



FARMINGTON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
SERVICE OF DIVINE WORSHIP
Christmas Sunday: A Service of Joy
December 29, 2024

Worship Online at 11:00am Sunday Mornings

www.farmingtonpres.org

Click "Worship Together"

ASSEMBLE IN GOD'S NAME

PRAYER OF PREPARATION "The Christmas Spirit" Ann Weems
The Christmas spirit
is that hope
which tenaciously clings
to the hearts of the faithful
and announces
in the face
of any Herod the world can produce
and all the inn doors slammed in our faces
and all the dark nights of our souls
that with God
all things are still possible,
that even now
unto us
a Child is born!

WELCOME

PRELUDE "All My Heart This Night Rejoices" arr. Gordon Young

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Like eager children waiting for dawn, tearing at the wrapping to get to the gift, waking sleeping parents with shouts of joy, let our celebration begin!

Jesus Christ, come to us, fill our hearts with joy as we gather this morning, let praise rise from willing lips, from lives open to you, and from hearts filled with your love.

With the angels, let us sing: Glory to God in the highest,
and hope to every discouraged heart.

Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to every conflicted soul.

Glory to God in the highest,
and joy to every downcast spirit.

Glory to God in the highest,
**for a love so vast, so deep, so real, that God took on
flesh and came to live, one of us.**

May we share the light of this love with a world where too many
dwell in darkness.

**Let us sing praises to our God. Let us offer this light
against the darkness.**

*HYMN OF PRAISE – No. 134 “Joy to the World”

**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.**

(Please be seated.)

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

CALL TO RECONCILIATION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Joyful God, you told us that to enter the kingdom of heaven, we
must become like children.

**Did you mean that, like children, we must practice
unhindered joy? Did you mean that, like children, we
should lean into laughter, release our cynicism, and
open ourselves to delight?**

In a world as broken and battered as ours, we admit, this often
seems easier said than done.

Forgive us, patient God, for the moments when we are so focused on the bad and on worry that we miss the good.

Forgive us for hearing the nativity story and still doubting your love for every person.

Open our hearts to you, even now; open our lives to you, even now; let us become like children, even now.

(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!

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

*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[†]

We believe in God, the creator and giver of life, who brought all creation to birth, who mothers us and fathers us, protecting, nurturing, and cherishing us.

We believe in Jesus Christ: God born among us as a fragile baby, embodying both love and the need for love, and calling us to rest in God as trustingly as a tiny child.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, breathed into us at our birth, always drawing us on to be born again, encouraging, exhorting, comforting, nourishing our growth and inspiring our living.

We believe in the reconciliation of the world to God, through Christ. Hunted at birth and humiliated at death, Christ entered our fearful darkness so that we might enter his glorious light and share the life of his resurrection.

And we believe that each new child is a glimpse of the face of God, a sign of the life to come, and a call to live

in peace and celebrate living together, for we all bear God's image.

Glory to God in the highest, and peace to all, for all are loved by God. Amen.

THROUGH CHILDREN'S EYES

Nic Luter

*All children are invited to come to the Chancel steps.
Afterward, young children may remain or proceed to the nursery.
Worship bags are available beside the entrance to the Sanctuary*

PROCLAIM GOD'S WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON

Isaiah 9:2-3, 55:12-13

The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned. You have enlarged the nation and increased their joy; they rejoice before you as people rejoice at the harvest, as warriors rejoice when dividing the plunder. and seen, as it was told unto them.

You will go out in joy and be led forth in peace; the mountains and hills will burst into song before you, and all the trees of the field will clap their hands. Instead of the thornbush will grow the juniper, and instead of briars the myrtle will grow. This will be for the Lord's renown, for an everlasting sign, that will endure forever."

This is the Word of the Lord!

Thanks be to God!

PSALTER

Psalm 126:1-3

When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who dreamed. Our mouths were filled with laughter, our tongues with songs of joy. Then it was said among the nations, "The Lord has done great things for them." The Lord has done great things for us, and we are filled with joy.

This is the Word of the Lord!

Thanks be to God!

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON

Luke 2:10-20

But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests."

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."

So, they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

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 "Good News of Great Joy" Rev. Rebecca Luter

RESPOND TO GOD

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Please remember those on our prayer list.

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.

PRESENTATION OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS

OFFERTORY ANTHEM "Walk in Light" Karen Marolli

*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.

*HYMN NO. 136 “Go, Tell It on the Mountain”

Go, tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere; go, tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born!

While shepherds kept their watching o’er silent flocks by night, behold, throughout the heavens there shone a holy light. *Refrain.*

The shepherds feared and trembled when lo! above the earth rang out the angel chorus that hailed our Savior’s birth. *Refrain.*

Down in a lowly manger the humble Christ was born, and God sent us salvation that blessed Christmas morn. *Refrain.*

*BENEDICTION

*SENDING FORTH HYMN - No. 155 “Raise a Song of Gladness”

Raise a song of gladness, peoples of the earth. Christ has come, bringing peace, joy to every heart. Alleluia, alleluia, joy to every heart! Alleluia, alleluia, joy to every heart!

*POSTLUDE “Rise Up, Shepherds, and Follow”

Betty Roe

*Stand as able.

Bold Type – congregation in unison

†Affirmation of Faith adapted from “Christmas Affirmation” by Nathan Nettleton, 1999, incorporating some lines from “Midwife of our lives” by Kathy Galloway published in Kathy Galloway (ed.) *The Pattern of Our Days*, Glasgow: Wild Goose Publications, 1996, p.138.

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

Participating in the service today:

Rev. Rebecca Luter, Pastor

Jim Thrash, Director of Music

Tom Bryant, Accompanist

Davis Howe, Interim Youth Director

Becky Hutchins, Liturgist

Nic Luter, Children’s Moment

Elizabeth Demaree and Jinney Hart, Ushers

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!

Fellowship All are invited to visit over coffee in the Narthex following worship this morning.

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 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 hosted 8 women and 6 men at Room in the Inn. One of the women is expecting a child and was particularly concerned with good nutrition. Thank you to all who helped host, to those who provided a delicious dinner, and to those whose gifts to Farmington make it possible for us to be part of this life-saving ministry.

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, 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: Marl Bluff Church, Reagan, TN.

Sympathy to the family and friends...of Kathy VanderEcken, mother of Gretchen Burch, Director of FPDS; and of Luv Bacerra, father of Liv Palmer.

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