



**FARMINGTON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
SERVICE OF DIVINE WORSHIP**

**First Sunday after Christmas
December 31, 2023**

Worship Online at 11:00am Sunday Mornings

www.farmingtonpres.org

Click "Worship Together"

ASSEMBLE IN GOD'S NAME

PRAYER OF PREPARATION

"Muscle Memory"

When the world falls apart around me,
when the rug is pulled,
and the house is on fire,
when all I can do

is swallow the cry in my throat,
take me to the Table.

Tell me how people have fed each other.

Tell me how they've torn the bread
with wrinkled hands
and children's hands.

Tell me how they've said, *This love is for you*,
as they've looked you in the eye.

Then take me to the Font.

Float my hands in the pool.

Let me feel weightless.

Tell me to leave my burdens there.

Then take me to the front doors.

Remind me how we throw them open.

Take me to the creaky pews,
pews that have held the straightened spines and silent prayers of so
many.

Take me to church.

Move me through the rituals.

Tell me why it matters,
so that next time, when someone else's world falls apart,

I will have the muscle memory to share.

-Rev. Sarah Are Speed

WELCOME

PRELUDE “O Little Town of Bethlehem” Ralph Vaughan Williams

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Every year we celebrate Christmas.

Every month we share in the breaking of bread.

Every week we gather for worship.

Every day we count our blessings.

Every minute God is near.

Yes, every minute God is near.

These are the rituals of our faith.

These are the rhythms of our worship.

*HYMN OF PRAISE – No. 132 “Good Christian Friends, Rejoice”

**Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice;
give ye heed to what we say: Jesus Christ is born today; ox
and ass before him bow, and he is in the manger now. Christ
is born today! Christ is born today!**

**Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice;
now ye hear of endless bliss: Jesus Christ was born for this!
He has opened heaven’s door, and we are blest forevermore.
Christ was born for this! Christ was born for this!**

**Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice;
now ye need not fear the grave: Jesus Christ was born to save!
Calls you one and calls you all to gain the everlasting hall.
Christ was born to save! Christ was born to save!**

(Please be seated.)

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

Jamie & Carol Jameson

CALL TO RECONCILIATION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God of rhythms and patterns, we confess that our faith would not be what it is without rituals. We have to return to worship to hear old, familiar stories again and again. Each time you meet us here and speak to us anew. We remember our baptism and are thankful that you claim us as your own. We come to your Table hungry and thirsty, and you feed us. We are grateful. We confess that without these rhythms and rituals, the patterns of our lives would quickly begin to

unravel. It would not be long before we lost our way. Forgive our vulnerability to the ways of this world and our pride to think we can make it on our own. Remind us that the ordinary rhythm of ritual anchors us in you.

(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 The Apostles’ Creed
I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

THROUGH CHILDREN’S EYES Rev. Rebecca Luter

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

The LORD said to Moses, Consecrate to me every firstborn male. The first offspring of every womb among the Israelites belongs to me, whether human or animal. Then Moses said to the people, Commemorate this day, the day you came out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery, because the LORD brought you out of it with a mighty hand. Eat nothing containing yeast. Today, in the month of Aviv, you are leaving. When the LORD brings you into the land of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Hivites and Jebusites—the land he swore to your ancestors to give you, a land flowing with milk and honey—you are to observe this ceremony in this month: For seven days eat bread made without yeast and on the seventh day hold a festival to the LORD. Eat unleavened bread during those seven days; nothing with yeast in it is to be seen among you, nor shall any yeast be seen anywhere within your borders. On that day tell your son, I do this because of what the LORD did for me when I came out of Egypt. This observance will be for you like a sign on your hand and a reminder on your forehead that this law of the LORD is to be on your lips. For the LORD brought you out of Egypt with his mighty hand. You must keep this ordinance at the appointed time year after year. After the LORD brings you into the land of the Canaanites and gives it to you, as he promised on oath to you and your ancestors, you are to give over to the LORD the first offspring of every womb. All the firstborn males of your livestock belong to the LORD. Redeem with a lamb every firstborn donkey, but if you do not redeem it, break its neck. Redeem every firstborn among your sons. In days to come, when your son asks you, What does this mean? say to him, With a mighty hand the LORD brought us out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. When Pharaoh stubbornly refused to let us go, the LORD killed the firstborn of both people and animals in Egypt. This is why I sacrifice to the LORD the first male offspring of every womb and redeem each of my firstborn sons. And it will be like a sign on your hand and a symbol on your forehead that the LORD brought us out of Egypt with his mighty hand.

