

TAKOMA PARK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Christmas Eve December 24, 2023

Live streamed at 5:00 p.m.



Kelly Latimore, artist

Rev. Mark Harper, Pastor
Takoma Park Presbyterian Church
310 Tulip Avenue, Takoma Park, MD 20912
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THE SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY

() Indicates those who are able, please stand.*

+Facemasks are currently optional. If you have a vulnerable health condition or just prefer to wear a mask, please feel free to do so.

Health and Safety Committee.

Preparation for the Word

"The Word became flesh and blood, and moved into the neighborhood.

-John 1:14, The Message Translation

WE GATHER IN GOD'S NAME

Let the Prelude's music open you to God's presence as we begin worship.

Prelude	Whence Is This Lovely Fragrance	French Carol Arr. James T. Bingham
	Away in a Manger	William Kirkpatrick Arr. J. T. Bingham

Welcome

Opening Prayer (Unison)

All glory to you, great God, for the gift of your Son, whom you sent to save us. With singing angels, let us praise your name, and tell the earth the story of Jesus, that all may believe, rejoice, and bow down, acknowledging your love; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

**Call to Worship
and Lighting the Christmas Eve Candle of Christ:**

*Edith Holleman and
Shadday Linares and Caylhor Mejias*

*Creator of the stars of night, Your people's everlasting light,
O Christ, Redeemer of us all, we pray you hear us when we call.*

Sung by cantor

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth, and set lights in the sky – sun and moon and stars.

By these stars, our ancestors charted their journeys.

By these stars, they knew God was with them.

In the beginning, too, was the Word. And the Word has come down from heaven to earth.

By the Word made flesh, Christ our Savior, we know that God is with us.

Tonight we light a fifth candle to bring the fire of the stars down from heaven to earth, to nestle among the greens.

We name this candle Christ.

Our lives are a journey, and we do not always know the way.

But we chart our path by the star of Christ. Even when faith burns low and its promises seem too good to be true, we set our face steadily towards the light. . . Let us pray:

**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.**

***Carol 133**

"O Come, All Ye Faithful"

Prayer of Adoration

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.** Let us pray:

Glory to you, almighty God, for you sent your only-begotten Son, that we might have new life and be set free from self-serving sin.

Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ, for you became flesh and dwelt among us that we might become your people and become welcoming of all people.

Glory to you, Holy Spirit, for you direct and rule our lives, even though we resist your guidance.

Glory to you, almighty God, and to your Son, Jesus Christ, and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen.

Silent Prayer

Affirmation of Faith (Unison)

Christ is born! Give him glory! Christ has come down from heaven!

Receive him! Christ is now on earth! Exalt him! O earth, sing to the Lord!

O you nations, praise Christ in joy!

***Praise 583**

Glory to God (x2)

Glory to God, glory to god, glory to God in the highest!

Glory to God, glory to God, alleluia, alleluia!

Anthem

O Holy Night

Adolph Adam

First Scripture Reading

Luke 2:1-14

***Carol 139**

“That Boy-Child of Mary”

Second Scripture Reading

Luke 2:15-20

Proclamation

Two Kinds of Power

Rev. Mark Harper

Anthem

Gesu Bambino

Pietroc Yon

The Offering Invitation

Offertory Fantasia on “Green Sleeves” Ralph Vaughan Williams

***Doxology 607**

OLD HUNDREDTH

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Christ all people here below;
Praise Holy Spirit evermore;
Praise Triune God, whom we adore. Amen.

***Prayer of Dedication (Unison)**

Holy God, tonight we celebrate the gift of your complete love, born in human flesh. By your Spirit, help us to embody that love in our worship and life together as your people. Bless these gifts that those who receive them will know your love, justice, peace, and joy. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Anthem

Masters in the Hall

French Carol

Arr. Gustav Holst

Masters in this Hall, hear ye news today,
Brought from overseas, and ever I you pray.

Refrain: *Nowell! Nowell! Nowell! Nowell! Sing we clear!
Holpen are all folks on earth, born is God's Son so dear.
Nowell! Nowell! Nowell! Nowell! sing we loud!
God today hath poor folks rais'd and cast adown the proud.*

Going o'er the hills; thro' the milk-white snow,
Heard I ewes bleat while the wind did blow.

