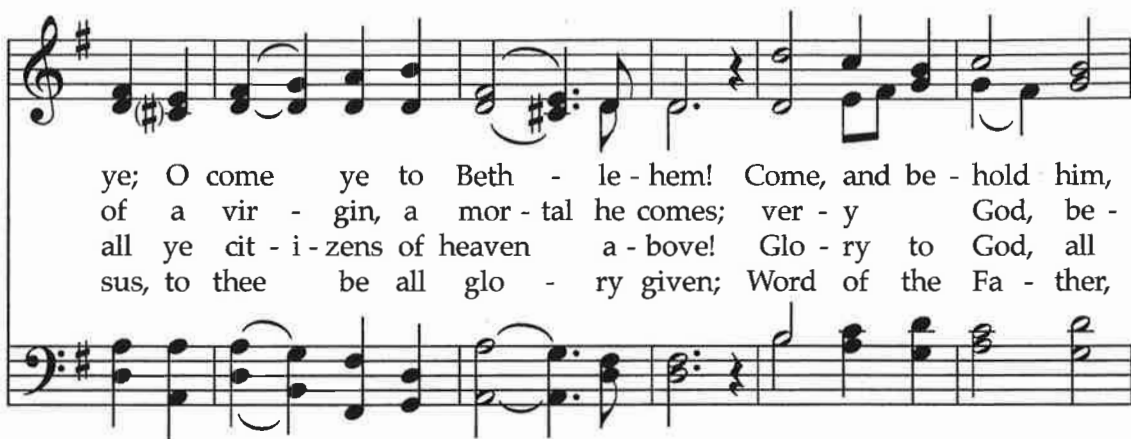
SERMON **"Lessons from the Manger"** Dr. Andrew Chaney  
**3. The Shepherds Teach – Everyone Is Important to God**

\*HYMN 113 **Angels We Have Heard on High** GLORIA

## 133 O Come, All Ye Faithful

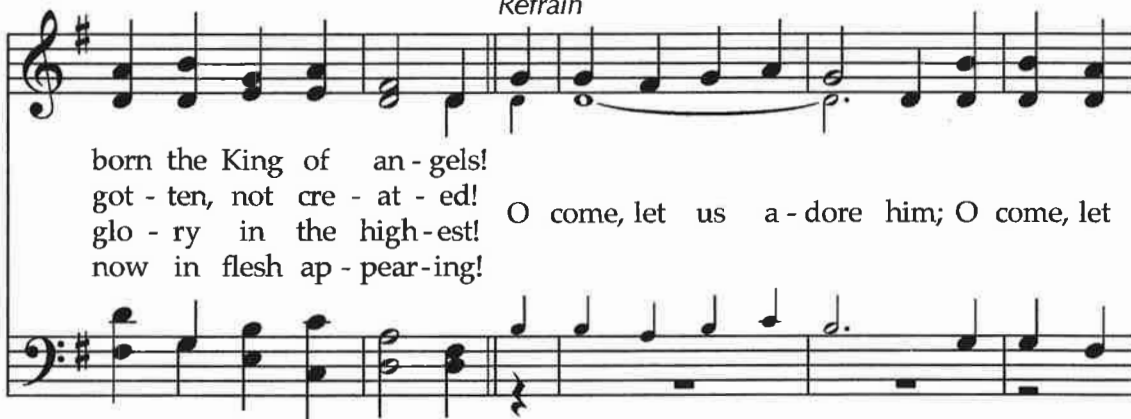


1 O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant; O come  
 2 True God from true God, Light from light e - ter - nal, born  
 3 Sing, choirs of an - gels; sing in ex - ul - ta - tion; sing,  
 4 Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this hap - py morn - ing; Je -



ye; O come ye to Beth - le - hem! Come, and be - hold him,  
 of a vir - gin, a mor - tal he comes; ver - y God, be -  
 all ye cit - i - zens of heaven a - bove! Glo - ry to God, all  
 sus, to thee be all glo - ry given; Word of the Fa - ther,

## Refrain



born the King of an - gels!  
 got - ten, not cre - at - ed! O come, let us a - dore him; O come, let  
 glo - ry in the high - est!  
 now in flesh ap - pear - ing!



us a - dore him; O come, let us a - dore him, Christ, the Lord!