This is the Word of the Lord!

Thanks be to God!

On the eighth day, when it was time to circumcise the child, he was named Jesus, the name the angel had given him before he was

conceived. When the time came for the purification rites required by the Law of Moses, Joseph and Mary took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, Every firstborn male is to be consecrated to the Lord), and to offer a sacrifice in keeping with what is said in the Law of the Lord: a pair of doves or two young pigeons. Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying: Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you may now dismiss^[e] your servant in peace. For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the sight of all nations: a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of your people Israel. The child's father and mother marveled at what was said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too. There was also a prophet, Anna, the daughter of Penuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, and then was a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying. Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.

This is the Word of the Lord!

Thanks be to God!

RESPONSE NO. 587 "Alleluia!"

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

SERMON "Rooted in Ritual"

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 “On Christmas Night All Christians Sing”

*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 welcome Christ born anew in our lives even now. Amen.

*HYMN - No. 146 “Gentle Mary Laid Her Child”

Gentle Mary laid her child lowly in a manger; there he lay, the undefiled, to the world a stranger. Such a babe in such a place, can he be the Savior? Ask the saved of all the race who have found his favor.

Angels sang about his birth; wise men sought and found him; heaven’s star shone brightly forth, glory all around him. Shepherds saw the wondrous sight, heard the angels singing; all the plains were lit that night; all the hills were ringing.

Gentle Mary laid her child lowly in a manger; he is still the undefiled, but no more a stranger. Son of God, of humble birth, beautiful the story; praise his name in all the earth; hail the King of glory!

*BLESSING AND CHARGE

*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 “Sussex Carol”

Quentin Thomas

*Stand as able.

Bold Type – congregation in unison

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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
Pat Sherman, Liturgist
Rev. Rebecca Luter, Children’s Moment
Paula Patterson and Billy Wann, Ushers
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 Week

Holiday Schedule The Church Office and Day School will be closed Monday, January 1st. 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 today, December 31st, will be applied to your 2023 Giving Statement.

Next Sunday

Children's Sunday School will study the Baptism of Jesus. 10-10:45am in classroom A6.

Youth Sunday School will continue our walk through the Hebrews Scriptures, imagining ourselves in the stories to see what God is revealing. 10-10:45am in the Youth Room.

Youth Fellowship will return on the eve of “The King’s” birthday, January 7th, for an Elvis inspired discussion and trivia from 2-4pm.

Potluck Lunch next 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 next Sunday, January 7th, after Potluck Lunch. Join us as we “wrap up” Christmas 2023!

Announcements

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...we remember that Christmas is not only about us making room for Jesus Christ in our lives, but also about the good news that in coming to us, Jesus makes room for us to move in with God. You are God’s child. You belong. You are loved.

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, Bill Renfrow, Jack Scherer, JoAnne Simpkins, Patti Simpkins, Williams Stevens, Kathy VanderEcken, Jim Waller, Kasi Wann, Frank Whited, Faye Woods, and from our Presbytery: Marl Bluff Church, Reagan, TN.

Sympathies... to the family and friends of Bob Pointer, uncle of Bo Bradham, to the family and friends of Katherine Patrick, grandmother of Chris Luter, to the family and friends of Edith Langstone, family of Bonnie Schwartz, and to the family and friends of Lorraine Howarth, former member of Farmington Presbyterian.



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

FARMINGTON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
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