



*"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government will be upon his shoulders and his name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."*

-Isaiah 9:6

**December 24, 2023**

**11:00 p.m.**

**THE APPROACH TO GOD**

WELCOME

Pastor Keith L. DeVries

PRELUDE

**"I Wonder as I Wander"**

arr. Molly Ijames

Trina Spvack, Piano

\* CALL TO WORSHIP

Pastor: Good news of great joy!

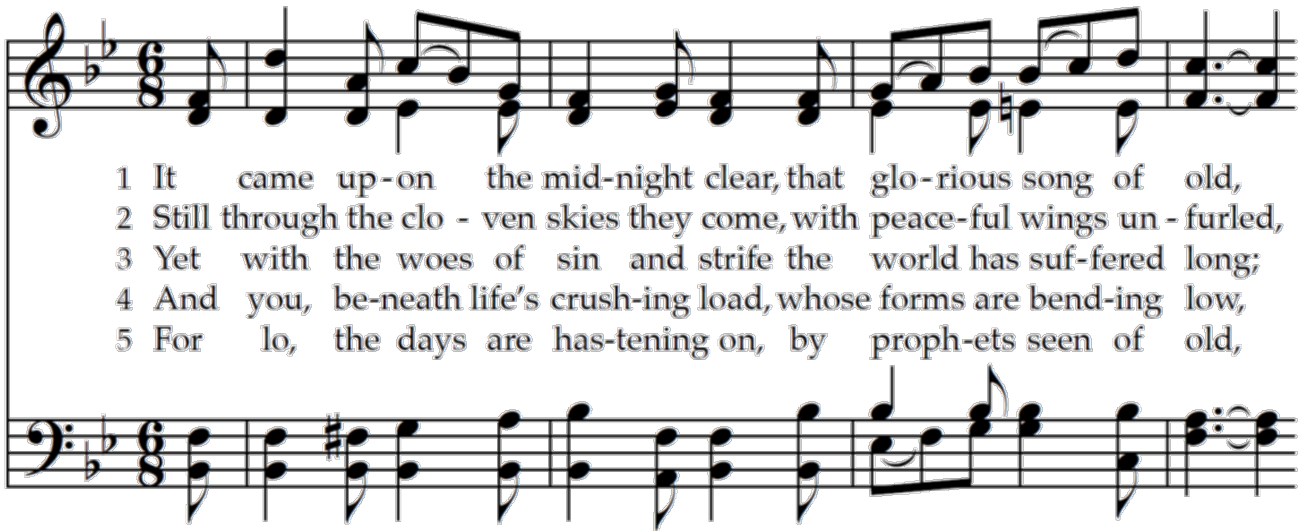
**People: People who walked in darkness now live in great light.**

Pastor: Good news of great joy!

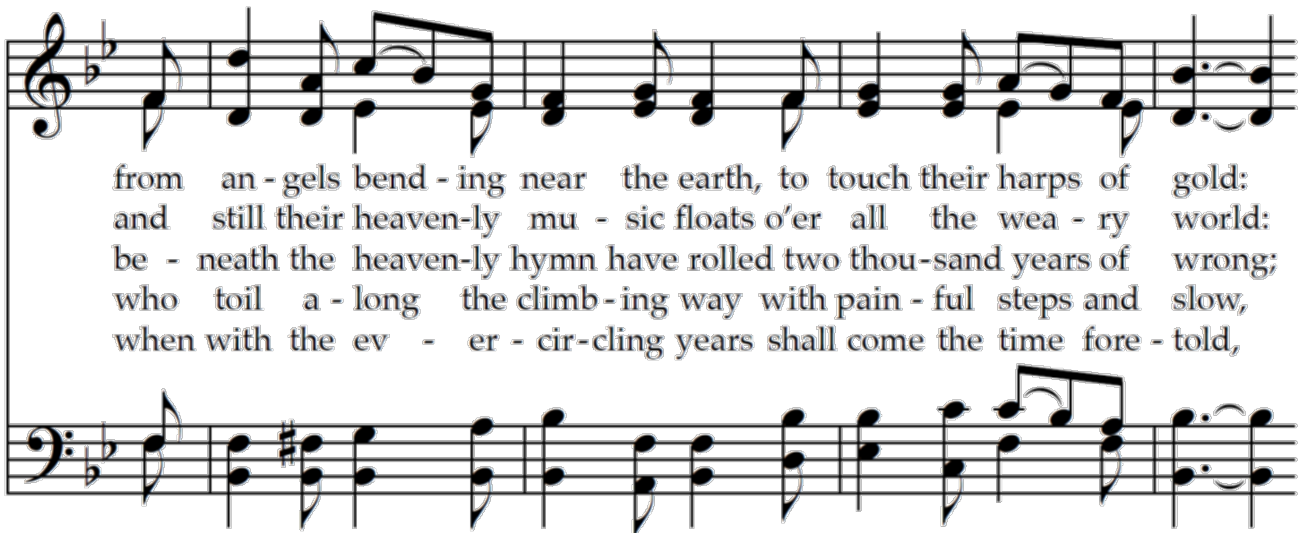
**People: Oppression and war will not have the last word.**

Pastor: Good news of great joy!

