



## **Reformed Presbyterian Church**

**7:00 pm Worship Service**

**December 24, 2023**

**Reformed Presbyterian Church** exists to be a stream of God's refreshing grace for people from all walks of life.

**TONIGHT'S SPEAKER:** Dr. Tim Witmer, Interim Pastor

Organist: Courtney Brooke

Choir Director: Rachel Klein

### **PRELUDES**

*Swiss Noel/ D. Hustad*

*One Small Child/ arr. L. Larson*

*O Little Town of Bethlehem/ L. Redner*

*O Holy Night/ arr. F. Bock*

*Angels from the Realms of Glory/ arr. F. Varner*

### **WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

#### **\*HYMN 208**

*O Come All Ye Faithful*

#### **CHORAL ANTHEM**

*Anthem for Christmas/ arr. J. Purifoy*

In the space of the beginning

was the living Word of Light.

When this Word was clearly spoken,

all that came to be was right.

All creation had a language,  
words to say what must be said.  
All day long the heavens whispered,  
signing words in scarlet red.

Still some failed to understand it,  
so God spoke His final Word.  
On a silent night in Judah's hills  
a baby's cry was heard.

"Glory!" sang the angel chorus.  
"Glory!" echoed back the night.  
Love has come to walk among us,  
Christ the Lord was born that night.

All creation sing His praises,  
earth and heaven praise His name.  
All who live come join the chorus,  
find the words, His love proclaim!

**\*HYMN 195**

*Joy to the World! The Lord Is Come*

**SCRIPTURE READING**

Luke 2:1-7 (ESV)

Herb Noack, Reader

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. <sup>2</sup> This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. <sup>3</sup> And all went to be registered, each to his own town. <sup>4</sup> And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, <sup>5</sup> to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. <sup>6</sup> And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. <sup>7</sup> And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

**CHORAL ANTHEM**

*All is Well/* arr. L. Larson

All is well, all is well. Angels and men rejoice!  
For tonight darkness fell into the dawn of love's light.  
Sing allele, sing alleluia!

All is well, all is well. Let there be peace on earth.  
Sing, for Christ is come, go and tell that he is in the manger.  
Sing allele, sing alleluia!

All is well, all is well. Lift up your voice and sing.  
Born is now Emmanuel. Born is our Lord and Savior.  
Sing alleluia! All is well!

Born is now Emmanuel. Born is our Lord and Savior.  
Sing alleluia! Sing alleluia, alleluia! All is well, all is well.

### SCRIPTURE READING

Luke 2:8-20 (ESV)

Vicky Ruckert, Reader

<sup>8</sup> And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup> And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. <sup>10</sup> And the angel said to them, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. <sup>11</sup> For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. <sup>12</sup> And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.” <sup>13</sup> And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

<sup>14</sup> “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!”

<sup>15</sup> When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.” <sup>16</sup> And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. <sup>17</sup> And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child.

<sup>18</sup> And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. <sup>19</sup> But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. <sup>20</sup> And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

### \*HYMN 203

*Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*

### CHORAL ANTHEM

*My Heart, Your Bethlehem/ R. E. Schram and D. Gaines*

Will you have a place to lay your head  
on the night of Your holy birth;  
a crown, or a robe of royal thread,  
as Your life begins on earth?

Though some may not receive You,  
or know just who You are,  
I will prepare a place for You,  
a home within my heart.

I'll make my heart Your Bethlehem,  
where You O Lord, can enter in.  
Shine Your light, let Your life in me begin,  
and make my heart Your Bethlehem.

O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us we pray.  
Cast out our sin and enter in; be born in us today!  
Though some may not believe  
You are the Savior born for them,  
I will prepare a place for You;  
my heart, your Bethlehem.

How silently, how silently the wondrous gift is giv'n.  
So God imparts to human hearts  
the blessings of His heav'n.

Though some may not receive You,  
or know just who You are,  
I will prepare a place for You,  
a home within my heart.  
I'll make my heart Your Bethlehem,  
where You, O Lord can enter in.  
Shine Your light, let Your life in me begin,  
and make my heart Your Bethlehem.

