



**FARMINGTON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
SERVICE OF DIVINE WORSHIP**

**Christmas Eve  
December 24, 2023**

Worship Online at 11:00am Sunday Mornings

[www.farmingtonpres.org](http://www.farmingtonpres.org)

Click "Worship Together"

**ASSEMBLE IN GOD'S NAME**

PRAYER OF PREPARATION

Lord Jesus Christ, we celebrate your coming. You came 2,000 years ago, and you come even now, into a weary world, transforming our weariness into joy. Your light entered the world, shining in the darkness, and nothing could overcome it. We give thanks this night for the things in our lives that spark joy, for each glimpse of beauty, and each glint of your glory. Even as we gather to celebrate, we know that for far too many, the world is still not as it should be. So we pray: Come, Lord Jesus, come. We are making space in our lives for love to be born. Amen.

WELCOME

PRELUDE

Michael Helman

Pastorale on "Angels We Have Heard on High"

\*CALL TO WORSHIP

The impossible is about to happen in a stable. The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;

**Those who lived in a land of deep darkness, on them has the light shined!**

This is the night when creation stood still and held its breath, for God was doing the most unbelievable, dangerous thing.

**This is the night when God embraced humanity from the inside, as one of us, from birth to death.**

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

**And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth.**

\*HYMN OF PRAISE – No. 113 “Angels We Have Heard on High”

**Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o’er the plains,  
and the mountains in reply echoing their joyous strains.  
*Gloria in excelsis Deo!***

**Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains  
prolong? What the gladsome tidings be which inspire your  
heavenly song? *Refrain***

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

*(Please be seated.)*

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

The Wann Family

CALL TO RECONCILIATION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**Loving Christ, Scripture tells us that you were born in a stable  
because there was no room in the inn. There was no room for  
a desperate husband, no room for a woman in need, no room  
for an innocent baby. Forgive us.**

**We should have learned our lesson by now, but just as others  
turned their backs on you, we continue to turn our backs to  
others. Teach us to see you in them. Teach us that when we  
make room for one another we are making room for you.  
Carve out space in our hearts to love as you love. We want to  
be part of your coming in the world. Guide us, we pray.**

*(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

**I believe in God whose light shines in the darkness, and the darkness can never smother it.**

**I believe that on a night like this night in Bethlehem there was born a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord.**

**I believe in the Word who has become incarnate, our very flesh and blood, yet full of grace and truth.**

**I believe in the blessed appearing of the salvation of our God, that is for the happiness of all people.**

**I believe in his name as Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of peace; of the increase of his rule and of his unique peace, there will be no end. The zeal of the God of hosts will do this.**

**This I surely believe!**

**PROCLAIM GOD’S WORD**

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

**Loving God, we have heard this story before - the story of a star in the sky and a baby laid in a manger.**

We have heard this story before – passed down in hopeful whispers through the generations.

**So this night, as we lean our hearts and our ears closer to you, we ask that you would make room in our souls to hear this story again.**

Make room for us in awe. Make room for us in wonder. Make room for heartache and compassion. Make room in our hearts for you.

**Draw us into the story, that we might hear the truths of this ancient Word as if it were the first time. For we know that you are still speaking.**

Speak to us again this night. We are listening. We are already making room. Amen.

THE CHRISTMAS STORY

Luke 2:1-20<sup>†</sup>

And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. And Joseph also

went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn. And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

This is the Word of the Lord!

**Thanks be to God!**

RESPONSE NO. 587 “Alleluia!”

**Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!**

SERMON “We Make Room”

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 “Lullaby” arr. Hal Hopson

\*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.**

INVITATION TO THE LORD’S TABLE

PRAYER OF GREAT THANKSGIVING

God is with us.

**We are not alone.**

Christ is present here.

**The Spirit moves among us.**

Let us give thanks to God.

**We give thanks in memory and in hope...**

SUNG RESPONSES

**O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,  
That mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.**

**Glorious now behold him arise, King and God and Sacrifice:  
Alleluia! Alleluia! sounds through the earth and skies.**

**O star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright,  
Westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light!**

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.

#### 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.**

#### SHARING THE BREAD AND THE CUP

#### LITANY OF LIGHT

Emmanuel, God-with-us,  
interrupt and open our eyes to the wonder of this night,  
that we might catch a glimpse of your glory.

**May your light shine!**

Emmanuel, God-with-us,  
interrupt and soften our hearts to the message of this hour,  
that we might prepare for your coming.

**May your light shine!**

Emmanuel, God-with-us,  
interrupt and open our minds to truly listen to all  
that we might hear your voice cry out from many lips.

**May your light shine!**

Emmanuel, God-with-us,  
with eyes open, hearts softened, minds listening, and spirits full,  
we rejoice that you interrupt and transform our world  
that we might respond to your message of love.

**May your light shine! Amen.**

As we pray that the light of Emmanuel would shine in our dark world, we acknowledge that we are the bearers of the light. The light of Christ shines in our world only as we allow it to shine in us.