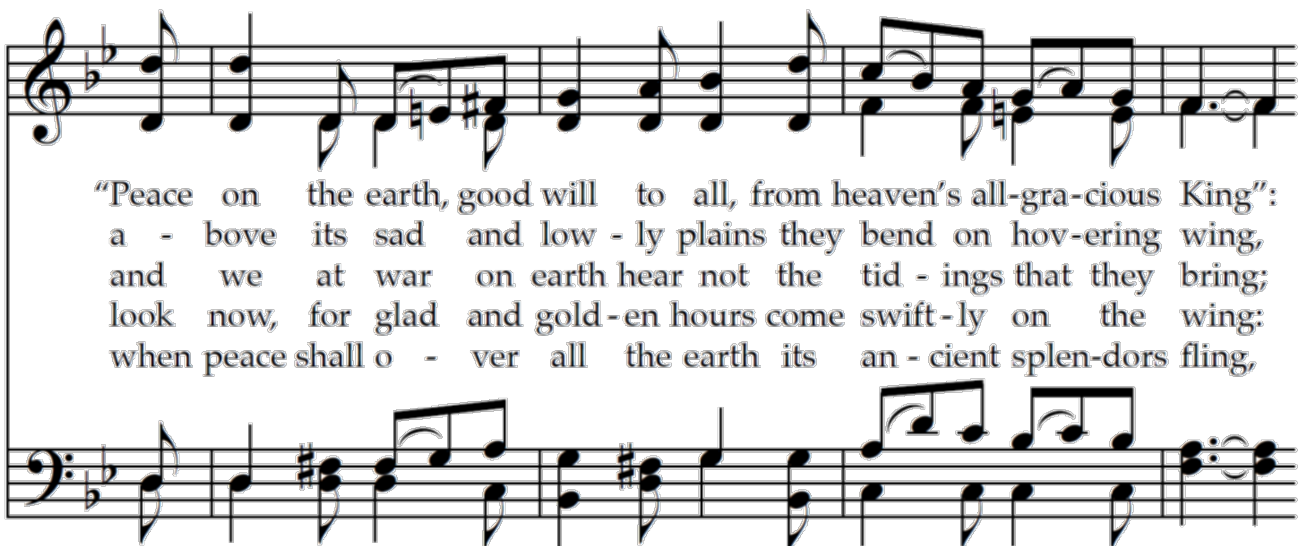
**People: A Savior is born, who is the Messiah, the Lord. Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace.**



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 Yet with the woes of sin and strife the world has suf-fered long;  
 4 And you, be-neath life's crush-ing load, whose forms are bend-ing low,  
 5 For lo, the days are has-tening on, by proph-ets seen of old,



from an - gels bend - ing near the earth, to touch their harps of gold:  
 and still their heaven-ly mu - sic floats o'er all the wea - ry world:  
 be - neath the heaven-ly hymn have rolled two thou-sand years of wrong;  
 who toil a - long the climb-ing way with pain - ful steps and slow,  
 when with the ev - er - cir-cling years shall come the time fore - told,



"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,  
 and we at war on earth hear not the tid - ings that they bring;  
 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,

## CONFESSION AND PARDON

Pastor Ivan N. Herman

Pastor: Friends, the grace of Christ educates us so that we can live sensible, ethical, and godly lives. On this eve of his birth, we confess that we struggle to receive him still. We pray together:

**All: God of Love Incarnate, we confess that, with the shepherds, we are terrified of your glory; for in glory's light we see plainly all that is wrong in the world: how oppression still enslaves; how garments of war are still stained with blood; how those seeking refuge still find no place of safety. We also see what is wrong in us: how passionately we pursue the things of this world, but forget to ponder the mystery of faith; how we do not practice the peace you intend in our relationships, our community, or even in the church. Forgive us, we pray, and help us not to be afraid. Like the shepherds, we want to follow and find you.**

***Silence***

Pastor: Good news! Great joy! In Jesus Christ the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all.

