

Christmas Eve

FAMILY WORSHIP SERVICE

2024 • 5 PM



East Liberty
Presbyterian Church

www.ELPC.church

116 South Highland Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15206



412.441.3800

www.ELPC.church



EAST LIBERTY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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As a diverse community of believers, we strive to follow God – the Creator who calls us, Jesus who teaches us, and the Spirit who empowers us. We show God’s unconditional love by providing a refuge for spiritual growth, ardently pursuing justice, and extending Christ’s radical hospitality to all. (Strategic Vision mission statement, 2011)

Christmas Eve Family Service

DECEMBER 24, 2024 — 5:00 PM

TIME OF PREPARATION

A child is born with an odd heritage, in an odd place, under odd circumstances. But this is a "Prince of Peace," a "Wonderful Counselor," a "Mighty God." Angels sing, people come from miles around, and a star shines brightly on the place where he lay swaddled. Odd enough. But then this Presence of God, Emmanuel, goes on to live an odd life of presence with the poor, the unlikely, the untouchable, the lowly and in the end, gives himself for the sake of the least of these.

— Reading from “Presence in the Midst of Loneliness” by Marcia McFee Dylan Evers

PRELUDE

“In Dulci Jubilo”

Marcel Dupré

Dr. Edward Alan Moore, *organ*

“God Rest Ye”

Elijah Herzer, *clarinet*

“It Came Upon the Midnight Clear”

Brady Conley, *viola*

“O Holy Night”

Adolphe Adam

Cody Conley, *violin*

WELCOME

Rev. Dr. Michael A. Diaz

CALL TO WORSHIP

Annabel Degenholtz

Taylor Reese

Leader: Tonight, we tell the story that we tell every year — the story of Christ’s birth, the story of love made flesh. For generations, people have gathered together on this holy night, because there is something about this story that speaks to the deepest parts of us. We believe in bundling up this hope, this good news, and passing it on — to our children, to our neighbors, to the world around us. Our story is in the story of Christmas. Friends, there is good news to tell – good news for all!

People: **To us is born this day in Bethlehem a Savior who is Christ the Lord!**

Leader: Friends, look around! God is giving us a sign of God’s love:

People: **You will find a child wrapped in cloth and lying in a manger. This baby is Emmanuel – God with us!**

Leader: Let us sing our praises to God!

People: **Glory to God in the highest and peace to all people on earth!**

* **PROCESSIONAL HYMN #113** (*music printed in bulletin*)

GLORIA

“Angels We Have Heard on High”

* Indicates where you may please rise in body or spirit.

OPENING PRAYER

Rev. BJ Woodworth

Leader: Living God, on this holy night we gather – to stand with shepherds, amazed at your glory; to sing with angels, rejoicing in your work; to wait with Joseph, trusting in your promise; to sit with Mary, cradling your love.

People: **May the good news of this night inspire us to tell the world of our great joy: for to us is born a Savior; the Messiah, the Lord. Glory and praise to you forever! Amen.**

ANTHEM

“In the Bleak Midwinter”

Gustav Holst
Cody Conley, *violin*

LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLES AND THE CHRIST CANDLE

Meghan Bogema, Matt, and Emilia Battifareno
Brian, Eden, and Lila Castle
Annabel Degenholtz
Bill Johnson
Taylor Reese

* **HYMN #121** (*music printed in bulletin*)

“O Little Town of Bethlehem”

ST. LOUIS

SCRIPTURE READING

Luke 2:7-20

Rev. Woodworth

SERMON

“We Tell This Story”

Rev. Dr. Diaz

PRAYER OF INTERCESSION & THE LORD’S PRAYER

Jan Herzer

Loving God, we admit that there is something so marvelous and wonderful about this night:
the glow of the candlelight, and the familiar hymns,
the kids that are filled with contagious, joyful energy,
joy and hope are in the air.

Help us to share the joy of this night
with the children of this city,
with single parents,
with lonely young adults,
with our unhoused neighbors,
with those who are grieving,
with people who couldn’t quite make it home for Christmas.

Help us live like the shepherds—who weren’t afraid to go and tell the good news.

