



THOMPSON
MEMORIAL

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



9:30 pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
December 24, 2023

WELCOME!!

Welcome to worship on this most sacred night. Whether you have worshiped here for years or this is your first time with us, our greatest prayer is that you feel the presence of God in this place.

Throughout worship, we invite you to stand where there is an asterisk and to join us in the liturgy printed in bold.

During this worship service we will enjoy a time of candle lighting. Please be sure to hold your candle upright while it is lit and allow unlit candles to tilt toward already lit candles. This will prevent wax from dripping.

During this service we offer the sacrament of communion. We celebrate an open table at TMPC and all are welcome to participate.

OUR SUNDAY SERVICES

We offer a 9:00 am Traditional service in the Sanctuary and 11:00 am Contemporary service with praise music in the Fellowship Hall. Our services are livestreamed and recorded and can be viewed anytime on www.tmpc.org. Please follow along and respond when the type is bold and stand, as you are able, when there is an asterisk in the bulletin. Our Common Hour described below begins at 10 am.

THE COMMON HOUR

On Regular Sundays, TMPC has an hour between services that is a space for coffee, Adult Education and Children's choirs. Join us for a time of fellowship and goodies or our activities or events at 10:00 am in Fellowship Hall.

RESTROOMS

If you need to use the restroom, please exit the sanctuary to the right of the altar area and go up the steps. Turn right and the bathroom is on your left.

VISITOR BAGS

If you are visiting with us today, we would love to share a visitor bag with more information and a gift for you. If you have any questions about TMPC, don't hesitate to speak to an usher or a pastor!

Be sure to look at our website www.tmpc.org for more information, events, and on-line giving.

We are glad to share in your faith journey!

SERVICE OF CANDLELIGHT AND COMMUNION

WORDS OF WELCOME

Stephanie Templin Ashford

PRAYER OF INVOCATION

PRELUDE

Christmas Angels

Adult Bell Choir
arr. by Brian Tervo

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

The Green Family

Tonight, we tell the story that we tell every year—the story of Christ’s birth, the story of love made flesh. It’s a story that weaves through every generation. It’s a story that picks up the bits and pieces of our narrative and braids us together.

The candle of hope reminds us that there's room for every story.
(The candle of hope is lit)

The candle of peace reminds us that God meets us in our fear.
(The candle of peace is lit)

The candle of joy reminds us that we can choose a better way.
(The candle of joy is lit)

The candle of love reminds us to see God in each other.
(The candle of love is lit)

At the center of our hope, our peace, our joy, our love is God - who came to this earth to dwell among us. So tonight, we light the Christ candle, for God's love just could not stay away.

We join our voices with the angels, shepherds, and magi who celebrate the birth of Jesus - Emmanuel - God who is with us and loves us. Thanks be to God for a love like that. Amen.

*HYMN OF PRAISE NO. 133

O Come, All Ye Faithful

ADESTE FIDELES

WE ARE RENEWED THROUGH GOD’S GRACE

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Holy God, we admit—we don't fully understand the Christmas story.

We are not familiar with angel choruses.

We have not walked many miles to be counted in a census,

and we don't always hear your voice in our dreams.

We don't fully understand this story, so we admit, sometimes we hesitate to tell it. Instead of running out into the streets to shout that there is a love bigger than we could imagine,

we whisper this good news.

Instead of throwing open the doors and inviting people in,

we simply leave them unlocked, hoping folks will figure it out.

Instead of telling the next generation why this night matters so much,

we stay quiet, afraid of creating pressure.

Forgive us for our silence.

Forgive us for our hesitation.

Forgive us for the moments when we fail to share your good news.

Plant this story of love so deep in our bones that we cannot help but share it with a world longing to know a love like this. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Friends, hear this good news:

The holy one enters the world as Emmanuel, God with us, bringing hope, forgiveness, and grace as freely offered gifts to us.

**May we open our hearts to the God who is with us,
and receive the gifts of salvation which has been offered to us.
Thanks be to God. Amen.**

*GLORIA PATRI NO. 581

GLORIA PATRI

***Glory Be to the Father,
and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
as it was in the beginning, is now,
and ever shall be, world without end. Amen, Amen.***

SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 11: 1–3a; 4a; 6–9

*CAROL NO. 110

Love Has Come

BRING A TORCH

SCRIPTURE

Luke 1: 26-33

ANTHEM

In the Bleak Midwinter

With One Voice Choir
Arr. by Dan Forrest

SCRIPTURE Luke 2:1-7

CAROL NO. 115 *Away in the Manger* MUELLER

SCRIPTURE Luke 2: 8-20

CAROL NO. 119 *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing* MENDELSSOHN

CALL TO OFFERING

OFFERTORY *Now the Green Blade Riseth* Adult Bell Choir
Arr. by Kevin McChesnery

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

SCRIPTURE Isaiah 9: 2-4; 6-7

SERMON Stephanie Templin Ashford

ANTHEM *Rocking Carol* With One Voice Choir
Arr. By John Purifoy

WE GATHER AT THE TABLE OF THE LORD JESUS

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

THE GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Eternal God, holy and mighty, it is truly right and our greatest joy to give you thanks and praise, and to worship you in every place where your glory abides. In sending us your Son, Jesus Christ, to be born of Mary, your Word became flesh, and we have seen a new and radiant vision of your glory. His name is above every name, the Prince of Peace and Savior of all. In him we have been brought out of darkness into your marvelous light. Therefore, we join you, joining our voices with the heavenly choirs and with all the faithful of every time and place, who forever sing to the glory of your name:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION AND PRAYER OF CONSECRATION

COMMUNION OF GOD'S PEOPLE

SHARING OF THE BREAD AND CUP

(Eat the bread as you are served. Hold the cup until all have been served.)

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AFTER COMMUNION

Welcome, welcome, Jesus Christ our infant savior, baby who makes every moment holy. May we, who like the shepherds have witnessed in the stable a new kind of love, return to our work with joy. May we, for whom the heavens have opened to proclaim that God is with us, we who have fed on living bread and tasted the wine of heaven, go out to be instruments of your peace. Amen.

MUSIC

O Holy Night

Peter Heckman

SCRIPTURE

John 1: 1-14

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

As the lights are dimmed, the minister will take light from the Christ candle and pass it to the ushers who will carry the light from row to row. Please share the light with those around you by tipping the unlit candle toward the lit candle.

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.

CHRISTMAS PRAYER AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

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.

Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her king;
let every heart prepare him room,
and heaven and nature sing,
and heaven and nature sing,
and heaven, and heaven and nature sing.

Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!
Let all 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.

***BENEDICTION**

Stephanie Templin Ashford

(Please extinguish your candles)

**Please stand in body or spirit.*

Merry Christmas!

This year's Christmas Offering will go to the Trenton Area Soup Kitchen. TMPC has enjoyed a long partnership with TASK. Most recently we handed out over 300 hooded sweatshirts for their Christmas giveaway and our folks help twice a month serving meals at their facility. TASK offers food service, but also addresses systemic poverty through ESL classes, job training and wraparound services. Your offering tonight will go to support these services.