

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Sunday, December 24, 2023 | 4p and 6p | streaming at wpc-online.org

*Carol 119 *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing* MENDELSSOHN

**Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn king.
Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!”
Joyful, all ye nations, rise; join the triumph of the skies;
with the angelic host proclaim, “Christ is born in Bethlehem!”**

Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn king!”

**Christ, by highest heaven adored, Christ the everlasting Lord,
late in time behold him come, offspring of the virgin’s womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see; hail the incarnate deity,
pleased in flesh with us to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel.**

Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn king!”

**Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace!
Hail the sun of righteousness!**

**Light and life to all he brings, risen with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by, born that we no more may die,
born to raise us from the earth, born to give us second birth.**

Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn king!”

* Prayer of Confession

**God of grace and truth, in Jesus Christ you came among
us as light shining in darkness. We confess that we have
not welcomed the light, or trusted good news to be good.
We have closed our eyes to glory in our midst, expecting
little, and hoping for less. Forgive our doubt, and renew
our hope, so that we may receive the fullness of your grace,
and live in the truth of Christ the Lord. Amen.**

* Assurance of Pardon

Leader: Friends, believe the good news of the gospel.
People: In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

* Gloria Patri, Hymn 113, *Refrain only* GLORIA

Gloria in excelsis Deo!
Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Hearing **God's Word**

Prayer for Illumination

Old Testament Lesson, *Isaiah 9:2-7*

p. 555

Gospel Lesson, *Luke 2:1-20*

p. 832

Leader: The Word of the Lord.
People: Thanks be to God.

Homily "Christmas Traditions"

Responding to **God's Word**

Solo *Gesu Bambino* Pietro A. Yon

Prayers of Thanksgiving & Intercession

The Lord's Prayer

* Lighting of the Candles and Carol 122, *Silent Night, Holy Night* STILLE NACHT

The first verse of “Silent Night” will be sung in German by a quartet. The congregation will join in on the second and following verses. **We will conclude by singing the first verse.** As “Silent Night” is being sung, the lights will be dimmed, and the pastors will light a candle from the Christ candle on the Advent wreath. The pastors will light the candles of the ushers. The light will then be passed from worshiper to worshiper. Remember that the lighted candle remains upright, and the unlighted candle is tipped to be lighted. Before leaving their pews, worshipers are requested to extinguish their candles.

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Quartet:

*Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht! Alles schläft, einsam wacht
nur das traute, hochheilige Paar. Holder Knabe im lockigen Haar,
schlaf in himmlischer Ruh, schlaf in himmlischer Ruh!*

**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.**

**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.**

* A Christmas Prayer

* Carol 134 *Joy to the World* ANTIOCH

**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.**

* Charge & Benediction

* Postlude *He is Born* Hudson

*All who are able may stand

Plates will be placed at the rear of the Sanctuary Narthex
for those desiring to leave a retiring offering.

Leading Worship **this Evening**

Ben Dorr, *preaching*

Leigh Stuckey, Lauren Slingerland, Mary Kathleen Duncan, *liturgists*

Bryant Puntch (4p), Parks McLeod (6p), *head ushers*

Todd Monsell, *organist & pianist*

Rosemary Hughes, *flute*

Kathryn Knauer, *soloist*

Rosemary Hughes, Kathi Hurst, Marlon Hurst, Todd Monsell, *quartet*

Nora Blouin, Francie Whitted (4p), *acolytes*

Ella Heegard, Sawyer Rentz (6p), *acolytes*

***The Pastors and Staff of Westminster wish you
a merry Christmas and a happy New Year.***

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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CHRISTMAS TREES

To make our Sanctuary, Entrance Pavilion, Fellowship Hall, and Sanctuary Atrium festive for the Christmas season, the Women of Westminster, our Youth, the Men of Westminster, and the Lightly Seasoned Fellowship Group decorated this year's Christmas trees. Thank you to all!

TRAFFIC POLICE OFFICER

A Greenville city police officer will be on duty from 3:30 - 7:30p to help people cross the street from the TD Bank on the other side of Augusta Street.

NURSERY

A nursery is available for infants through four-year kindergarten at the 4p service. There will not be a nursery provided for the 6p service. Our nurturing staff of experienced caregivers and parent volunteers offers a welcoming environment to all children.

LAST WEEK OF DECEMBER:

The church office will be closed on December 25 and 26. On Sunday, December 31, we will have one worship service at 10a.

2023 GIVING

2023 Pledges	\$2,412,817
Amount Received	\$1,956,877
Pledges Outstanding	(\$455,940)

Please have any contributions you wish to show on your 2023 contribution statement postmarked by December 30, 2023, or you can hand deliver to the Church office on or before December 29, 2023. You can also place your offering in the plate on Sunday, December 31st. By fulfilling your pledge, you enable us to keep faith with our mission partners.

the HARBINGER

open minds open hearts

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Prayer of Preparation

Good and gracious God, on this holy night you gave us your Son, the Lord of the universe, wrapped in swaddling clothes, the Savior of all, lying in a manger. On this holy night, draw us into the mystery of your love. Join our voices with the heavenly host that we may sing your glory on high. Give us a place among the shepherds that we may find the one for whom we have waited, Jesus Christ, the Messiah and Lord, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

Gathering and Preparing for **God's Word**

Prelude "Pastoral Symphony" from Messiah Handel

Welcome & Lighting of the Christ Candle

4p – Bryan & Sarah Kelley, Salters and Emma

6p – Ross & Emily Lordo

*Call to Worship

Leader: Glory to you, almighty God,
for you sent your only-begotten Son,
that we might have new life.

People: **Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ,
for you became flesh and lived among us
that we might become your people.**

Leader: Glory to you, Holy Spirit,
for you direct and rule our lives.

People: **The grace of God has appeared,
bringing salvation to all.**

All: **Let us worship God!**