**\*HYMN 213**

*What Child is This*

**CHORAL ANTHEM**

*The Hands that First Held Mary's Child/ D. Forrest*

The hands that first held Mary's child were hard from working  
wood. From boards they sawed and planed and filed and  
splinters they withstood. This day they gripped no tool of steel,  
they drove no iron nail, but cradled from the head to heel  
our Lord, newborn and frail.

When Joseph marveled at the size of that small breathing frame,  
and gazed upon those bright new eyes and spoke the infant's  
name, the angel's words he once had dreamed poured down  
from heaven's height, and like the host of stars that beamed  
blessed earth with welcome light.

“This child shall be Emmanuel, not God upon the throne,  
but God with us, Emmanuel, as close as blood and bone.”  
The tiny form in Joseph's palms confirmed what he had heard,  
and from his heart rose hymns and psalms for heaven's  
human word.

The tools that Joseph laid aside a mob would later lift  
and use with anger, fear, and pride to crucify God's gift.  
Let us, O Lord, not only hold the child who's born today,  
but charged with faith may we be bold to follow in His way.

**SCRIPTURE READING** John 3:16 (ESV)

<sup>16</sup>For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son,  
that whoever believes in him should not perish but have  
eternal life.

**CHRISTMAS EVE MEDITATION** *God's Gift-Giving Guide*  
Dr. Tim Witmer

**\*CANDLE-LIGHTING** *Silent Night*

**BENEDICTION**

**POSTLUDE** *It Came Upon the Midnight Clear* arr. F. Varner

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*The Hands That First Held Mary's Child*: Words by Thomas  
Troeger, Music by Dan Forrest ©2011 by Breckenhorst Press, Inc.

**208 *O Come All Ye Faithful***

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.

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.

Sing choirs of angels, Sing in exultation,  
Sing all ye citizens of heav'n above:  
Glory to God in the highest:  
O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him,  
O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.

Yea, Lord, we greet thee,  
born this happy morning:  
Jesus, to thee be all glory giv'n;  
Word of the Father,  
late in flesh appearing;  
O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him,  
O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.

*O Come, All Ye Faithful*, Words attr. To John Francis Wade, Trad. by Frederick Oakeley, Music from John Francis Wade's Cantus Diversi ©Public Domain CCLI License # 79597

**195 *Joy to the World! The Lord Is Come***

Joy to the world, The Lord is come:  
Let earth receive her King;  
Let every heart prepare Him room,  
And heav'n and nature sing,  
And heav'n and nature sing,  
And heav'n, and heav'n, and nature sing.

Joy to the earth! the Savior reigns:  
Let men their songs employ;  
While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains  
Repeat the sounding joy,  
Repeat the sounding joy,  
Repeat, repeat, the sounding joy.

No more let sins and sorrows grow,  
Nor thorns infest the ground;  
He comes to make His blessings flow  
Far as the curse is found,  
Far as the curse is found,  
Far as, far as, the curse is found.

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.

*Joy to the World! The Lord Is Come*, Words by Isaac Watts, Music by  
George Frederick Handel, arr. by Lowell Mason ©Public Domain CCLI  
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**203 *Hark! the Herald Angels Sing***

Hark! the herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the new-born King,  
peace on earth, and mercy mild,  
God and sinners reconciled!"  
Joyful, all ye nations rise,  
join the triumph of the skies;  
with th' angelic host proclaim,  
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"  
Hark! the herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the new-born King!"

Christ, by highest heav'n 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 th' incarnate Deity,  
pleased as man with men to dwell,  
Jesus, our Emmanuel.  
Hark! the herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the new-born King!"

Hail the heav'n-born Prince of Peace!  
Hail the Sun of Righteousness!  
Light and life to all he brings,  
ris'n with healing in his wings.  
Mild he lays his glory by,  
born that man 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 new-born King!"



### **213 *What Child Is This***

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!

Why lies He in such mean estate,  
Where ox and ass are feeding?  
Good Christian, fear: for sinners here  
The silent Word is pleading.  
Nails, spear, shall pierce him through:  
the cross be borne for me, for you:  
Hail, hail the Word made flesh, the babe, the son of Mary.

So bring Him incense, gold, and myrrh,  
Come, peasant, king 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.

*What Child Is This*, Words adapted by William C. Dix, Music an English melody © Public Domain CCLI  
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**210 *Silent Night! Holy Night!***

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,  
heav'nly 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!