

First Sunday after Christmas
December 31, 2023



Faith Presbyterian Church
ORDER OF WORSHIP

Welcome to worship at Faith Presbyterian Church! We are glad you are joining us this morning. Whoever you are, wherever you come from, whomever you love, whatever your faith or your doubt, we welcome all whom God welcomes, and that means you. As we begin our time together, take a few deep breaths and settle in, to make the transition from getting here to being here, and to prepare your mind and body for worship.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

JOYS AND CONCERNS

GATHERING OF GOD'S PEOPLE

PRELUDE

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Judy Sperling

Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.
The brightness of God's light shines upon all the nations. All are welcomed to the brightness of God's dawn.

*Please rise in body or in spirit; unison parts are in bold.

With radiant eyes, with rejoicing hearts, we receive the abundance God gives.
With our gifts, with our very selves, we worship God.

***HYMN 119** *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*

MENDELSSOHN

page 7

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God of the ages, our beginning and our end, it's a day for looking at the past, what we've done and where we've been this year. It doesn't take long for us to recall the missteps and the mistakes and the many times we missed the mark. Looking back, we see our sins. We also see your faithfulness. So we offer our confession with a measure of hope that your mercy will cleanse us yet again so that we might follow Jesus Christ into the future you have prepared.

Amen.

Kyrie 121 *O Little Town of Bethlehem (verse 4)*

ST. LOUIS

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!

Assurance of Grace

3 Good Chris-tian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;
now ye need not fear the grave: Je - sus Christ was born to save!
Calls you one and calls you all to gain the ev - er - last - ing hall.
Christ was born to save! Christ was born to save!

***PASSING THE PEACE**

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

PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

OLD TESTAMENT READING Isaiah 61:10- 62:3

I will greatly rejoice in the Lord,
my whole being shall exult in my God;
for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation,

he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,
as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.
For as the earth brings forth its shoots,
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up,
so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise
to spring up before all the nations.

For Zion's sake I will not keep silent,
and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest,
until her vindication shines out like the dawn,
and her salvation like a burning torch.
The nations shall see your vindication,
and all the kings your glory;
and you shall be called by a new name
that the mouth of the Lord will give.
You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the Lord,
and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

NEW TESTAMENT READING Romans 12:1-8

I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.

For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think, but to think with sober judgement, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.

This is the word of God, for the people of God.
Thanks be to God.

SERMON

Through a Different Lens

Rev. David C. Harris

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

***HYMN 144** *In the Bleak Midwinter*

CRANHAM

page 8

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

If you wish to contribute online, please scan the QR code with your mobile device to be directed to Faith's online giving site.



OFFERTORY

PRAYER OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

SENDING GOD'S PEOPLE INTO THE WORLD

***CAROL 136** *Go, Tell It on the Mountain*

GO TELL IT

page 9

***CHARGE AND BLESSING**

POSTLUDE

LEADING WORSHIP TODAY

Rev. David C. Harris, *Guest Preacher*

Vivian V. Slacum, *Guest Musician*

Judy Sperling, *Liturgist*

Robin Nemser, *Elder of the Day*

Carl & Kristin Herber, *Ushers*

****Joys and Concerns:** We are a community who prays with and for each other. There is a book in the narthex where you may write your joys and concerns, to be included in the Prayers of the People and shared in our weekly prayer chain email. If you would like to be added to the prayer chain email: faithchurchbalt@gmail.com.

This week we pray for:

Faith's homebound members and
those receiving long-term care.
Our partners in Cuba

Victims of gun violence
The people of Ukraine, Israel, Palestine, Sudan,
and all those who suffer from war and disaster.

WELCOME to Faith Presbyterian Church! If you are visiting with us this morning, we hope you find our worship to be meaningful - your presence enriches our community. If you are seeking a church home, we hope you will return soon so that we might get to know you better. To learn about

ways to get engaged in the life of Faith, check out our website, www.faithpcbalt.org, and speak with our pastor, Rev. Cat Goodrich, cgoodrich@faithpcbalt.org.

KIDS are welcome at Faith! Our PRAYGROUND at the front of the sanctuary is for children 6 and younger during worship. There are books and quiet activities to keep hands busy so ears can listen, and it's close to the action so that our youngest members can experience the beauty of worship in a space that's just for them.

Sign up for our weekly **News & Notes** email by completing the visitor card or go to the website: faithpcbalt.org and navigate to "Contact Us."

The Forum: Faith formation gathering for youth and adults, *Sundays, 9:15 in the Woodmont Room and on Zoom.* cgoodrich@faithpcbalt.org! There will be no Forum on December 24 and 31.

January Forum Schedule

- 1/7 - New Year's Resolutions (John and Deb Colmers)
- 1/14 - Cuba Partnership (Cuba team)
- 1/21 & 1/28 - Matthew 25 (John Colmers)

February Forum Schedule

Living the Questions is an open-minded alternative to studies that attempt to give participants all the answers. Here we'll look at essential questions in the Christian faith and explore what's next for Christianity. The class will be facilitated by Rev. Dr. Jerrett L. Hansen, a retired pastor of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

- 2/4 - Taking the Bible Seriously
- 2/11 - Thinking Theologically
- 2/18 - The Myth of Redemptive Violence
- 2/25 - Stories of Creation

Wednesday Bible Study 11:00 a.m. on Zoom Wednesday - Join Cat every Wednesday to reflect on the coming Sunday's lectionary passage. All are welcome! Meeting ID: 818 8551 6595; passcode: 716331

Children's Sunday School has begun. On Sunday mornings, after the Moment with Faith Kids, kids ages 4 and up are invited to explore the passage of the day with games, crafts, and other activities. They will return at the end of worship to the sanctuary.

