

# *The First Presbyterian Church* *in the City of New York*

---

## CHRISTMAS EVE

*Service for the Lord's Day*

December 24th, 2021

*The Session and members of First Church extend a sincere welcome to all persons regardless of race, nationality, gender, or sexual orientation. This includes an open invitation to membership, the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper, marriage, funerals, memorial services, and service as an officer of the church.*

## GATHERING

### PRELUDE

“Nöel: Où s'en vont ces gais bergers?”  
*Where are Those Happy Shepherds Going?*  
“Berceuse paraphrase”  
“Carillon”  
“Bring a Torch, Jeanette, Isabella!”

Claude Balbastre  
George Baker  
Leo Sowerby  
arr. Keith Chapman

### PEALING OF THE CHRISTMAS BELLS

### WELCOME

### OPENING PRAYER

### CALL TO WORSHIP AND LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE

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.

**We light the Christ candle.**

**The Light shines in the darkness,  
and darkness will never overcome it.**

Glory to God in the highest heaven,  
**and on earth peace among those whom God favors!**  
**Let us worship God!**

### CAROL: HYMN 133

“O Come, All Ye Faithful”

ADESTE FIDELES

### LITANY FOR CHRISTMAS

The grace of God has appeared,  
bringing salvation to all.

**Glory to God in the highest!**

The people who walked in darkness  
have seen a great light.

**Glory to God in the highest!**

For a child has been born for us,  
a Son has been given to us.

**Glory to God in the highest!**

He is Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

**Glory to God in the highest!**

To us is born in the city of David  
a Savior, the Messiah, the Lord.

**Glory to God in the highest!**

And the Word became flesh  
and lived among us.

**Glory to God in the highest!**

## RESPONSE

Charles Wood, arr.

Ding Dong! merrily on high in heav'n the bells are ringing. Ding, dong! verily the sky is riv'n  
with angel singing. *Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis.* E'en so here below, let steeple bells be swungen.  
And i-o, by priest and people be sungen. *Gloria...* Pray ye dutifully prime your matin chime, ye  
ringers. May ye beautifully rime your evetime song, ye singers. *Gloria...* -G.R. Woodward

## HEARING THE WORD

### FIRST LESSON

Luke 2:1-7

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. 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 place for them in the inn.

### CAROL: HYMN 121

“O Little Town of Bethlehem”

ST. LOUIS

### SECOND LESSON

Luke 2:8-20

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before 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. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and 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 heaven,  
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

### SERMON

“I Choose Gratitude”

Rev. Dr. Greg Stovell

# RESPONDING TO THE WORD

CAROL: HYMN 119

“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”

MENDELSSOHN

## CHRISTMAS PRAYER

### OFFERTORY

Will Todd

Shepherds, called by angels, called by love and angels: No place for them but a stable. My Lord has come. Sages, searching for stars, searching for love in heaven; No place for them but a stable. My Lord has come. His love will hold me, his love will cherish me, love will cradle me. Lead me, lead me to see him, sages and shepherds and angels; No place for me but a stable. My Lord has come.

-Will Todd

## PASSING OF THE LIGHT

### CAROL

“Silent Night, Holy Night!”

STILLE NACHT

1. Si - lent night, ho - ly night! All is calm, all is bright  
2. Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Shep - herds quake at the sight,  
3. Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Son of God, love's pure light

'round you vir - gin moth - er and child! Ho - ly In - fant, so ten - der and mild,  
glo - ries stream from heav - en a - far, heav - en - ly hosts sing "Al - le - lu - ia:  
ra - diant beams from thy ho - ly face, with the dawn re - deem - ing grace,

sleep in heav - en - ly peace, — sleep — in heav - en - ly peace.  
Christ, the Sav - ior, is born; — Christ, the Sav - ior, is born!"  
Je - sus, Lord, at thy birth, — Je - sus, Lord, at thy birth.