Help us take the words of the angels to heart—to not be afraid.

Help us to be as trusting as Joseph—who chose to believe the impossible.

But more than anything, give us the courage to tell this story.

As we tell your story of good news, let us once again speak the prayer that Jesus taught us to pray, saying:
Our Father/Creator/Mother... Amen.

The Lord’s Prayer can be found on pg. 35 (English), on pg. 40 (Español) or on pg. 45 (한국어) in the Glory to God hymnal.

OFFERING INVITATION

*We offer our gifts in response to God’s love, and the grace of Jesus Christ,
which we seek to make known through the ministries of this congregation.*

*You are invited to use the QR code to the right if you would like to make a
donation in support of ELPC. A donation box is also available in the Sanctuary.*

Brian, Eden, Jen and Lila Castle



OFFERTORY

“Sweet Little Jesus Boy”

Robert MacGimsey
David Jennings-Smith, *soloist*

* DOXOLOGY AT THE PRESENTATION #143 (verse 4)

REGENT SQUARE

All cre - a - tion, join in prais - ing God Cre - a - tor, Spir - it, Son,
ev - er - more your voic - es rais - ing to the e - ter - nal Three in One:
come and wor - ship, come and wor - ship, wor - ship Christ, the new - born king!

* SHARING GOD'S PEACE

Rev. Dr. Diaz
Rev. Woodworth

Leader: La paz de Cristo esté con ustedes.
People: Y también contigo.

The peace of Christ be with you.
And also with you.

— THE LORD'S SUPPER —

INVITATION TO THE LORD'S SUPPER

Rev. Dr. Diaz

GREAT THANKSGIVING

Rev. Woodworth

Leader: El Señor esté con ustedes.
People: Y también contigo.
Leader: Levantemos nuestros corazones.
People: Lo tenemos levantado al Señor.
Leader: Demos gracias al Señor nuestro Dios.
People: Es justo dar gracias y alabanzas a Dios.

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.
Lift up your hearts.
We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give God thanks and praise.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Rev. Dr. Diaz
Rev. Woodworth

SHARING THE BREAD & THE CUP

The communion elements are gluten-free bread and grape juice. The congregation is invited to come forward by using the center aisle to the communion servers where each may receive the bread and the cup, then returning to their seats via the side aisles to partake of the elements. Congregants in the Transepts will be guided by volunteers to receive communion. Those not able to come forward will be served in their seats.

MUSIC DURING COMMUNION

HYMN #136 (*music printed in bulletin*) “Away in a Manger” Brady Conley, *viola*
“Go, Tell It on the Mountain” GO TELL IT
“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing” Elijah Herzer, *clarinet*

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION (*unison*)

Rev. Woodworth

Holy and astounding God, on this night, at this table, in this meal, we have been met by Christ – the reflection of your glory, the imprint of your being. As we depart from this place, may our lives be a joyful song, proclaiming the good news for all the world. Amen.

SHARING THE LIGHT OF CHRIST

Rev. Dr. Diaz

* HYMN #122 (*music printed in bulletin*) “Silent Night” STILLE NACHT

* CHARGE & BENEDICTION Rev. Dr. Diaz

* RECESSIONAL HYMN #134 (*music printed in bulletin*) ANTIOCH
“Joy to the World”

POSTLUDE

“Joy to the World — Carillon”

Mary Beth Bennett
Dr. Moore, *organ*



As part of ELPC's mission to extend radical hospitality to all, our full worship service is now being livestreamed on Facebook and archived at www.ELPC.church. This notice is to inform you that by being in attendance, you give permission for incidences where you appear within the video. Should you have any questions, please see one of our pastors.

Please turn off all electronic devices before the service begins.

