



Draw Near
LESSONS AND CAROLS



**FARMINGTON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
SERVICE OF DIVINE WORSHIP**

Third Sunday of Advent
December 7, 2025

Worship Online at 11:00am Sunday Mornings

www.farmingtonpres.org

Click "Worship Together"

*Rise in body or in spirit.

Bold Type – Participate in unison.

PRAYER OF PREPARATION

God of timeless grace, we come with joyful expectation. Prepare our hearts to draw near. May we eagerly await not only the celebration of the birth of Jesus our Christ so long ago but also attend the birthing of his kingdom here and now. Amen.

WELCOME

Visitors and members are encouraged to fill out the attendance folder located on the center aisle of each pew and pass it to those seated along the pew.

PRELUDE

Fantasy on "Greensleeves"

Ralph Vaughan Williams

PRAYER OF INVOCATION

PROCESSIONAL HYMN NO. 140

"Once in Royal David's City"

Soloist and Chancel Choir

Once in royal David's city stood a lowly cattle shed, where a mother laid her baby in a manger for his bed: Mary was that mother mild; Jesus Christ, her little child.

He came down to earth from heaven who is God and Lord of all, and his shelter was a stable, and his cradle was a stall; with the poor and meek and lowly, lived on earth our Savior holy.

**Congregation joins in singing verses 3, & 4.*

Jesus is our childhood's pattern; day by day like us he grew; he was little, weak and helpless; tears and smiles like us he knew; and he feels for all our sadness, and he shares in all our gladness.

And our eyes at last shall see him, through his own redeeming love; for that child so dear and gentle is our Lord in heaven above; and he leads his children on to the place where he is gone.

THE FIRST LESSON

John 1: 1-14

Rev. Ruth Lovell Bradham

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. There was a man sent from God whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify

concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God. The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH†

Choir sings: Stars and angels sing, yet the earth sleeps in shadows; can this tiny spark set a world on fire?

Congregation sings:

God is with us, al - le - lu ia,
 come to save us, al - le - lu ia, Al - le - lu ia!

THE SECOND LESSON

Hebrews 8: 7-13

Ann Erickson

For if there had been nothing wrong with that first covenant, no place would have been sought for another. But God found fault with the people and said: “The days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and with the people of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they did not remain faithful to my covenant, and I turned away from them, declares the Lord. This is the covenant I will establish with the people of Israel after that time, declares the Lord. I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. No longer will they teach their neighbor, or say to one another, ‘Know the Lord,’ because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest. For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.” By calling this covenant “new,” he has made the first one obsolete; and what is obsolete and outdated will soon disappear.

*HYMN NO. 108

“Of the Father’s Love Begotten”

Verses 1-4

Of the Father’s love begotten, ere the worlds began to be, he is Alpha and Omega; he the source, the ending he, of the things that are, that have been, and that future years shall see, evermore and evermore! Amen.

By his Word was all created; he commanded; it was done: heaven and earth and depths of ocean, universe of three in one, all that sees the moon’s soft shining, all that breathes beneath the sun, evermore and evermore! Amen.

O, that birth forever blessed when the Virgin, full of grace, by the Holy Ghost conceiving, bore the Savior of our race, and the babe, the world’s Redeemer, first revealed his sacred face, evermore and evermore! Amen.

6This is he whom seers in old time chanted of with one accord, whom the voices of the prophets promised in their faithful word. Now he shines, the long-expected. Let creation praise its Lord, evermore and evermore! Amen.

THE THIRD LESSON

Isaiah 9:2, 6-7

Nic Luter

The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned. For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this.

CAROL

“Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming”

Howard Helvey

Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming from tender stem hath sprung! Of Jesse's lineage coming, as those of old have sung. It came, a blossom bright, amid the cold of winter, when half spent was the night. Isaiah 'twas foretold it, the Rose I have in mind; with Mary we behold it, the Virgin Mother kind. To show God's love aright, she bore to us a Savior, when half spent was the night. O Flower, whose fragrance tender with sweetness fills the air, dispel in glorious splendor the darkness everywhere; true man, yet very God, from sin and death now save us, and share our every load.

THE FOURTH LESSON

Luke 1: 26-38

Rev. Dr. Barb Johnson

In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. The angel went to her and said, “Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you.” Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. But the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end.” “How will this be,” Mary asked the angel, “since I am a virgin?” The angel answered, “The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month. For no word from God will ever fail.” “I am the Lord's servant,” Mary answered. “May your word to me be fulfilled.” Then the angel left her.

*HYMN NO. 100

“My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout”

Verses 1 & 2

My soul cries out with a joyful shout that the God of my heart is great, and my spirit sings of the wondrous things that you bring to the ones who wait. You fixed your sight on your servant's plight, and my weakness you did not spurn, so from east to west shall my name be blest. Could the world be about to turn?

My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Let the fires of your justice burn. Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near, and the world is about to turn.