ROPAGOFA Youth Group meets every third Sunday at 5:30! Join young people from Faith, Govans, and Roland Park churches to build a durable faith through fun, games, and encountering God together. The next gathering will be – **January 21 at Faith.**

119 Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

1 Hark! The her - ald an-gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born king.
 2 Christ, by high - est heaven-a-dored, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord,
 3 Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the sun of righ-teous-ness!

Peace on earth and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled!"
 late in time be-hold him come, off-spring of the vir-gin's womb.
 Light and life to all he brings, risen with heal - ing in his wings.

Joy - ful, all ye na - tions, rise; join the tri-umph of the skies;
 Veiled in flesh the God-head see; hail the in-car - nate de - i - ty,
 Mild he lays his glo - ry by, born that we no more may die,

with the an-gel - ic host pro-claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"
 pleased in flesh with us to dwell, Je - sus, our Em-man - u - el.
 born to raise us from the earth, born to give us sec - ond birth.

Hark! The her - ald an-gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born king!"

In the Bleak Midwinter 144

1 In the bleak mid-winter, frost-y wind made moan;
 2 Our God, heaven can-not hold him, nor earth sus-tain;
 3 An-gels and arch-an-gels may have gath-ered there;
 4 What can I give him, poor as I am?

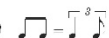
earth stood hard as i-ron, wa-ter like a stone;
 heaven and earth shall flee a-way when he comes to reign:
 cher-u-bim and ser-a-phim thronged the air;
 If I were a shep-herd, I would bring a lamb;

snow had fall-en, snow on snow, snow on snow,
 in the bleak mid-win-ter a sta-ble place suf-ficed
 but his moth-er on-ly, in her maid-en bliss,
 if I were a wise man, I would do my part;

‡ in the bleak mid-win-ter, long a-go.
 the Lord God in-car-nate, Je-sus Christ.
 ‡ wor-shipped the be-lov-ed with a kiss.
 yet what I can I give him: give my heart.

Though this text describes winter weather in England rather than in Palestine, the poet is using familiar surroundings as a means of making the Nativity more immediate and personal. The tune name honors a Gloucestershire village near the composer's birthplace in Cheltenham.

136 Go, Tell It on the Mountain

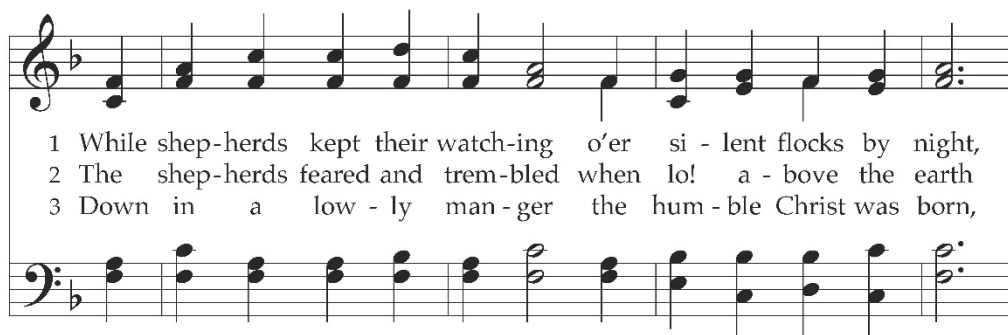
Refrain 



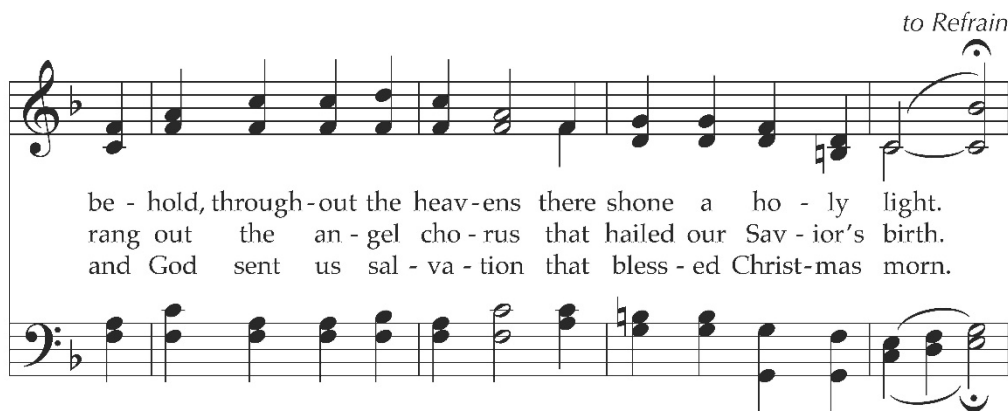
Go, tell it on the moun-tain, o-ver the hills and ev - ery - where;



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



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.