◆ **PARTICIPANTS IN TODAY'S SERVICE**

Preaching: Rev. Dr. Michael A. Diaz
Liturgists: Rev. BJ Woodworth
Meghan Bogema, Matt, and
Emilia Battifareno
Brian, Eden, Jen and Lila Castle
Annabel Degenholtz
Sara Hackett
Jan Herzer
Bill Johnson
Taylor Reese
Musicians: Dr. Edward Alan Moore
Organist and Music Director
Cody Conley, *Violin*
Brady Conley, *Viola*
Elijah Herzer, *Clarinet*
Cantors: David Jennings Smith
Tessa Morris
Robin Thompson
Logan Williams
Acolytes: Annie and Liam Cowan
Beadles: Polly McQueen
Mario Seneca
Crucifer: Jan Herzer
Sound: Tim Benedict and Wayne Gaines

◆ **WORSHIP FLOWERS**

The poinsettia plants in the Sanctuary are in loving memory of the Honorable Andrew W. Mellon and Mr. and Mrs. Richard Beatty Mellon, sponsored by the congregation members.

◆ **SUNDAY WORSHIP**

There will be no Journey service on Sunday, Dec 29.

11 am **Sanctuary Worship.** Our largest service with a multi-cultural congregation and music from organ, piano and choir.
Dec 29 — Rev. Dr. Michael A. Diaz preaching.

◆ **WEEKDAY WORSHIP**

Taizé: Prayerful Song and Quiet Meditation

Chants and periods of meditative silence modeled after the Taizé community in France. Rev. BJ Woodworth leads this service in the Chapel.

Wednesdays, 7 pm

No service (and no Cathedral Yoga) on Dec 25 and Jan 1.

Prayer Room (*in Highland Ave hallway*)

Come to sit and pray in silence. Come to experience the quiet in the midst of the wonderful busyness.

Available everyday

◆ **WEEKLY SPIRITUAL LIFE OFFERINGS**

Contemplative Prayer on Mondays

Rev. BJ Woodworth will lead a time on Zoom of 30 minutes of communal silence and guided meditation on scripture.

Mondays, 7:30 to 8 am

Meeting ID: 959 8065 3992

Passcode: bestill

Tuesday Morning Zoom Prayer Group

Join Steve Evrard on Zoom for a time of scripture readings, responsive prayer, and interactive dialogue.

Tuesdays, 8 to 8:30 am

Meeting ID: 896 9680 6662

Passcode: 116

WELCOME VISITORS!

We are grateful to have you join us for worship this afternoon and ask you to **register your name in our red Friendship Books.**

To learn more about our programs, church activities and volunteer services, we invite you to also:

Pick up a copy of our newsletter, the *Reaching Out*, either in the Narthex or at the Hospitality Desk near the Highland Avenue doors.

Attend an *Inquirers' Class* to learn more about ELPC, Presbyterian theology, and to explore membership. Please see one of the pastors to attend, or contact Jen King for info on future classes (JenK@coh.net).

Call the Church Office (412.441.3800), or visit the ELPC website at www.ELPC.church.

#113 — ANGELS WE HAVE HEARD ON HIGH

1 An - gels we have heard on high, sweet-ly sing-ing o'er the plains,
 2 Shep-herds, why this ju - bi - lee? Why your joy - ous strains pro-long?
 3 Come to Beth - le - hem and see him whose birth the an - gels sing;

and the moun-tains in re - ply ech - o - ing their joy - ous strains.
 What the glad - some ti - dings be which in - spire your heaven - ly song?
 come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ, the Lord, the new - born King.

Refrain

Glo - ri - a

in ex - cel - sis De - o! Glo -

- ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o!

#121 — O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM

1 O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, how still we see thee lie!
 2 For Christ is born of Mar - y and, gath - ered all a - bove,
 3 How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly, the won - drous gift is given!
 4 O ho - ly child of Beth - le - hem, de - scend to us, we pray;

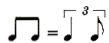
A - bove thy deep and dream - less sleep the si - lent stars go by.
 while mor - tals sleep, the an - gels keep their watch of won - dering love.
 So God im - parts to hu - man hearts the bless - ings of his heaven.
 cast out our sin and en - ter in; be born in us to - day.

Yet in thy dark streets shin - eth the ev - er - last - ing light;
 O morn - ing stars, to - geth - er pro - claim the ho - ly birth,
 No ear may hear his com - ing, but in this world of sin,
 We hear the Christ - mas an - gels the great glad ti - dings tell;

the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee to - night.
 and prais - es sing to God the king, and peace to all on earth.
 where meek souls will re - ceive him, still the dear Christ en - ters in.
 O come to us; a - bide with us, our Lord Em - man - u - el!

