



First Sunday of Christmas



December 26, 2021

*Draw near to God
for God is waiting for you.*

* indicates where the congregation is to stand if able
italic type is spoken by the liturgist – bold is spoken by the congregation

PRELUDE

CALL TO WORSHIP The Incarnation from "Cloth for the Cradle" by the Wild Goose Worship Group

**HYMN #143* Angels, from the Realms of Glory

1. 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!
2. 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!
3. 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!
4. 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!

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION AND BROKENNESS

Lord, it's only the day after the Christmas celebration and we are exhausted. People have come and gone; gatherings are winding down; we are being reminded of the "normalcy" of life returning to us. We don't want to go there just yet. We want to linger in the warmth of the season. Forgive us when we don't seem to feel your warmth in our lives all the time. Forgive us when we assign warmth only to Christmas, and then to Easter and seem to dwell on the mundane the rest of the time. Give us courage to live as people of the Light, those who find your comforting, encouraging presence in our lives at all times. Strengthen us for joyful service in your name. Amen.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE AND BLESSING

... Jesus died for me. Jesus forgives me. Jesus loves me. Jesus is good to me. Amen.

**GLORIA PATRI*

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON Psalm 148

¹ Praise the Lord!

Praise the Lord from the heavens;
praise him in the heights!

- ² Praise him, all his angels;
praise him, all his host!
- ³ Praise him, sun and moon;
praise him, all you shining stars!
- ⁴ Praise him, you highest heavens,
and you waters above the heavens!
- ⁵ Let them praise the name of the Lord,
for he commanded and they were created.
- ⁶ He established them forever and ever;
he fixed their bounds, which cannot be passed.^[a]
- ⁷ Praise the Lord from the earth,
you sea monsters and all deeps,
- ⁸ fire and hail, snow and frost,
stormy wind fulfilling his command!
- ⁹ Mountains and all hills,
fruit trees and all cedars!
- ¹⁰ Wild animals and all cattle,
creeping things and flying birds!
- ¹¹ Kings of the earth and all peoples,
princes and all rulers of the earth!
- ¹² Young men and women alike,
old and young together!
- ¹³ Let them praise the name of the Lord,
for his name alone is exalted;
his glory is above earth and heaven.
- ¹⁴ He has raised up a horn for his people,
praise for all his faithful,
for the people of Israel who are close to him.

Praise the Lord!

*HYMN #144 In the Bleak Midwinter

1. In the bleak midwinter, frosty wind made moan; earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone;
snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow, in the bleak midwinter, long ago.
2. Our God, heaven cannot hold him, nor earth sustain; heaven and earth shall flee away when he comes to reign:
in the bleak midwinter a stable place sufficed the Lord God incarnate, Jesus Christ.
3. Angels and archangels may have gathered there; cherubim and seraphim thronged the air:
but his mother only, in her maiden bliss, worshiped the beloved with a kiss.
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 give him: give my heart.

UNWRAPPING THE CHRISTMAS STORY

The Gift of Mary *“Blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord.” Mary said, ‘My soul magnifies the Lord.’”* – Luke 1:45-46

The Gift of Joseph *“Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, ‘Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.’”* – Matthew 1:19-21

The Gift of the Innkeeper *“And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.”* – Luke 2:6-7

**HYMN #140* Once in Royal David’s City

1. Once in royal David’s city stood a lowly cattle shed, where a mother laid her baby in a manger for his bed: Mary was that mother mild; Jesus Christ, her little child.

2. He came down to earth from heaven who is God and Lord of all, and his shelter was a stable, and his cradle was a stall; with the poor and meek and lowly, lived on earth our Savior holy.

3. Jesus is our childhood’s pattern; day by day like us he grew; he was little weak and helpless; tears and smiles like us he knew; and he feels for all our sadness, and he shares in all our gladness.

4. And our eyes at last shall see him, through his own redeeming love; for that child so dear and gentle is our Lord in heaven above; and he leads his children on to the place where he is gone.

