



First Presbyterian

CHURCH OF EASTON



A Service for the Worship of God
January 1, 2023

First Sunday of Christmas

**Indicates an invitation to rise in body and/or spirit as you are able.*

WE GATHER TO WORSHIP GOD

GATHERING MUSIC

TOWER BELLS

PRELUDE

Carol of the Friendly Beasts

English Carol; arr. Hebble

ANNOUNCEMENTS

WE GIVE THANKS TO GOD

CALL TO WORSHIP

God of love and light, your good news has been emblazoned across the skies;
the great starry night of Jesus' birth, sung by angels, celebrated by shepherds, witnessed by animals.

Open our eyes, ears, and hearts to receive your good news: Christ is born!

You have given us a new chance, a reminder of your continual love for us.

Open our eyes, ears, and hearts to receive your good news: Christ is born!

Be with us in this worship, we pray.

Guide our thoughts, our lives, our spirits as we seek to be made new because Christ is born!

*HYMN 22 (V.1-4)

Angels, from the Realms of Glory

Angels, from the realms of glory,
Wing your flight o'er all the earth;

Ye, who sang creation's story

Now proclaim Messiah's birth:

Come and worship, come and worship,
Worship Christ, the newborn King!

Shepherds, in the fields abiding,
Watching o'er your flocks by night,

God with us is now residing,

Yonder shines the infant light:

Come and worship, come and worship,
Worship Christ, the newborn King!

Sages, leave your contemplations,
Brighter visions beam afar;
Seek the great desire of nations;
Ye have seen His natal star:
Come and worship, come and worship,
Worship Christ, the newborn King!

All creation, join in praising
God the Father, Spirit, Son,
Ever more your voices raising
To the eternal Three in One:
Come and worship, come and worship,
Worship Christ, the newborn King!

WE PREPARE TO HEAR GOD'S WORD

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God of light and life, you have come to us in Christ Jesus to open a path to new life, but we fall back on what is familiar. We confess that we are in love with our old ways and our resolution for change is all too short. Forgive us when our resolve wavers and shine your light on the way we can follow into your future.

Silent Prayer

Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation. Be assured of God's forgiveness. Make a new start this year, be at peace with God, secure in the knowledge of God's love.

*RESPONSE OF PRAISE

**Come, thou long-expected Jesus, born to set thy people free;
From our fears and sins release us, let us find our rest in Thee.
Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth Thou art;
Dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart.**

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Psalm 148
Isaiah 43:15-16a; 18-19

SERMON

Beginnings with God

Rev. Stefanie Muntzel

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

The Magi offered rare and expensive gifts to honor the new-born Christ child. We may not bring gold, frankincense, and myrrh, but all our gifts are used by God to build God's kingdom in the world. Let us present our gifts and offerings.

Please leave your offering in the box at the front of the sanctuary or make your gifts online or via mail.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

God of neighborhoods and nations, we bring our gifts to you, grateful that you are with us in good times and hard times. We do not know what the year ahead will hold but your love shines like a star to guide us. Bless these gifts and bless us, and use them and us in the service of your mission in the world. Amen.

*SUNG RESPONSE

In the Bleak Mid-Winter

**What can I give Him, poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd I would bring a lamb;
If I were a wise man I would do my part;
Yet what I can, I give Him, give my heart.**

THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

If you are yearning for someone to trust, come to the table. If you are longing for a sense of peace, come to the table. If you are hungry for joy in your heart, come to the table. If you are thirsty for love, life-changing love, come to the table. Come and meet the Lord your God, the eternal Christ, who welcomes you as his guest. Come to the table of grace.

THE PRAYER OF GREAT 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.

PRAYER

Praise to you, O God, who formed the mountains and filled the seas, who set the sun to rule the day and the moon to rule the night. You have been faithful to your ancient promises to your people, whom you guided out of slavery and into freedom through fire and cloud and law. When your people turned away from your paths, you gave your prophets courage to speak words of righteousness and justice. You comforted your people in their time of suffering and oppression, promising that you are Immanuel, God-with-us. Therefore we praise 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, hosanna in the highest.

In time you visited your people with a new word, a living word, a word made flesh to live among us. We remember the life of that Christ-child: born in a manger amidst the poor and the outcast; driven from his homeland by cruel and frightened leaders; returning to grow into a teacher, a healer, and a friend. Jesus ate with sinners and brought sight to the blind, reclaiming a lost and scattered people in your name. Condemned to death by those who he had come to save, Jesus rose again to prove that not fear, not sin, not even death can halt God's plan of love.