From its Roman Catholic origins, this 18th-century hymn has spread to worldwide use by many denominations in both Latin and vernacular versions. Once popular with a wide range of hymn texts, this tune is now firmly associated with this Christmas text from which it is named.

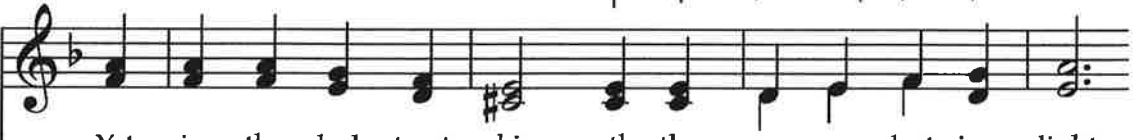
# 121 O Little Town of Bethlehem



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.

## Away in a Manger

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

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

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.

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,

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

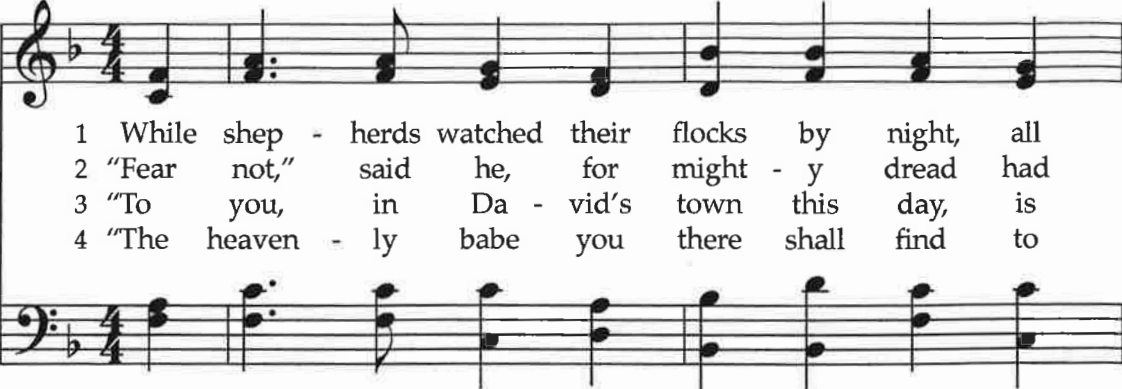
(A7) (D) (G) (D)  
C7 F B $\flat$  F

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

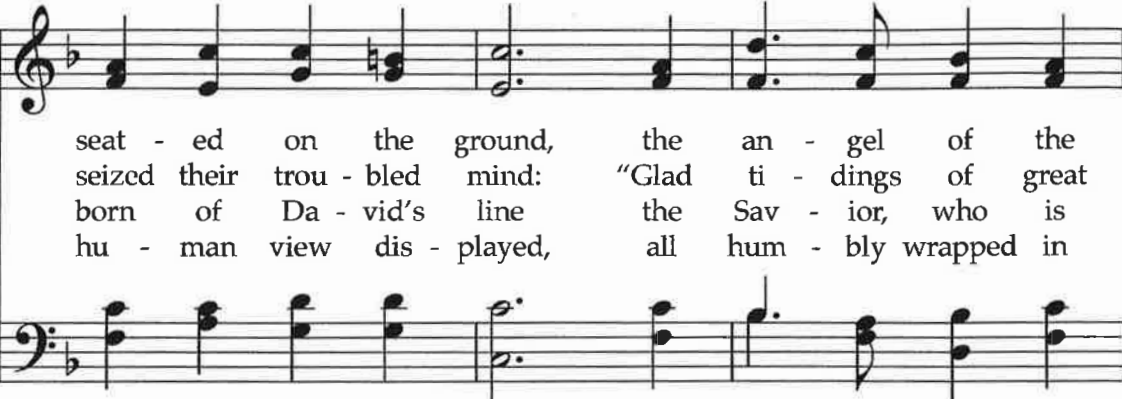
Though erroneously attributed to Martin Luther, this anonymous carol has North American roots, probably originating among Pennsylvania Lutherans. Although more than forty melodies have been connected with these words, this tune was among the earliest written for them.