**People: Glory to God in heaven, and on earth, peace.**

## LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

Bill and Misty Dunn

## CHRISTMAS PRAYER

**All: Lord Jesus, as we search for signs of Christ's presence this week, help us to become the signs of Christ's presence that others are searching for. As these candles are but a glimpse of the light of the heavens, help us to be a glimpse of heaven on earth. Help us to shine like stars in the world. Amen.**

## CHRISTMAS OFFERING

## CHRISTMAS PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

Pastor: Glory to you, O God, for good news of great joy that you give to all people. Thank you for Jesus Christ, the Messiah, who lived among us and now reigns on high. Thank you for his light that shines in the darkness. With the angels, we sing praise to you, celebrating your glory in all the earth, in the Son given to us, and in your promised salvation.

***Silence***

Pastor: Gathered as a community on this Christmas Eve, we pray for your church in every place, that we may make known to others what has been told to us about this child. Help us to bear Christ's light in every place of need. Draw near to those who spend this night apart from community: travelers and those far from home, people who live alone, one who waits in a hospital room, one who sits in a prison cell, one who is working deep in the night, one estranged from family or friends. Comfort those who are poor and vulnerable: the child at risk, the homeless on the streets, the family that is hungry, and those contending with prejudice and scorn.

***Silence***

Pastor: Restore those who have lost faith, lost hope, or simply lost their way. End the hostilities and wars we construct by ushering in the endless peace of your design. Establish your reign of justice and righteousness. You are the Lord of hosts who, with zeal, will do this; through Jesus Christ our Savior who taught us to pray:

**All: Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.**

**THE CHRISTMAS STORY**

***Told In Carols and Scripture***

***from the Contemporary English Version***

SPECIAL MUSIC

**"O Holy Night"**

arr. Mark Hayes

Hannah Ludwig

SCRIPTURE

John 1:1-5, 9-14

SILENT REFLECTION



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!"



SILENT REFLECTION

CAROL

**"O Little Town of Bethlehem"**

No. 43

*Presbyterian Hymnal*

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!

SILENT REFLECTION

CAROL

**"Love Has Come"**

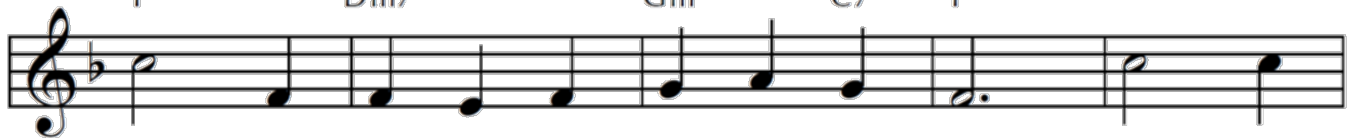
No. 110

*Glory to God*



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

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



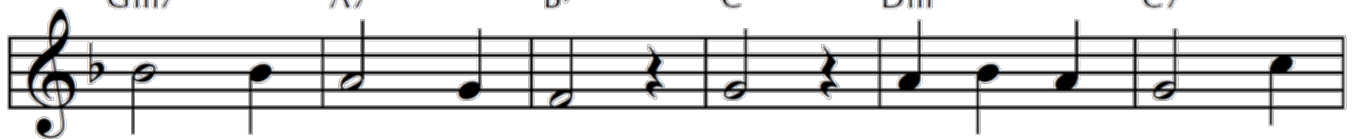
Love shines forth in the Beth - le - hem skies. See, all  
 Love is God now a - sleep in the hay. See the  
 Love is life ev - er - last - ing and free. Love is

(A) (D) (Bm) (D) (A) (G) (D)  
 C F Dm F C B<sup>b</sup> F



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

(Em7) (F#7) (G) (A) (Bm) (A7)  
 Gm7 A7 B<sup>b</sup> C Dm C7



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

(D) (A) (G) (A) (D) (A) (A7) (Dsus) (D)  
 F C B<sup>b</sup> C F C C7 Fsus F



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

SILENT REFLECTION

CAROL

**"What Child Is This"**

No. 145

*Glory to God*



1 What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mar-y's lap is sleep-ing?  
 2 Why lies he in such mean es - tate where ox and ass are feed - ing?  
 3 So bring him in-cense, gold, and myrrh; come, one and all, to own him.



Whom an - gels greet with an-thems sweet while shep-herds watch are keep-ing?  
 Good Chris-tian, fear; for sin-ners here the si - lent Word is plead-ing.  
 The King of kings sal - va-tion brings; let lov - ing hearts en-throne him.



This, this is Christ the King, whom shep-herds guard and an-gels sing;  
 Nails, spear, shall pierce him through; the cross be borne for me, for you.  
 Raise, raise the song on high. The vir - gin sings her lul - la - by.



haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mar - y!  
 Hail, hail, the Word made flesh, the babe, the son of Mar - y!  
 Joy, joy, for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mar - y!





