

# THE SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY

The First Presbyterian Church  
of Howard County

*First Sunday of Christmas  
December 29, 2024*

*10:00 a.m. In-person & Livestream Service*

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## GATHER

*Let all enter the sanctuary in a spirit of prayer.  
Words in **bold** are read by the congregation.*

*\*Those who are able may stand*

*Please remember to turn your cell phones to silent.*

*This worship service is being livestreamed to the internet,  
and you may appear on our Facebook page and YouTube channel.*

*For our online congregation - Let us know you are here! Post a greeting!  
And remember that you can place a request in the Prayer Journal  
in the comments on both You Tube and Facebook Live.*

**Prelude**

Prelude on In Dulci Jubilo

*Gordon Young*

### Lighting the Christ Candle

Whenever we light this candle, we proclaim:  
**Christ is the light of the world and the center of our lives.**

### Call to Worship

O come, let us worship the Lord  
and consider what wondrous things God has done:  
**The Magi who study the heavens follow a guiding star!**

O come, let us worship the Lord  
and consider what wondrous things God has done:  
**The peoples who live in the shadows see a glorious light!**

O come, let us worship the Lord  
and consider what wondrous things God has done:  
**The Christ who embodies the Word unveils the hidden plan,  
making us joint heirs of the promise of salvation through the gospel!**

\* **Hymn 126**

Jesus, Jesus, O What a Wonderful Child  
*(See hymn on next page)*

*Wonderful Child*

# Jesus, Jesus, O What a Wonderful Child 126

Je-sus, Je-sus, O what a won-der-ful child.

Je-sus, Je-sus, so ho-ly, meek and mild;

new life, new hope the child will bring.

Lis-ten to the an-gels sing: "Glo-ry,

glo-ry, glo-ry!" Let the heav-ens ring.

Specific sources for the words and the music of this piece from the African American heritage remain uncertain. The predictable rhymes suggest that, like "Jesus, the Light of the World" (see no. 127), it may have originated as a reflection on an existing Christmas carol.

## Call to Confession

### Prayer of Confession

Almighty God, your love and power transform death into life, despair into hope, lifeless stumps into tender shoots and a tiny baby into the Prince of Peace. In the hearing of your Word and the repenting of our sins, transform the hardness of our hearts into lives of receptivity, following the One who came to baptize us with the Holy Spirit and fire, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

### Assurance of Grace

#### \* Response of Praise 141, verse 1

*On This Day Earth Shall Ring*

*(singing together)*

1 On this day earth shall ring with the song  
chil - dren sing to the Lord, Christ our King, born on earth to  
save us; him the Fa - ther gave us. \*Id - e - o - o - o,  
id - e - o - o - o, id - e - o glo - ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o!

The musical score is written in 4/4 time and consists of four staves. The first staff begins with a whole rest for two measures, followed by notes for the lyrics. Chords are indicated above the notes: Dm, Am, C, F, Dm, G. The second staff continues the melody with chords Em, F, G, C, Am, Dm, Em, Am. The third staff is the Refrain, starting with Dm, Em, Am, G, C, and containing the lyrics 'save us; him the Fa - ther gave us. \*Id - e - o - o - o,'. The fourth staff continues the Refrain with chords F, C, Dm, C, Am, D and the lyrics 'id - e - o - o - o, id - e - o glo - ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o!'.

#### \* Sharing the Peace

The peace of Christ be with you.

**And also with you.**

*(We share peace with a nod or a bow, perhaps with hand on heart or folded hands, or with the ASL sign for peace. If worshiping from home, greet each other by sending a text, a wave or comment on Facebook or YouTube.)*

\* **Response of Praise 127, verse 1**  
(singing together)

*Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*

*With a gospel feel*

1 Hark! the her - ald an - gels sing. Je - sus, the  
light of the world. Glo - ry to the  
new - born King, Je - sus, the light of the world.

*Refrain*

We'll walk in the light, beau - ti - ful light.  
Come where the dew - drops of mer - cy shine bright.  
O, shine all a - round us by day and by  
night. Je - sus, the light of the world.