# 117 While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks



1 While shep - herds watched their flocks by night, all  
 2 "Fear not," said he, for might - y dread had  
 3 "To you, in Da - vid's town this day, is  
 4 "The heaven - ly babe you there shall find to



seat - ed on the ground, the an - gel of the  
 seized their trou - bled mind: "Glad ti - dings of great  
 born of Da - vid's line the Sav - ior, who is  
 hu - man view dis - played, all hum - bly wrapped in



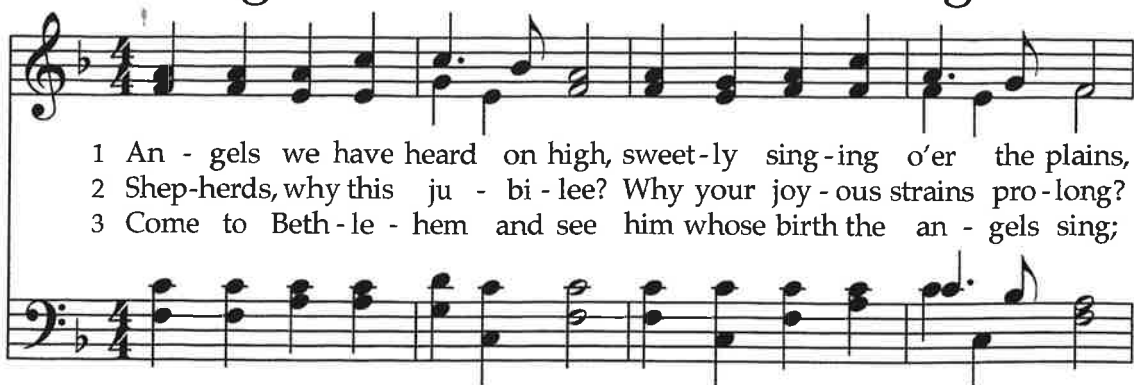
Lord came down, and glo - ry shone a - round.  
 joy I bring to you and hu - man - kind.  
 Christ the Lord, and this shall be the sign:  
 swath - ing bands, and in a man - ger laid."

5 Thus spoke the seraph, and forthwith  
 appeared a shining throng  
 of angels praising God, who thus  
 addressed their joyful song:

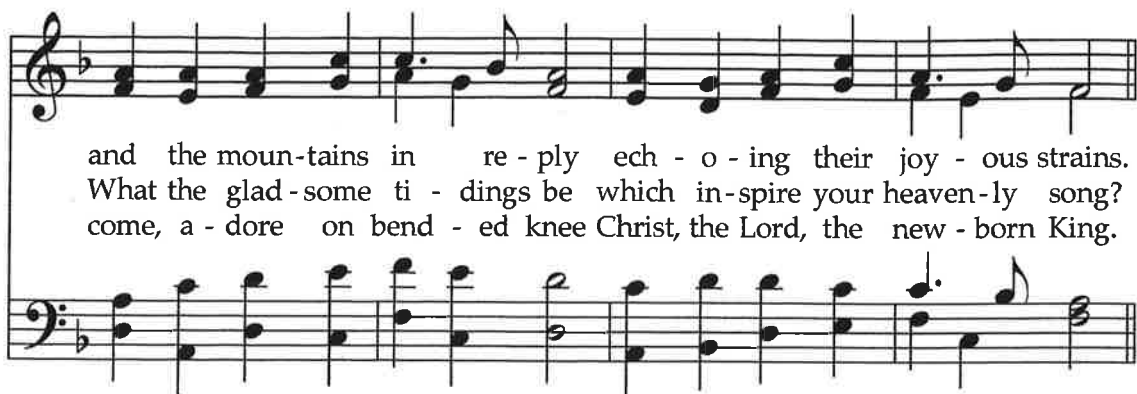
6 "All glory be to God on high,  
 and to the earth be peace;  
 good will to all from highest heaven  
 begin and never cease!"

This was one of the first metrical texts to deal with a New Testament narrative rather than paraphrase one of the Psalms. It is set here to a psalm tune that is more than a century older than the words, though the two were not firmly joined until the mid-19th century.

# 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





## ... TO UNITE AROUND THE LORD'S TABLE

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

PRAYER OF CONSECRATION

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

SHARING THE BREAD AND THE CUP

For the bread, say, "This is the body of Christ broken for you."

For the cup, say, "This is the blood of Christ shed for you."

