



**FARMINGTON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
SERVICE OF DIVINE WORSHIP**

**Fourth Sunday of Advent
December 24, 2023**

Worship Online at 11:00am Sunday Mornings

www.farmingtonpres.org

Click "Worship Together"

ASSEMBLE IN GOD'S NAME

PRAYER OF PREPARATION

Lord Jesus Christ, we await your coming. We wait filled with hope, knowing that in the fullness of time your light will shine in the darkness and confident that the darkness will never overcome it. We wait anticipating your peace, believing that one day justice will roll in like the tide and peace will be left in its wake. We await joy with expectation, recognizing that contentment comes and goes, happiness ebbs and flows, but our joy is like a spring bubbling up from within as we realize the depth of your love for us. We wait your coming, Lord Jesus, making the space in our lives where love might be born. Amen.

WELCOME

PRELUDE "Cradle Song"

Alice Jordan

*CALL TO WORSHIP

It is almost Christmas, and so we gather in expectation!

We come, ready to sing the story of God coming to us.

Let us stand in awe. Let us worship God with wonder.

We will allow ourselves to be amazed.

Our God commands the chaos of water –

Parting the Red Sea, bringing water from a rock, and walking on the Sea of Galilee.

Our God provides all that is necessary for abundant life –

Providing quail and manna in the dessert, a land flowing with milk and honey, and the Bread of Life and the Cup of Salvation.

Our God directs the orbit of the stars in the sky and sparks the dreams of our hearts.

Nothing is impossible with God.

*HYMN OF PRAISE – No. 143 “Angels, from the Realms of Glory”

Angels, from the realms of glory, wing your flight o’er all the earth; you, who sang creation’s story now proclaim Messiah’s birth: come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn king!

Shepherds. In the fields abiding, watching o’er your flocks by night, God with us is now residing yonder shines the infant light: come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn king!

Sages, leave your contemplations; brighter visions beam afar; seek the great desire of nations; you have seen his natal star: come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn king!

All creation, join in praising God the Father, Spirit, Son, evermore your voices raising to the eternal Three in One: come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn king!

(Please be seated.)

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

Pat Sherman and family

CALL TO RECONCILIATION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Holy God, somewhere in our childhood we face pressure to outgrow awe. We turn into adults who obsess over data and facts. We praise those who have answers, and assume that wonder is an answerless game. Forgive us for closing that door to you. Remind us that the kingdom of God belongs to those who come with childlike faith. Teach us the ways of awe and wonder. So that when we find ourselves speechless like Zechariah, our first words will be praise. So that when we find ourselves overwhelmed like Mary, our first words will be acceptance. So that when we find ourselves amazed like the shepherds, our first thought will be to run to worship you. With hearts wide open, 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

We believe in Jesus Christ, born to us all so long ago in Bethlehem of Judea.

We believe in Him whose birth glorified Bethlehem, but for whom there was no room in the inn.

We believe in Him whose guiding star can bring together the humble and wise everywhere.

We believe in Him who walked among the common people, and was welcomed by those with open minds and yearning hearts.

We believe in Him whose life changed the course of history, over whom kings had no power, whose life humbled the proud, toppled the mighty, and elevated those of low degree.

We believe in Him whose love changed human hearts, and whose life and death on the cross proved that it is more important to serve than to be served.

We believe in Him who is the Prince of Peace, whose spirit makes for justice and peace among all peoples.

We believe in Him who is Emmanuel, whose presence changes the world through the power of love, faith and hope.

THROUGH CHILDREN’S EYES

Charlie Smithers

All children are invited to come to the Chancel steps.

Afterward, young children may remain or proceed to the nursery.

Worship bags are available beside the entrance to the Sanctuary.

PROCLAIM GOD’S WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

FIRST READING

Psalm 126

When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who dreamed. Our mouths were filled with laughter, our tongues with songs of joy. Then it was said among the nations, The LORD has done great things for them. The LORD has done great things for us, and we are filled with joy. Restore our fortunes, LORD, like streams in the Negev. Those who sow with tears will reap with songs of joy. Those who go out weeping, carrying seed to sow, will return with songs of joy, carrying sheaves with them.

This is the Word of the Lord!

Thanks be to God!

SECOND READING

Luke 1:46-56

And Mary said: My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. From now on all generations will call me blessed, for the Mighty One has done great things for me--holy is his name. His mercy extends to those who fear him, from generation to generation. He has performed mighty deeds with his arm; he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts. He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble. He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty. He has helped his servant Israel, remembering to be merciful to Abraham and his descendants forever, just as he promised our ancestors. Mary stayed with Elizabeth for about three months and then returned home.

This is the Word of the Lord!

Thanks be to God!

RESPONSE NO. 587 "Alleluia!"

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

SERMON "Like Those Who Dreamed"

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 “Love Has Come” French Carol

*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

Holy God, we offer you these gifts and our lives. Use them, and us, to change the world so that it is more like you intend. Show us opportunities to share hope, to establish peace, to bring joy, and to express love as we make room in our lives for Jesus’s coming even now. Amen.

*HYMN - No. 144 “In the Bleak Midwinter” Verse 4
What can I give him, poor as I am? If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb; if I were a wise man, I would do my part; yet what I can I give him: give him my heart.

*BLESSING AND CHARGE

*SENDING FORTH HYMN - No. 136 Verse 3
“Go, Tell It on the Mountain”

Go, tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere; go tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born!

Down in a lowly manger the humble Christ was born, and God sent us salvation that blessed Christmas morn. *Refrain*

*POSTLUDE Michael Helman
Trumpet Tune on “Angels We Have Heard on High”

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

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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
Doug Barr, Director of Christian Education
Jim Thrash, Director of Music
Tom Bryant, Accompanist
Chris Luter, Liturgist
Charlie Smithers, Children's Moment
Roland Mittag and Nadine Oest, Ushers
Delilah Davis, 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

Need to give us information? Want to ask a question? Looking for assistance with signing up? Email us at: 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. 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.

Happenings AT FARMINGTON PRESBYTERIAN

This Sunday

Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion is today, Sunday, December 24th at 5pm. Come to worship the newborn King!

This Week

Holiday Schedule The Church Office and Day School will be closed December 25-29th. 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 31st 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 31st.

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 7th 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 7th 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 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 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.

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Germantown, TN 38139
901-754-2794 www.farmingtonpres.org