The Gift of the Stable *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him.”*
– John 1:1, 10

The Gift of the Shepherds *“In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then the angel of the Lord stood among them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see – I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord.”*
– Luke 2:8-11

**HYMN #135* There’s a Star in the East

1. There’s a star in the east on Christmas morn. Rise up, shepherd, and follow.
It will lead to the place where the Christ is born. Rise up, shepherd, and follow.

Refrain: Follow, follow; rise up, shepherd, and follow. Follow the star of Bethlehem. Rise up shepherd and follow

2. If you take good heed to the angel’s words, rise up, shepherd, and follow.
You’ll forget your flocks; you’ll forget your herds. Rise up, shepherd, and follow. *Refrain*

RECOGNITION OF THE OFFERING

**DOXOLOGY*

Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise him, all creatures here below. Praise him above, ye heavenly hosts. Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

**PRAYER OF DEDICATION*

You bless us with an abundance of gifts, God of this holy season, not as a reward for doing good, but as a means to reach out with healing to the broken, to clothe those who shiver in winter, and to bless others with the hope which has been ours. As we offer our gifts to you, we do so in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Gift of the Messiah *“For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”*
-- Isaiah 9:6

JOYS AND CONCERNS

PASTORAL PRAYER AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who is 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.

**HYMN #Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*

1. Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king. Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!" Joyful, all ye nations, rise; join the triumph of the skies; with the angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king!"

2. Christ, by highest heaven adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord, late in time behold him come, offspring of the virgin's womb. Veiled in flesh the God-head see; hail the incarnate deity, pleased in flesh with us to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel.
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king!"

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!"

**BENEDICTION*

POSTLUDE

ANNOUNCEMENTS: December 24, 2021

God is our refuge and strength



Mayfield, Ky., Dec. 12, 2021. Courtesy of State Farm (© 97.2.0)

Special offering: As night fell on December 10, a horrific line of powerful tornadoes ripped across several states, ending the lives of more than 100 people and wreaking devastation across many communities by the time morning had broken. One of these tornadoes was on the ground for a terrifying and unprecedented 250 miles, more than 200 of those miles in Kentucky alone, where the town of Mayfield saw the catastrophic destruction of much of the downtown area, including the Presbyterian, Methodist and Baptist churches. In the wake of these terrible and catastrophic storms, it is the

role of ordinary people of faith like us to shine as light in this bleakest of winters. We are called to be the hands and feet of God as we reach out to shelter, feed, care for and help rebuild the lives of those who have lost loved ones, homes, work and a sense of safety as a result of the tornadoes. We are invited to stand with them — and to stand together — bearing witness by our gifts and prayers that God is indeed incarnate among us, no matter what.

If you are able, please make a donation to assist those in need following this storm. Please mark your gift "Tornado Relief." All the contributions will be sent to the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance who are already on the ground in the areas of the recent devastation providing much needed help. This special offering will continue through January 2, 2022.

Office closed Monday December 27, 2021.

An evening of Fun, Fellowship and Food for everyone - January 8 for "Trivia Night": With the holidays behind us, we will gather as a church family in-person and on Zoom for a fun evening of trivia appropriate for all

ages. A light supper will be offered of chili and chicken noodle soup. The whole event is from 4:00 – 6:00. Please join us! Sign up is available in Fellowship Hall as well as by calling Susan in the church office.

Sunday school: resumes Sunday January 9.

Youth group: resumes Sunday evening January 9.

Thursday evening Bible Study and Fellowship: will resume for a new study on January 13.

In our thoughts and prayers:

The Conner/Lang Family, Aleena Lang, Natalie Pizza, Bill Wark, Raymond Tinari,
Dick Wright, Sally Thiessen, Faith Hyndman

Thank you all for your support, compassion and patience through this past year. You all are what make Forest Grove Presbyterian Church a loving and caring community. We wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year!!

Church Staff

Susan Fall, Pastor Leanne Yerkes, Director of Music
Susan Flanagan, Office Administrator Jason Gordon, Youth Director
Mary Ann Welsh, Treasurer Chris Miterko, Grounds Keeper