CHRISTMAS EVE PRAYER

## ... TO SPREAD GOD'S LIGHT

PRESENTATION OF GIFTS

Offertory

Gesú Bambino

Pietro Yon

\*Response

DIX

As they offered gifts most rare at that manger rude and bare;  
So may we with holy joy, pure, and free from sin's alloy,  
All our costliest treasures bring, Christ, to thee, our heavenly King.

\*Prayer of Dedication and The Lord's Prayer

Elder Sherry Clark

\*SHARING THE LIGHT

Night of Silence

Daniel Kantor

**(Please tilt only the unlit candles.)**

- (All) 1. Cold are the people, winter of life, We tremble in shadows this cold endless night,  
Frozen in the snow lie roses sleeping, Flowers that will echo the sunrise  
Fire of hope is our only warmth, Weary its flame will be dying soon.
- (Choir) 2. Voice in the distance, call in the night, On wings You enfold us, You speak of the light,  
Gentle on the ear you whisper, softly, rumors of a dawn so embracing,  
Breathless love awaits darkened souls, Soon will we know of the morning.
- (All) 3. Spirit among us, shine like the star, Your light that guides shepherds and kings from afar,  
Shimmer in the sky so empty, lonely, Rising in the warmth of your Son's love,  
Star unknowing of night and day, Spirit we wait for your loving Son.

\*HYMN 122

Silent Night, Holy Night

STILLE NACHT

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. 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.    | 3. 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. |
| 2. 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. | 4. 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.                 |

Following the Benediction, please extinguish your candle and place in the receptacle as you exit the sanctuary.

## ...AND DEPARTS TO CELEBRATE AND SERVE

\*CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

\*POSTLUDE

Joy to the World!

arr. Kurt Varner

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Sir John Betjeman** was an English poet, writer, broadcaster, and Poet Laureate of the United Kingdom from 1972 until his death in 1984. Betjeman was a practicing Anglican. With this portion of his poem, “Christmas”, the church staff wishes you all a very Merry Christmas.

“... And is it true? and is it true,  
this most tremendous tale of all,  
seen in a stained-glass window’s hue,  
A baby in an ox’s stall?  
The Maker of the stars and sea  
Become a child on earth for me?...  
That God was man in Palestine  
And lives today in Bread and Wine.

A **Nursery** is provided this evening for infants and young children across the street in the Van Arnold Education Building.

A **Candle** should have been picked up as you entered the Sanctuary tonight. Please tilt only the unlit candle as you “share the light” and hold your lit candle up right as you share the light to the person next to you. Please be aware of how you and children hold the lighted candle in order to prevent candle wax from dripping onto the pew upholstery.

**The Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper** will be served as part of worship this evening. The invitation to the Lord’s Supper is extended to all who have been baptized, remembering that access to the Table is not a right conferred upon the worthy, but a privilege given to the undeserving who come in faith, repentance, and love. In preparing to receive Christ in this Sacrament, the believer is to confess sin and brokenness, to seek reconciliation with God and neighbor, and to trust in Jesus Christ for cleansing and renewal. Even one who doubts or whose trust is wavering may come to the Table in order to be assured of God’s love and grace in Christ Jesus.

**Our Thanks** to Karla Bowen, Eleanor Braswell, Laura Oakes, and Sarah Nell Thach for preparing the elements for communion this evening.

**Our Thanks** to Somerset Peede, viola, for enhancing our worship tonight.

**Tonight’s Christmas Eve loose offering** has been approved by the Session to be split evenly between **Greenwood Interfaith Ministries (Community Kitchen)**, and the **Community Food Pantry**.

**Stewardship 2023** – Please do your best to complete your 2023 pledge by **Thursday, December 28**, so the Session can meet its financial commitments for 2023. The Church Office will be open until 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, December 28. We need \$39,000.00 of outstanding pledges to come in by the end of this month. Some \$42,600.00 of benevolences are yet to be paid. Thank you for your generosity.

**The Church Office** will be closed Monday, December 25<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday, December, 26<sup>th</sup>.

### FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

300 Main Street  
Greenwood, Mississippi 38930  
662-453-4680  
[www.fpcgreenwood.org](http://www.fpcgreenwood.org)

Dr. Andrew Chaney, Pastor  
Rev. Ray Smithee, Director of Music & Organist  
Whitney Avritt, Director of Youth Ministries  
Kelli Stainback, Director of Christian Education