Refrain:

Shepherds many a one sat among the sheep,
No man spake more word than they were all asleep.

Refrain:

Then to Bethlem Town we went two and two,
And see a Mighty Lord lie in a manger low.

Refrain:

Ox and ass Him know, kneeling on their knees,
Wondrous joy had I this little Babe to see.

Refrain:

This is Christ the Lord, Masters be ye glad!
Christmas is come in and no folks should be sad.

Refrain:

English words: William Morris

A Litany for Christmas

When the world was dark and the city quiet, you came.

You crept in beside us.

And almost no one knew. Only the few who dared to believe that God might do something different.

Will you do the same this Christmas, Lord?

Will you come into the darkness of this world; not the friendly darkness as when sleep rescues us from tiredness, but the fearful darkness, in which people have stopped believing that war will end, or that food will come, or that a government will change, or that the church cares?

Will you come into that darkness and do something different to save your people?

Will you come into the quietness of this city, not the welcome quietness as when lovers hold hands, but the fearful silence when the phone has not rung, the letter has not come, the friendly voice no longer speaks, the doctor's face says it all?

Will you come into that quietness and do something different to embrace your people?

Will you come into our lives if we open them to you and do something different?

When the world was dark and the city was quiet, you came.

You crept in beside us.

Do the same this Christmas, Lord. Do the same this Christmas. Amen.

Lighting the Candles

We light our candles to symbolize the presence of God within us and the love of Christ that we carry into the world. Come, let us live in the light of the Lord.

(Ushers will come forward and light their candles from the Christ candle and then distribute the light throughout the congregation)

***Carol 122**

“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,
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.

***Blessing**

***Carol 119**

“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”

Postlude

Joy to the World

G.F. Handel
Arr. Fred Bock

Community worship ends; discipleship and service begin anew.

Participants in this evening's service

Rev. Mark Harper, Pastor
Brian Monsell, Liturgist
Roger Griffis, baritone
Dr. James Bingham, piano
Jay Clouse, Zoom Technician
Erol Kalayoglu, Zoom Technician

ANNOUNCEMENTS

If you are looking for a church home, you are warmly welcome. Sunday worship service is at 11:00 a.m., with Sunday School for all ages. Pastor Mark Harper is pleased to talk with you, you may call him on 301-270-5550.

+Please continually pray for peace - - in our homes, in our lives, neighborhoods, the nation and the world.

+Monday night choir rehearsals are on a two-week hiatus and resume Monday, January 8, 2024 at 7:30 p.m.

+The Church Office will be closed next week.

+In honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., the Takoma Park Presbyterian Church invites the congregation and wider Takoma Park Community to three Sunday morning discussions of King's 1964 Nobel Peace Prize Lecture "The Quest for Peace and Justice."

Each discussion will take place in the church parlor and also on zoom at <https://tinyurl.com/TPPCSundayBibleStudy> from 9:30-10:50 a.m.

Topics include

- January 14--Racial Justice;
- January 21--Poverty; and
- January 28--War.

You can read the lecture at

<https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/peace/1964/king/lecture/>.

Excerpts are at:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1He8x9iwHo61jwa5U0-hl7TsbJPHYHd87/edit>

+Thank you for your continued support of TPPC.

As a reminder, there are several ways to donate to TPPC. Information on giving, including giving on line, can be found at

<https://www.takomaparkpc.org/give>.

Checks may be mailed to

Takoma Park Presbyterian Church,
310 Tulip Avenue, Takoma Park, MD 20912.

If you have questions, please contact finance@takomaparkpc.org.

The Work of Christmas Begins

When the songs of the angels are stilled

When the star in the sky is gone

When the kings and princes are home

When the shepherds are back with their flocks

The work of Christmas begins:

to find the lost

to heal the broken

to feed the hungry

to release the prisoner

to rebuild the nations

to bring peace among the people

to make music in the hearts.

Howard Thurman

Wishing a Joyous and Peaceful
Christmas and
Happy New Year to All.

Frohe Weihnachten - **German**

Afe Nhyiapa - Asanti Twi - **Ghanaian**

Feliz Navidad - **Spanish**

Krismasi njema - **Swahili**

Wanikiya Tunpi Wowiyuskin do - **Dakota**

Joyeux Noël - **French**

Shengdan jie kuaile - **Mandarin**

Peace on Earth