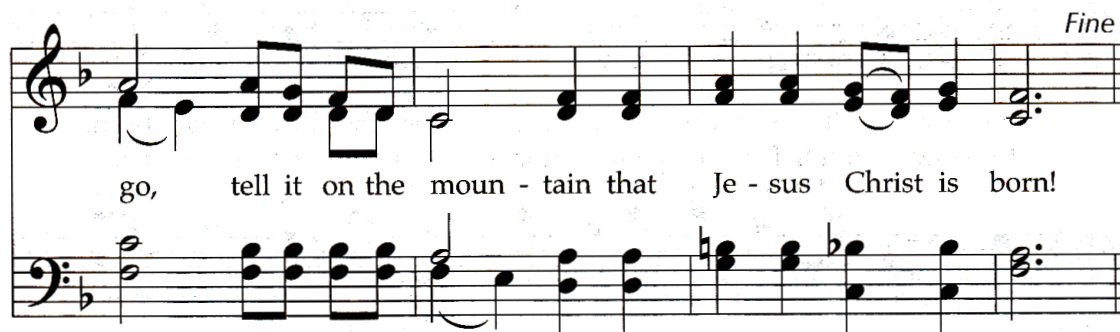
Though he was famed during his lifetime as a great preacher, no sermon Phillips Brooks ever preached has been heard or read by as many people as have sung this carol he wrote in December 1868 for the Sunday School children of Holy Trinity Episcopal Church in Philadelphia.

#136 — GO, TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN

Refrain 

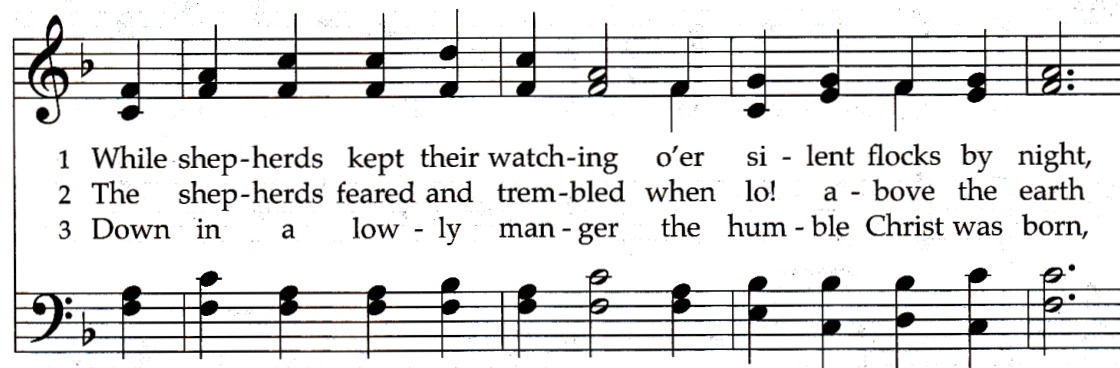


Go, tell it on the moun-tain, o-ver the hills and ev - ery - where;

