

FARMINGTON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP

LOVE KNOWS
your name





FARMINGTON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
SERVICE OF DIVINE WORSHIP
Christmas Eve
December 24, 2024

Worship Online at 11:00am Sunday Mornings
www.farmingtonpres.org
Click "Worship Together"

ASSEMBLE IN GOD'S NAME

PRAYER OF PREPARATION

Lord Jesus Christ, on a night like this one, you were born and swaddled and laid in a manger. You came into this world and took your first breath, God's love in the flesh. Your love changed the world - a love both expansive and personal. As we prepare to hear this ancient story once again, awaken something new, something personal, in us. Awaken in us a sense of awe and wonder that *unto us*, a savior is born. Awaken in us a desire to love as we have been loved by you. Awaken in us hope and joy, here and now. Amen.

WELCOME

PRELUDE "Christmas Fantasy"

Charles Callahan

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Let us kneel in the darkness;

God is coming into our lives in a new way.

Let us wait with hope-filled hearts,

as Christ's image grows within us and shows us life.

Let Christ speak to us and teach us love,

until we open our hearts to be his home.

*HYMN OF PRAISE – No. 112

"On Christmas Night All Christians Sing"

On Christmas night all Christians sing, to hear the news the angels bring; on Christmas night all Christians sing, to hear

the news the angels bring, news of great joy, news of great mirth, news of our merciful King's birth.

Then why should we on earth be sad, since our Redeemer made us glad; then why should we on earth be sad, since our Redeemer made us glad, when from our sin he set us free, all for to gain our liberty?

When sin departs before his grace, then life and health come in this place; when sin departs before his grace, then life and health come in its place; heaven and earth with joy may sing, all for to see the newborn King.

All out of darkness we have light, which made the angels sing this night; all out of darkness we have light, which made the angels sing this night: "Glory to God in highest heaven; peace on earth and goodwill. Amen!"

(Please be seated.)

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

CALL TO RECONCILIATION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Loving Christ, when the shepherds heard that you were born, they left their sheep in the fields and ran. They trusted the angels' invitation. They believed that your love existed for them. Give us that kind of trust, because somewhere between the angels' songs and the manger, we tend to lose our way. We doubt. We doubt ourselves – am I really loveable? To God? We doubt the invitation – am I really wanted? By God? We doubt that love could know our names – do I really belong? With God? Reassure us that we are loved, invited, and known by name. Despite all the things we have done that we ought not to have done, and all the things that we have not done that we ought to have done, the good news of this night is for each of us. Love is born and knows my name.

(A time of silent prayer.)

KYRIE—NO. 123 "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear" Verse 3

Yet with the woes of sin and strife the world has suffered long; beneath the heavenly hymn have rolled two thousand years of wrong; and we at war on earth hear not the tidings that they bring; O, hush the noise and cease the strife to hear the angels sing!

*GLORIA—NO. 119 “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing” Verse 3

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!”

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

I believe in God whose light shines in the darkness, and the darkness can never smother it.

I believe that on a night like this night in Bethlehem there was born a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

I believe in the Word who has become incarnate, our very flesh and blood, yet full of grace and truth.

I believe in the blessed appearing of the salvation of our God, that is for the happiness of all people.

I believe in his name as Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace; of the increase of his rule and of his unique peace, there will be no end. The zeal of the God of hosts will do this.

This I surely believe!

PROCLAIM GOD’S WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

THE CHRISTMAS STORY

Luke 2:1-20†

And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) to be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn. And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and

the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

This is the Word of the Lord!

Thanks be to God!

RESPONSE NO. 113 "Angels We Have Heard on High" Refrain

Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!

SERMON "This Is Active Love"

Rev. Rebecca Luter

RESPOND TO GOD

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Please remember those on our prayer list.

PRESENTATION OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS

OFFERTORY ANTHEM "See, Amid the Winter's Snow"

*DOXOLOGY—NO. 108 "Of the Father's Love Begotten" Verse 6

Christ, to thee with God the Father, and, O Holy Ghost to thee, hymn and chant and high thanksgiving and unwearied praises be. Honor, glory, and dominion, and eternal victory, evermore and evermore! Amen.

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Emmanuel, shine your light and love upon these gifts and upon us. Dedicate them and us to bringing peace in this

world. By your Holy Spirit, fill us, intertwine us, enwrap us with your power that is beyond this world and at the same time comes as close as our next breath so that when the ringing of the bells fades and the candles are blown out, your light may continue to shine. Amen.

INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE

PRAYER OF GREAT THANKSGIVING

God is with us.

We are not alone.