## SENDING

### BLESSING

### MUSIC FOR REFLECTION

Adolphe Adam

O holy night! the stars are brightly shining; It is the night of the dear Savior's birth. Long lay the world in sin and error pining, till He appeared and the soul felt its worth. A thrill of hope—the weary world rejoices, for yonder breaks a new and glorious morn! Fall on your knees! O hear the angel voices! O night divine, O night when Christ was born! O night, O holy night, O night divine!

Truly He taught us to love one another; His law is love and His gospel is peace. Chains shall He break, for the slave is our brother, and in His name all oppression shall cease. Sweet hymns of joy in grateful chorus raise we; let all within us praise His holy name. Christ is the Lord! O praise His name forever! His pow'r and glory evermore proclaim!

—Placide Cappeau; trans. John Sullivan Dwight

### LEADING THIS MORNING

Hannah Faye Allred, M.Div., *Staff Associate for Mission and Social Justice*

Rev. Dr. Barbara Davis, *Executive Minister*

Rev. Dr. Greg Stovell, *Pastor/Head of Staff*

Audrey Webber, M.Div., *Associate for Hospitality and Visual Arts*

The First Church Choir

Sean Fallen, *soloist*

Michael Shake, *Organist and Director of Music*

PERMISSIONS *Noël: Où s'en vont ces gais bergers?* Public domain. *Berceuse paraphrase.* © 1993 H.T. FitzSimons Company. Used under ONE LICENSE #73497-A. *Carillon.* Public domain. *Bring a Torch, Jeanette, Isabella!* © 1976, 1996 McAfee Music Corp. Used under ONE LICENSE #73497-A. *O Come, All Ye Faithful.* Public domain. *Ding, Dong! Merrily on High.* Public domain. *O Little Town of Bethlehem.* Public domain. *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing.* Public domain. *My Lord Is Come.* © 2011 Oxford University Press. Used under ONE LICENSE #73497-A. *Silent Night, Holy Night!* Public domain. *O Holy Night.* Public domain. Scripture quotations are from the New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright © 1989 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

---

12 W 12th Street, New York, NY 10011

212.675.6150 • [fpcnyc.org](http://fpcnyc.org)

*We wish to express our gratitude to the following for their gifts  
as we recall those in whose names the gifts are given.*

Nancy and Anthony Bowe in memory of Thomas and Mary Board

The Buice Family in memory of Stuart Upchurch Buice

Sally Collins in loving memory of her parents, Rev. Ray and Willie Mae Collins,  
and sister-in-law, Dawn Timmer Sterkin

Rev. Dr. Barbara E. Davis in honor of her father Robert Livingston Davis, and her  
brothers Robert Livingston Davis, Jr. and David E. Davis

The Gray-White Family in memory of Lydia White

Christopher Flint in memory of Thomas Flint and Dean Mignott

Lesley B. Hoopes in memory of George & Georgina Bissell,  
Zissimos Frangopoulos, Joseph & Elizabeth Hoopes, Michael & Beverly Sullivan

Betty Jones in memory of family members and dear friends,  
Myra Tobin and Reggie Taylor

Kathryn Ketcham in memory of my husband, The Rev. Dr. John B. Ketcham

Andrew Ketler in remembrance of Lawrence Gray and Alice Ketler

Ian C. Laing in memory of Virginia Thoren:  
faithful, compassionate, wise member of this congregation for many years

Bradley McCormick and Marion Katz in memory of Susan McCormick

Gift given by Charles Mitchell

Gift given by Mario Nievera

Joan Reutershan & Meg Harper in memory of Jane Reutershan

Nadine Stewart and David Zydallis in memory of Bruce K. Stewart, our beloved  
brother

Sue & Arnold Taub in memory of Katherine & H.J. Bicksler

Ann Timmons in memory of Janet W. Timmons

Charlotte Wallace and family in loving memory of Peter Wallace

Audrey and Woodie Webber in memory of our little dog Banjo,  
and in memory of all the furry family members our church has lost

Laura Bowden and Michael Shake in honor of the ministry of  
the First Church Choir.