Though I am small, my God, my all, you work great things in me, and your mercy will last from the depths of the past to the end of the age to be. Your very name puts the proud to shame, and to those who would for you yearn, you will show your might, put the strong to flight, for the world is about to turn. *Refrain.*

THE FIFTH LESSON

Luke 2: 1, 3-7

Roland Mittag

In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. And everyone went to their own town to register. So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

CAROL

"The Virgin's Slumber Song"

Max Reger

Amid the roses Mary sits and rocks her Jesus-child, while amid the treetops sighs the breeze so warm and mild, and soft and sweetly sings a bird upon the bough: Ah, baby, dear one, slumber now! Happy is Thy laughter, holy is Thy silent rest, Lay Thy head in slumber, fondly on Thy Mother's breast! Ah, baby, dear one. Slumber now!

THE SIXTH LESSON

I John 3: 1-3, 16-20

Bailey Wann

See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. All who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure. This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters. If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth. This is how we know that we belong to the truth and how we set our hearts at rest in his presence: If our hearts condemn us, we know that God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything.

CAROL

"O Little Town of Bethlehem"

Dan Forrest

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie. Above thy deep and dreamless sleep, the silent stars go by. Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting Light; the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary, and gathered all above, while mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wondering love. O morning stars together, proclaim the holy birth, and praises sing to God the King, and peace to all the earth.

How silently the wondrous gift is giv'n! So God imparts to human hearts the blessing of His heav'n. No ear may hear His coming, but in this world of sin, where meek souls will receive Him still, the dear Christ enters in.

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.

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.

THE SEVENTH LESSON

Luke 2: 8-16

Dr. Tom Bryant

And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. 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.

CAROL

"See, Amid the Winter's Snow"

Dan Forrest

Alleluia, Alleluia. See, amid the winter's snow, born for us on earth below. See, the tender Lamb appears, promised from eternal years.

Hail, thou ever-blessed morn. Hail redemption's happy dawn. Sing through all Jerusalem: "Christ is born in Bethlehem." Alleluia, Alleluia.

Lo, within a manger lies He who built the lofty skies, He, who, throned in light sublime, sits amid the cherubim.

Sacred infant, all divine, what a tender love was thine. Thus to come from highest bliss, down to such a world as this.

THE EIGHTH LESSON

Matthew 2: 1-12

Davis Howe

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him." When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born. "In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written: "But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel." Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him." After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshipped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

PRESENTATION OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

“Brightest and Best”

Shawn Kirchner

Hail the bless'd morn, see the great Mediator down from the regions of glory descend! Shepherds go worship the babe in the manger, lo, for his guard the bright angels attend.

Brightest and best of the stars of the morning, dawn on our darkness and lend us thine aid. Star in the East, the horizon adorning, guide where our infant Redeemer is laid.

Cold on his cradle the dewdrops are shining, low lies his bed with the beasts of the stall. Angels adore him in slumber reclining, Maker and Savior of all.

Shall we not yield him, in costly devotion, odors of Edom and offsprings divine. Gems of the mountains and pearls of the ocean, myrrh from the forest or gold from the mine?

*DOXOLOGY NO. 113

“Angels We Have Heard on High”

Verse 3

Come to Bethlehem and see him whose birth the angels sing; come, adore on bended knee Christ, the Lord, the newborn King. *Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!*

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Holy God, we tell the old, old story of your love, born in a humble cattle stall to uncertain parents passing it on from generation to generation, like a tapestry woven throughout time, with room for every story. Without fail, it continues to call us to draw near, to change us, to calm our fears and offer hope, to expand our love. This day we give thanks for the ways your work is unfolding in and through us, even now. Use us and our resources to bring the news of great joy to the world. Amen.

THE NINTH LESSON

Mark 1: 1-3

Rev. Rebecca Luter

The beginning of the good news about Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God, as it is written in Isaiah the prophet: “I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way”— “a voice of one calling in the wilderness, ‘Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.’”

*HYMN No. 133

“O Come, All Ye Faithful”

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant; O come ye; O come ye to Bethlehem! Come, and behold him, born the King of angels!

O come, let us adore him; O come, let us adore him; O come, let us adore him, Christ, the Lord!

True God from true God; Light from light eternal, born of a virgin, a mortal he comes; very God, begotten, not created! *Refrain.*

Sing, choirs of angels; sing in exultation; sing, all ye citizens of heaven above! Glory to God, all glory in the highest! *Refrain.*

Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning; Jesus, to thee be all glory given; Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing! *Refrain.*

*BENEDICTION

*POSTLUDE

“In Dulci Jubilo”

J.S. Bach

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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

Chancel Choir

Desiree Howe, Soprano

Natalie Duncan, Mezzo-soprano

Richard Stewart, Tenor

Sharon Hailey, Violin

Jim and Catherine Laycook, Lighting the Advent Wreath

Rev. Ruth Lovell Bradham, Ann Erickson, Nic Luter,

Rev. Dr. Barb Johnson, Roland Mittag, Bailey Wann,

Dr. Tom Bryant, and Davis Howe, Readers

Leslie McNamara and Bob Plotner, Ushers

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