Christ is present here.

The Spirit moves among us.

Let us give thanks to God.

We give thanks in memory and in hope...

SUNG RESPONSES

O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

Glorious now behold him arise, King and God and Sacrifice:
Alleluia! Alleluia! sounds through the earth and skies.
O star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright,
Westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect
light!

O holy child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray,
Cast out our sin and enter in; be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell:
O come to us abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel.

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.

SHARING THE BREAD AND THE CUP

LITANY OF LIGHT

Emmanuel, God-with-us,

In the beginning, in the midst of darkness, God spoke.

Let there be light!

Emmanuel, God-with-us,

In the beginning was the Word. And the Word came and dwelt among us. And the Word was the light of all peoples.

May your light shine!

Emmanuel, God-with-us,

We are here to seek a little light by which we can see, by which we can live, by which we can love.

May your light shine!

Emmanuel, God-with-us,

We need to be assured that the light of Christ is with us even in this moment, burning with a flame much more powerful than the flicker of our own little candles.

May your light shine!

Emmanuel, God-with-us,

Embolden us to share the love of God with a world longing for light and hope, purpose and love. May our actions and generosity shine in a world under the shadow of despair.

May your light shine!

Emmanuel, God-with-us,

We join the chorus of those whose carols have echoed through the years – “O come to us, abide in us, our Lord, Emmanuel.”

May your light shine! Amen.

LIGHTING THE CANDLES

*HYMN NO. 122 “Silent Night, Holy Night!”

Silent night, holy night! All is calm, all is bright ‘round you 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 “Al-le-lu-ia: 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 Al-le-lu-ia to our King: Christ the Savior is born; Christ the Savior is born.

*BENEDICTION

*SENDING FORTH HYMN – No. 134 “Joy to the World” Verses 1 & 4

**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.**

**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.**

*POSTLUDE

Marty Haugen

“Awake! Awake and Greet the New Morn”

*Stand as able.

Bold Type – congregation in unison

†King James Version, 1604.

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Participating in the service tonight:

Rev. Rebecca Luter, Pastor

Jim Thrash, Director of Music

Tom Bryant, Accompanist

Natalie Duncan, Soloist

Davis Howe, Interim Youth Director

Chris Luter, Liturgist

Billy & Sandy Wann, Ushers

Ruth Lovell Bradham, Laurinda Ingram, Pat Sherman,

Kasi Wann, and Shelley Wann, Communion Servers



THIS SERVICE IS BEING LIVE-STREAMED
AND RECORDED. ATTENDEES
IMPLICITLY AGREE THAT THEY, AND
ANY CHILDREN ACCOMPANYING
THEM, MAY BE ON CAMERA.

Welcome IN THE NAME OF JESUS, THE CHRIST

We hope that you will sense the presence of the Holy Spirit in this place and find here a place that feels like home. We are grateful for the visitors and friends of the Farmington family who add to our community each week. **Need more information? Want to sign up for something? Looking for the livestream of worship?** Go to our website: www.farmingtonpres.org

Need to give us information? Want to ask a question? Looking for assistance with signing up? Email us at: church@farmingtonpres.org

How do I join the church? Members are received by Profession of Faith, Reaffirmation of Faith, and Transfer of Membership from another congregation. If you are interested in joining, please let Rev. Rebecca know or email church@farmingtonpres.org. We look forward to officially welcoming you into the Farmington Presbyterian Church family!

Prayer Concerns and Pastoral Care You are encouraged to complete a Prayer Concern card in the pew rack to add someone to the church's prayer list. Copies of the complete list are available in the folder under the Prayer Board in the office. You may reach Rev. Rebecca Luter at (901)674-8000 or rluter@farmingtonpres.org.

Happenings AT FARMINGTON PRESBYTERIAN

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

A Service of Joy We hope you will join us either in person or on the livestream to celebrate the joy of Christmas at 11am on December 29.

Angel Tree Mothers in Community (formerly MOPS) have decorated the tree in Fellowship Hall with items requested by Room in the Inn and First Presbyterian Church for our unhoused neighbors. Take a moment to choose and ornament and deliver your gift by January 5.

Epiphany Sunday We will again observe the tradition of receiving Star Words for Epiphany in our worship on January 5. If you worship online would like to receive a Star Word in the mail, please let us know by emailing church@farmingtonpres.org.

Potluck Sunday Following worship on January 5, we will enjoy a potluck lunch together in the Fellowship Hall. Please bring a dish to the kitchen (with warming instructions, if needed) prior to worship. If you are able to help with setup or cleanup, contact Paula Gale or Paula Patterson.