SCRIPTURE

Luke 2:15-20

SILENT REFLECTION

SPECIAL MUSIC

**"Jesu Bambino"**

Pietro Yon

Hannah Ludwig

## **CHRISTMAS COMMUNION**

THE INVITATION TO OUR LORD'S TABLE

THE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

**People: We lift them to the Lord.**

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**People: It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE

***Wherever you are, in the Sanctuary or at home,  
you are invited to partake of the bread and the cup.***

***If you are worshipping in person, please come down the center aisle to receive  
the communion elements; partake and return to your seat using the side aisles.***

***Ushers will bring communion to the seats of those who cannot come forward.***

PRAYER OF COMMITMENT

### **SPREADING THE LIGHT**

***Jesus is the light of the world. As His followers, we are called to receive His light and  
carry Him into the darkness of today.***

***Watch the light change as each of us receives the light of Christ.***

1 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! All is calm, all is bright  
 2 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Shep - herds quake at the sight;  
 3 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Son of God, love's pure light  
 4 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Won - drous star, lend thy light;

'round yon vir - gin moth - er and child! Ho - ly In - fant, so ten - der and  
 glo - ries stream from heav - en a - far, heav - en - ly hosts sing "Al - le - lu -  
 ra - diant beams from thy ho - ly face, with the dawn of re - deem - ing  
 with the an - gels let us sing Al - le - lu - ia to our

mild, sleep in heav - en - ly peace, sleep in heav - en - ly peace.  
 ia: Christ the Sav - ior is born; Christ the Sav - ior is born!"  
 grace, Je - sus, Lord, at thy birth, Je - sus, Lord, at thy birth.  
 King: Christ the Sav - ior is born; Christ the Sav - ior is born.

## BENEDICTION

\* CONGREGATION LEAVES IN SILENCE

\* Please stand if you are able.

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## CHRISTMAS EVE 2023

### The Lord's Supper and Its Symbolism

The Lord's Supper has special significance as it commemorates the last meal Jesus shared with his disciples until he ate with them in the Kingdom of God (Luke 22:16). Bread was and is a common staple which Jesus used as a symbol for his body, broken into pieces to demonstrate giving of himself to others.

Wine was also a common staple in the first century and its consumption was part of everyday life. When Jesus shares the cup, it is a symbol of his blood shed and the sacrifice of his life for all humanity.

The sharing of this very common meal was and is a way of enjoying an ongoing relationship with Jesus Christ. "For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes." (1 Corinthians 11:26)

### Instructions for Lighting Your Candle

As we reflect upon the light of God's love which is revealed to us in the birth of Jesus Christ, we light candles to remind us that God's love brings light in the darkness. Tonight, just prior to singing "Silent Night," all of the lights in the Sanctuary will be turned off. **When Pastor Keith and Pastor Ivan turn on their candles, you are invited to turn on your candle using the switch at the bottom symbolizing how the light of God's love comes into the world.** Please turn off your candle following the benediction and place it in a basket in the Narthex as you exit.

### Silent Night, Holy Night

This Christmas hymn was originally written by Joseph Mohr for a Christmas festival at St. Nicholas Church, Oberndorf, near Salzburg, Austria. The story is told that the organ was not functioning the day of the service and Mohr decided to write a new hymn that would not require organ accompaniment. He took it to his friend, Franz Xaver Gruber, and asked him to write a suitable tune.

The two sang the new hymn as Gruber accompanied on the guitar. The village choir joined in, repeating the last line of each stanza in four-part harmony. As we sing this hymn tonight, may we lift our voices in prayerful praise with those who have been singing this hymn since 1831.

### **Special Thanks**

We extend our gratitude to our excellent musicians and audio/visual technicians for their dedication and hard work and for sharing their gifts with us during the season of Advent and Christmas. We especially thank pianist Trina Spivack, and vocalist Hannah Ludwig as they lead us in worship tonight.

Hannah Ludwig, mezzo-soprano, is originally from Sacramento and currently resides in Philadelphia, PA. She grew up at Carmichael Presbyterian Church and was a part of CPC's Contemporary Music Team. Hannah is a graduate of the Academy of Vocal Arts and received her Bachelor of Music degree in vocal performance from the University of the Pacific. She has performed throughout the US and Europe, most recently as a soloist for the New York Philharmonic's performances of Handel's *Messiah*.

Trina Spivack grew up at Carmichael Presbyterian Church and has played piano most of her life. She previously served CPC as director of the Living Water Ensemble and Sanctuary Choir Accompanist.

### **Please Join Us for Worship**

If you do not already have a church home, we invite you to call Carmichael Presbyterian your church home. ALL are welcome to worship on Sundays at 10:00 a.m. in-person or online via YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/@carmichaelpres>).



**CARMICHAEL**  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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