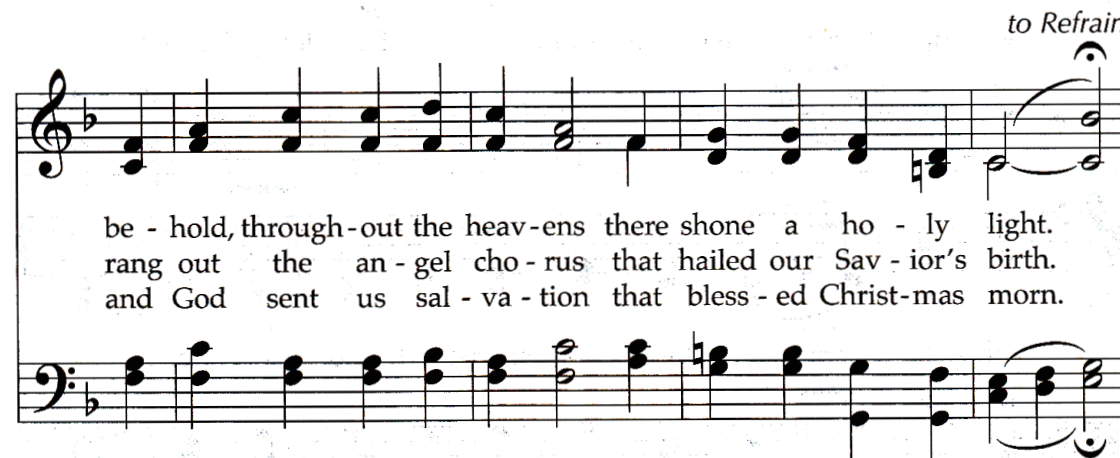


go, tell it on the moun - tain that Je - sus Christ is born!

Fine



1 While shep-herds kept their watch-ing o'er si - lent flocks by night,
2 The shep-herds feared and trem-bled when lo! a - bove the earth
3 Down in a low - ly man - ger the hum - ble Christ was born,



to Refrain

be - hold, through-out the heav-ens there shone a ho - ly light.
rang out the an - gel cho - rus that hailed our Sav - ior's birth.
and God sent us sal - va - tion that bless - ed Christ-mas morn.

Like other material from oral traditions, 19th-century African American spirituals flourished without being written down. Their refrains were their most stable parts, and narrative stanzas were often improvised to fit. These Nativity stanzas attempt to recall that tradition.

#122 — SILENT NIGHT

1 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! All is calm, all is bright
 2 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Shep - herds quake at the sight;
 3 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Son of God, love's pure light
 4 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Won - drous star, lend thy light;

'round yon vir - gin moth - er and child! Ho - ly In - fant, so ten - der and
 glo - ries stream from heav - en a - far, heav - en - ly hosts sing "Al - le - lu -
 ra - dian beams from thy ho - ly face, with the dawn of re - deem - ing
 with the an - gels let us sing Al - le - lu - ia to our

mild, sleep in heav - en - ly peace, sleep in heav - en - ly peace.
 ia: Christ the Sav - ior is born; Christ the Sav - ior is born!"
 grace, Je - sus, Lord, at thy birth, Je - sus, Lord, at thy birth.
 King: Christ the Sav - ior is born; Christ the Sav - ior is born.

GERMAN

- 1 *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!

KOREAN

- 1 *고요한 밤 거룩한 밤*
어둠에 묻힌 밤
주의 부모 앉아서
감사기도 드릴 때
아기 잘도 잔다
아기 잘도 잔다

SPANISH

- 1 *¡Noche de paz, noche de amor!*
Todo duerme en derredor,
entre los astros que esparcen su luz,
bella, anunciando al niño Jesús,
brilla la estrella de paz,
brilla la estrella de paz.

The tradition that this carol's tune was created for guitar accompaniment at its first singing on Christmas Eve 1818 seems reliable, though a recent find shows that the text was about two years old. But there is no question that this is now a favorite Christmas carol worldwide.

#134 — JOY TO THE WORLD

1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re - ceive
 2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their songs
 3 No more let sins and sor - rows grow, nor thorns in - fest
 4 He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the na -

her king; let ev - ery heart pre - pare him room,
 em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
 the ground; he comes to make his bless - ings flow
 tions prove the glo - ries of his righ - teous - ness

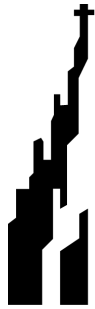
and heaven and na - ture sing, and heaven and na - ture
 re - peat the sound - ing joy, re - peat the sound - ing
 far as the curse is found, far as the curse is
 and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his
 and heaven and na - ture sing,

and

sing, and heaven, and heaven and na - ture sing.
 joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
 found, far as, far as the curse is found.
 love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.

heaven and na - ture sing,

While Isaac Watts did not write this text strictly for Christmas use, he did purposely cast his paraphrase of Psalm 98:4-9 in Christian terms, titling it "The Messiah's coming and kingdom." So "the Lord" here is Jesus Christ, rather than the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.



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