Boxing of the Green On the afternoon of January 5, we will pack away our Christmas decorations after Potluck. Please plan to stay and bid farewell to the Christmas season. Boxing the green always goes much more quickly than hanging the green!

Youth Fellowship Each Sunday evening the youth meet from 5:30-7:30pm for a time of fellowship, games, faith-building, and food. Friends are welcome! Holiday schedule: Youth will not meet December 29 and will resume meeting on January 5.

The Holy Mystery of Discipleship Beginning January 12, and continuing for 7 weeks, we will study paradoxes experienced in the journey of faith. How does God cleanse our hearts in the wilderness? What is the power of weakness, the gain of letting go, or the joy in suffering? How does transformation come through small actions? How is faith found in simplicity and abundance in generosity? Join us in worship at 11am in person or on the livestream.

Room in the Inn Farmington Presbyterian will be hosting again Saturday, January 18, at The Cottage at Germantown United Methodist Church. This ministry provides housing for homeless persons. Each time we host, a group of people prepare a meal for the evening: a casserole or meat, side(s), salad, bread, and dessert. The meal should serve 22 adults. A group of 6-8 people host our guests by setting up at 5pm and welcoming the guests at 6pm. We eat together and visit or play games until 9:30pm. At 9pm, 2 overnight shepherds arrive to spend the night, prepare coffee and a to-go breakfast, and do light clean-up after the guests depart at 6am. After we host, 2 laundry angels volunteer to launder the sheets, pillow cases, and blankets after we host our guests. This is a great way for someone who cannot be there in the evenings to still be a part of this ministry. The sign-up is on the website.

Announcements

Holiday Schedule The Church Office will be closed December 25-27 and January 1-3. If you need Rev. Luter, please contact her on her cell phone – (901) 674-8000.

End of Year Gifts IRS requires that all gifts to the church applied to 2024 Giving Statements be received by the Church Office or postmarked by December 31, 2024.

Sunday School Adults gather at 9:30am or 10am while youth and children gather at 10am each Sunday morning for lessons in faith and Scripture.

Fellowship Coffee Sign up to host Fellowship Coffee on our website to provide refreshments following worship, www.farmingtonpres.org Please keep it simple-something sweet and something salty.

Food Pantry Collection Farmington is collecting food pantry items for the Oakland Presbyterian Church Food Pantry. Canned meats, vegetables, pasta sauce, peanut butter, etc. can be dropped off in the basket by the West entrance of the church.

Bulletin Mailing List While we were all worshipping online, we sent a bulletin weekly to every household. If you are returning to worship in the Sanctuary and would like to be removed from the weekly mailing or if you are worshipping online and would like to be added to the weekly mailing, please email us at church@farmingtonpres.org and let us know.

Gathered to Worship...Sent to Serve In response to God's blessings and to support what God is doing through the Farmington family, you can make your offering through the website, using a checking account, or mail your offering to Farmington Presbyterian Church, 8245 Farmington Boulevard, Germantown, TN 38139.

This week at Farmington...we hold in prayer those on our prayer list and on our hearts and minds, those who are travelling and those who will be far from loved ones, and those who do not know the joy of the Christmas message: "For God so loved the world, that he sent his only begotten son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life."

Remember in Prayer...Our Farmington Family, Session and Staff; Jackie Baker, Hank Baron, Kevin Beard, Betty Boyd, Jeanne Carr, Judith Cassidy, Mary Lou Collins, Mark Fisher, Chelsea Moyer Fitzpatrick, Joe Gaul, Bill Harrington, Martha Hart, Robert Herring, Chris and Sabrina Johnson, Bill Jones, Bill Knight, Leslie Langston, Annette Main, Faye McKenzie, Sara Millar, Steve Moots, Nancy & Dennis Palmer, Pat Register, Bill Renfrow, Wayne Renfrow, Katie Robbins, Jack Scherer, Dee Scobey, Pat Sherman, Caitlin Shirazee, JoAnne Simpkins, William Stevens, Jon Still, B.J. Tanner, Kasi Wann, Frank Whited, Nathan Williams and from our Presbytery: First Presbyterian Church, McKenzie, TN.

Sympathy to the family and friends...of Rev. Arthur Lodge, retired PC (USA) pastor; of Brian Hailey, former colleague of Rebecca Luter; of Chris Kirchoff, son of Rev. Rick & Jane Kirchoff, retired pastor at Germantown United Methodist Church; of Kathy VanderEcken, mother of Gretchen Burch, Director of FPDS; and of Luv Bacerra, father of Liv Palmer.

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