#### LIGHTING THE CANDLES

\*HYMN NO. 122 "Silent Night, Holy Night!"

**Silent night, holy night! All is calm, all is bright 'round you virgin mother and child! Holy Infant, so tender and mild sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.**

Silent night, holy night! Shepherds quake at the sight; glories stream from heaven afar, heavenly hosts sing “Al-le-lu-ia: Christ the Savior is born; Christ the Savior is born!”

Silent night, holy night! Son of God, love’s pure light radiant beams from thy holy face, with the dawn of redeeming grace, Jesus, Lord, at thy birth, Jesus, Lord at thy birth.

Silent night, holy night! Wondrous star, lend thy light; with the angels let us sing Al-le-lu-ia to our King: Christ the Savior is born; Christ the Savior is born.

\*INVITATION, CHARGE AND BLESSING

\*SENDING FORTH HYMN – No. 134 “Joy to the World” Verses 1 & 4  
**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.**

**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.**

\*POSTLUDE “Joy to the World” arr. Jan Bender

\*Stand as able. **Bold Type** – congregation in unison

†King James Version, 1604.

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**Participating in the service today:**

Rev. Rebecca Luter, Pastor  
Doug Barr, Director of Christian Education  
Jim Thrash, Director of Music  
Tom Bryant, Accompanist  
Chris Luter, Liturgist  
Mike Colley and John Hazen, Ushers  
Laurinda Ingram, Cooper Patterson, Pat Sherman,  
Charlie Smithers, Shelley Wann, Communion Servers  
Charlotte Moots, Acolyte  
Chancel Choir

# 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](http://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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:rluter@farmingtonpres.org).

## Happenings AT FARMINGTON PRESBYTERIAN

### This Week

**Holiday Schedule** The Church Office and Day School will be closed December 25-29<sup>th</sup>. 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 2023 Giving Statements be postmarked by December 31, 2023. Gifts made in worship on December 31<sup>st</sup> will be applied to your 2023 Giving Statement.

**Advent Wreath Lighting** Your family is invited to participate in worship by lighting the Advent Wreath. Each year, we mark the weeks until Christmas by lighting the candles of hope, peace, joy, and love in anticipation of lighting the Christ Candle on Christmas Eve. Please let Rev. Rebecca know that you would like to light the candles on: December 31<sup>st</sup>.

### Next Sunday

**No Youth and Children Sunday School** for remainder of December. We will begin again in January 2024.

### Announcements

**Potluck Lunch** will be Sunday, January 7<sup>th</sup> following worship. Please bring a dish to share. What a wonderful time to begin fellowship for the New Year.

**Boxing of the Green** will be Sunday, January 7<sup>th</sup> after Potluck Lunch. Join us as we “wrap up” Christmas 2023!



**Angel Tree Collection** Please stop by the Angel Tree in the Fellowship Hall to pull off a collection baby item to shop for and return to the tree. Diapers, blankets, etc. These items will be donated to Room in the Inn and Family Inn.

**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.

**Fellowship Coffee** Please consider signing up to host Fellowship Coffee on our website to provide refreshments following worship, [www.farmingtonpres.org](http://www.farmingtonpres.org) Simply-something sweet and something salty.

**2024 Flower Calendar** Giving flowers for worship is a way to remember those we love and celebrate significant moments in our lives. You may sign up on our website under “Sign-ups.”

**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](mailto:church@farmingtonpres.org) and let us know.

**Communications from the Church** If you do not get the Happenings email each week and would like to, please email and let us know. We also send text reminders about upcoming Farmington events. You can get those by texting “@farmfam” to “81010.”

**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...** Thank you to all who baked and all who purchased sweets at the PW Holiday Bake Sale. \$750 was raised for mission projects in 2024!

**Remember in Prayer...** Our Farmington Family, Session and Staff; Jackie Baker, Barbara Beard, Kevin Beard, Bonnie Blair, Betty Boyd, Rev. Margaret Burnett, Kitty Cannon, Jeanne Carr, Ralph Carr, Judith Cassidy, Mary Lou Collins, Laurie Fisher, Mark Fisher, Skip Flannery, Bill Harrington, Martha Hart, Vanessa Howard, Gary Hutchins, Anthony Jones, Bill Knight, Logan Knight, Ches Latham, Iris Lawing, Dawn McKenzie, Faye McKenzie, Sara Millar, Susan Odom, Nancy & Dennis Palmer, Sarah Pointer, Penelope Read, Bill Renfrow, Jack Scherer, JoAnne Simpkins, Patti Simpkins, Williams Stevens, Kathy VanderEcken, Jim Waller, Kasi Wann, Frank Whited, Faye Woods, and from our Presbytery: First Presbyterian Church, McKenzie, TN.

**Sympathies...** to the family and friends of Cathy Burch, mother-in-law of Gretchen Burch, to the family and friends of Bob Pointer, uncle of Bo

Bradham, and to the family and friends of Katherine Patrick, grandmother of Chris Luter.



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

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