**Words of Welcome**

*Newcomers please leave us your address and contact information on the Visitor Card in the pew rack! Place the Visitor Card in the offering plate.*

## ENCOUNTER

### Prayer for Illumination

#### First Lesson: John 1:10-18

<sup>10</sup>He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. <sup>11</sup>He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. <sup>12</sup>But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, <sup>13</sup>who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. <sup>14</sup>And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

<sup>15</sup>(John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.'") <sup>16</sup>From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. <sup>17</sup>The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. <sup>18</sup>No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

The Word of God for the People of God.

**Thanks be to God.**

#### Children's Prayer and The Lord's Prayer

*Afterwards, children ages 4-7 may go with Ms. Kathy Moore to Godly Play.  
Parents can pick up their children following worship.*

*Older children, grades 2-5, who normally attend The Worship Bridge will return to their seats to experience a full worship service with their family.*

*(It is the church's policy to not put images of children on the livestream.)*

**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.**

**Second Lesson: Ephesians 3:1-12**

<sup>3</sup>This is the reason that I Paul am a prisoner for Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles—  
<sup>2</sup>for surely you have already heard of the commission of God’s grace that was given me for you,  
<sup>3</sup>and how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I wrote above in a few words,  
<sup>4</sup>a reading of which will enable you to perceive my understanding of the mystery of Christ.  
<sup>5</sup>In former generations this mystery was not made known to humankind, as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit:  
<sup>6</sup>that is, the Gentiles have become fellow heirs, members of the same body, and sharers in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.  
<sup>7</sup>Of this gospel I have become a servant according to the gift of God’s grace that was given me by the working of his power.  
<sup>8</sup>Although I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given to me to bring to the Gentiles the news of the boundless riches of Christ,  
<sup>9</sup>and to make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things;  
<sup>10</sup>so that through the church the wisdom of God in its rich variety might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places.  
<sup>11</sup>This was in accordance with the eternal purpose that he has carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord,  
<sup>12</sup>in whom we have access to God in boldness and confidence through faith in him.

For the Word of God in scripture,  
For the Word of God among us,  
For the Word of God within us,

**Thanks be to God!**

**Sermon**

In the Flesh!

*Kenneth Page*

*(after the sermon, we observe a time of silence and prayer)*

# RESPOND AND SERVE

## Sacrament of Baptism

Sophie Marie, daughter of Daniel and Tamara, and granddaughter of Doyle and Ellen.

\* Hymn 140

Once in Royal David's City

*Irby*

JESUS CHRIST: BIRTH

## Once in Royal David's City 140

1 Once in roy - al Da - vid's cit - y stood a low - ly  
2 He came down to earth from heav - en who is God and  
3 Je - sus is our child - hood's pat - tern; day by day like  
4 And our eyes at last shall see him, through his own re -

cat - tle shed, where a moth - er laid her ba - by in a  
Lord of all, and his shel - ter was a sta - ble, and his  
us he grew; he was lit - tle, weak and help - less; tears and  
deem - ing love; for that child so dear and gen - tle is our

man - ger for his bed: Mar - y was that moth - er  
cra - dle was a stall; with the poor and meek and  
smiles like us he knew; and he feels for all our  
Lord in heaven a - bove; and he leads his chil - dren

mild; Je - sus Christ, her lit - tle child.  
low - ly, lived on earth our Sav - ior ho - ly.  
sad - ness, and he shares in all our glad - ness.  
on to the place where he is gone.

Like "All Things Bright and Beautiful" (see no. 20), this popular Christmas hymn was written by an Irish poet to illustrate for children the various articles of the Apostles' Creed. It is not known which of several English villages the composer had in mind when naming this tune.

TEXT: Cecil Frances Alexander, 1848, alt.  
MUSIC: Henry John Gauntlett, 1849; harm. Arthur Henry Mann, 1919

IRBY  
8.7.8.7.7.7

**Concerns and Remembrances**

**Prayers of Gratitude and Concern**

**Concluding Prayer** *(together)*

**God of life, God of new life,  
by the birth of Jesus  
you have brought light into our darkness.  
Shine in our lives.  
Christ Jesus, by your coming,  
Set us free for ministry.  
AMEN**

**The Offering**

**Offertory Solo**

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

*Geistliche Kirchengesäng,  
arr. M Hayes*

\* **Doxology** *(singing together)*

*Carol CMD*

Praise God from whom all blessings flow.  
Praise God all creatures here below.  
Praise God above, ye heavenly host.  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

\* **Prayer of Thanksgiving and Dedication**

## **SEND AND BLESS**

**This Week at First Presbyterian Church**

\* **Hymn 110**

Love Has Come  
*(See hymn on next page)*

*Bring a Torch*



# Love Has Come

# 110

Capo 3: (D) (Bm7) (Em7) (A)  
 F Dm7 Gm7 C

1 Love has come: a light in the dark - ness!  
 2 Love is born! Come, share in the won - der.  
 3 Love has come and nev - er will leave us!