Remembering how you sent the light of the world into our darkness, we take from your creation these gifts of bread and cup and joyfully celebrate his dying and rising as we await with hopeful hearts the day of his coming. With thanksgiving we offer all that we are to you as a holy sacrifice, to be your servants, your light to shine for all the world. Great is the mystery of faith:

Dying you destroyed our death, rising you restored our life. Lord Jesus, come in glory.

Gracious God, pour out your Holy Spirit upon us and upon these your gifts of bread and wine, that the bread we break and the cup we bless may be the communion of the body and blood of Christ. By your Spirit unite us with the living Christ and with all who are baptized in his name, that we may be one in ministry in every place. As this bread is Christ's body for us, send us out to be the body of Christ in the world. Teach us to sow hope where there is despair; peace where there is violence; joy where there is mourning; and love where there is hatred. We name in our hearts the places and people who need your presence.

Silent Prayer

Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor are yours, almighty God, now and forevermore. Amen.

Let us now join together in the words that Jesus taught us to pray, saying:

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.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Truly Jesus showed God's love to all, for while there was no room at the inn when he was born, he makes sure that there is room for all at his table, even for the one who would betray him. For on the night before he died, Jesus took bread, and after giving thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take, eat. This is my body, given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.

In the same way he took the cup, saying: This cup is the new covenant sealed in my blood, shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this in remembrance of me.

Take, eat and drink, these are the gifts of God for the people of God!

COMMUNION OF GOD'S PEOPLE

The bread and juice are distributed together and can be enjoyed immediately.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Holy One, we have met you at this table. Nourished by your holy food, send us out as one people, full of vision and courage, to prepare the way for your kingdom. Filled with your grace, show us how to live so that all may know your hope, your peace, your joy, and your love. We pray in the sacred name of Jesus Christ, Messiah, Prince of Peace, Immanuel. Amen.

WE GO IN GOD'S NAME

*HYMN 5 (V.1-2)

Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence

Let all mortal flesh keep silence,
And with fear and trembling stand;
Ponder nothing earthly minded,
For with blessing in His hand,
Christ our God to earth descendeth,
Our full homage to demand.

King of kings, yet born of Mary,
As of old on earth He stood,
Lord of lords, in human vesture,
In the body and the blood,
He will give to all the faithful
His own self for heavenly food.

*BENEDICTION

Go in courage and confidence to face the year ahead, sure that the light of Christ will guide you.
And may God bless you and keep you;
may God's face shine upon you;
and may God be gracious to you
and give you joy and peace this day and every day,
now and evermore. Amen.

POSTLUDE

Carol of the Friendly Beasts

English Carol; arr. Callahan

The flowers on the communion table are given by Jason & Andrew Lesonick.

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Worship Leaders

Rev. Stefanie Muntzel

Gloria Snyder, Organist

Elizabeth Campbell, Chancel Choir Director

Peter Becker, Liturgist

Ruthann Arras and Shirley Heinsohn, Communion Servers

Tech Support: Jacob Van Norman, Bill Bartlett, Rich Linnell, Pat Koefoed, Luke McGloughlin

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Each Sunday we sing hymns taken from the blue hymnal provided for you in the pew where you are seated. Though we print the lyrics to the hymns in the bulletin, we encourage you to turn to the hymnal so you can also read the accompanying music.

Psalm 148

Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord from the heavens; praise him in the heights!
Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his host!

Praise him, sun and moon; praise him, all you shining stars!
Praise him, you highest heavens, and you waters above the heavens!

Let them praise the name of the Lord, for he commanded and they were created.
He established them for ever and ever; he fixed their bounds, which cannot be passed.

Praise the Lord from the earth, you sea monsters and all deeps,
fire and hail, snow and frost, stormy wind fulfilling his command!

Mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars!
Wild animals and all cattle, creeping things and flying birds!

Kings of the earth and all peoples, princes and all rulers of the earth!
Young men and women alike, old and young together!

Let them praise the name of the Lord, for his name alone is exalted; his glory is above earth and heaven.
He has raised up a horn for his people, praise for all his faithful, for the people of Israel who are close to him.
Praise the Lord!

Isaiah 43:15-16a; 18-19

I am the Lord, your Holy One, the Creator of Israel, your King. Thus says the Lord, do not remember the former things, or consider the things of old. I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.