(D) (Bm7) (Em) (A7) (D)  
 F Dm7 Gm C7 F

Love shines forth in the Beth - le - hem skies. See, all  
 Love is God now a - sleep in the hay. See the  
 Love is life ev - er - last - ing and free. Love is

(A) (D) (Bm) (D) (A) (G) (D)  
 C F Dm F C B<sup>b</sup> F

heav - en has come to pro - claim it; hear how their song of  
 glow in the eyes of his moth - er; what is the name her  
 Je - sus with - in and a - mong us. Love is the peace our

(Em7) (F#7) (G) (A) (Bm) (A7)  
 Gm7 A7 B<sup>b</sup> C Dm C7

joy a - ris - es: Love! Love! Born un - to you, a  
 heart is say - ing? Love! Love! Love is the name she  
 hearts are seek - ing. Love! Love! Love is the gift of

(D) (A) (G) (A) (D) (A) (A7) (Dsus) (D)  
 F C B<sup>b</sup> C F C C7 F<sup>sus</sup> F

Sav - ior! Love! Love! Glo - ry to God on high.  
 whis - pers. Love! Love! Je - sus, Em - man - u - el.  
 Christ - mas. Love! Love! Praise to you, God on high!

Here is a chance to sing a familiar French carol tune with new words, the most important clearly being "Love." The senses "seen and heard" (as in Acts 4:20 and elsewhere) organize the first two stanzas, while the third holds the summary statement: "Love is the gift of Christmas."

\* **Benediction**

\* **Response 135, verse 1** (singing together)

*There's a Star in the East*

1 There's a star in the east on Christ-mas morn. Rise up, shep-herd, and  
fol - low. It will lead to the place where the Christ was born.

*Refrain*  
Rise up, shep-herd, and fol - low. Fol - low, fol - low;  
rise up, shep-herd, and fol - low. Fol - low the star of  
Beth - le - hem. Rise up, shep-herd, and fol - low.

The musical score is written for two voices (Soprano and Bass) and piano accompaniment. It is in the key of D major (two sharps) and 4/4 time. The score consists of six systems of music. The first system contains the first line of the verse. The second system contains the second line of the verse. The third system begins the refrain. The fourth system continues the refrain. The fifth system continues the refrain. The sixth system concludes the refrain. The piano accompaniment provides harmonic support throughout the piece.

**Postlude**

**While By My Sheep**

*Trad. German Carol, arr. Mark Hayes*





## WELCOME TO WORSHIP AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

*We are grateful for your presence and invite you to participate in the worship, education, mission and common life of First Church.*

### During Today's Worship

**If your infant or child needs care** during the worship service, you may leave the Sanctuary and return as you wish. Child care for infants and children under four years old is available all morning. The nursery is in Room 159. We have a texting system to alert you if you are needed while in the worship service. The ushers will be glad to help you.

Flash photography during worship is not permitted. Please, no food or drink in the Sanctuary.

### If you are new to First Presbyterian Church

**Communion** is served on the first Sunday of each month.

**Disabled persons entrance** is through the Main Entrance in the rear of the building.

**We invite you to become a member** of First Presbyterian Church. Please speak with Pastor Ken or call the church office to set a time to meet.

### Interested in the mission and activities of First Presbyterian Church?

Visit the church's website, [www.firstpreshc.org](http://www.firstpreshc.org) for more info.

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## The First Presbyterian Church of Howard County

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Sarah Reinhardt, Nursery Assistant	

The First Presbyterian Church of Howard County is a congregation of the Presbytery of Baltimore in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

✦ We are an Earth Care Congregation ✦

✦ We are a Matthew 25 Congregation ✦

*Inspirit Counseling Services at First Presbyterian Church*

Meredith Barger 410-433-8861 x104 | John Michalczyk 410-433-8861 x115

