

REFORMATION LUTHERAN CHURCH
Serving Absecon - Galloway Township
Rev. Heidi Link – Pastor
Brian Conover - Music Director

Sunday, January 4th, 2026
THE SECOND SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS / 10:00 AM
SUNDAY SCHOOL CHRISTMAS PRESENTATION

*** ENTRANCE SONG**

Angels, from the Realms of Glory

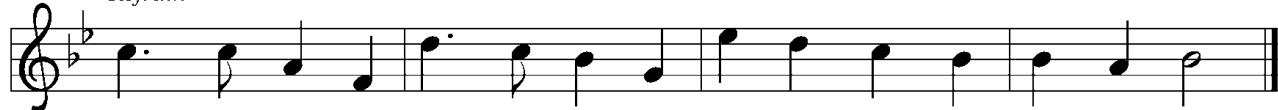


1 An - gels, from the realms of glo - ry, wing your flight o'er all the earth;
2 Shep-herds, in the fields a - bid - ing, watch-ing o'er your flocks by night,
3 Sa - ges, leave your con - tem-pla - tions, bright - er vi - sions beam a - far;
4 All cre - a - tion, join in prais-ing God, the Fa - ther, Spir - it, Son,



once you sang cre - a - tion's sto - ry, now pro - claim Mes - si - ah's birth:
God with us is now re - sid - ing, yon - der shines the in - fant light.
seek the great de - sire of na - tions, you have seen his na - tal star.
ev - er - more your voic - es rais - ing to the•e - ter - nal Three in One.

Refrain



Come and wor-ship, come and wor-ship, wor-ship Christ, the new-born king.

Text: James Montgomery, 1771–1854, alt., sts. 1–3; *Salisbury Hymn Book*, 1857, st. 4

Music: REGENT SQUARE, Henry T. Smart, 1813–1879

*** GREETING & PRAYER OF THE DAY**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

Let us pray: Almighty God, you have filled all the earth with the light of your incarnate Word. By your grace empower us to reflect your light in all that we do, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

*** - Congregation Stands (If for any reason you are unable to stand during the service, please remain seated.)**

*CONFESSİON AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, **+** one God, Wonderful Counselor, Mighty Savior, Prince of Peace. **Amen.**

Trusting in God's steadfast love and faithfulness, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Reconciling God,

we yearn for your presence to transform our grief, pain, and despair. We confess that we have not always prepared room in our hearts for your love; we have not always recognized your presence among us; we have not always embraced your message of peace. We cry out, weary with the burden of violence, oppression, and fear. We confess our failure to make room for those seeking refuge; our participation in violent systems that harm your innocent ones; our reluctance to embody your good news. Be born in us today and teach us to sing the joyful song of your salvation. Amen.

God's grace upon grace flows over you. **+** Christ's presence redeems the whole creation. Your sins are forgiven. Let the earth rejoice and be glad! **Amen.**

CONGREGATIONAL SONG – “Oh, Come, Oh, Come, Emmanuel”

- 1 **Oh, come, oh, come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.**

Refrain

**Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.**

- 2 **Oh, come, oh, come, great Lord of might, who to your tribes on Sinai's height
in ancient times once gave the law in cloud, and majesty, and awe. *Refrain***
- 3 **Oh, come, strong branch of Jesse, free your own from Satan's tyranny;
From depths of hell your people save and give them vict'ry o'er the grave.**

Refrain

SUNDAY SCHOOL PRESENTATION OF CHRISTMAS

FIRST LESSON: Luke 1:26-38

Song: "Come Thou Long Expected Jesus"

- 1 **Come, Thou long expected Jesus born to set Thy people free;
From our fears and sins release us, let us find our rest in Thee.
Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth Thou art;
Dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart.**

- 2 **Born Thy people to deliver, born a child and yet a King,
Born to reign in us forever, now Thy gracious kingdom bring.
By Thine own eternal Spirit rule in all our hearts alone;
By Thine all sufficient merit, raise us to Thy glorious throne.**

SECOND LESSON: Luke 2:1-7

THIRD LESSON: Matthew 1:18-25

Carol: "Away in a Manger"

- 1 **Away in a manger, no crib for his bed,
the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head;
the stars in the sky looked down where he lay;
the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.**

- 2 **The cattle are lowing; the poor baby wakes,
but little Lord Jesus no crying he makes.
I love you, Lord Jesus; look down from the sky
and stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.**

- 3 **Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask you to stay
close by me forever and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in your tender care
and fit us for heaven, to live with you there.**

Text: North American, anonymous, 19th cent.

FOURTH LESSON: Luke 2:8-21

Carol: "The First Noel"

- 1 **The first Noel the angel did say was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;**
In fields where they lay, keeping their sheep, on a cold winter's night that was so deep.
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel! Born is the King of Israel.
- 2 **They lookèd up and saw a star shining in the east beyond them far;**
And to the earth it gave great light, and so it continued both day and night.
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel! Born is the King of Israel.

FIFTH LESSON: Matthew 2:1-12

Carol: "We Three Kings"

- 1 **We three kings of Orient are;**
bearing gifts we traverse afar,
field and fountain, moor and mountain,
following yonder star.

Refrain **Oh, star of wonder, star of night,**
star with royal beauty bright;
westward leading, still proceeding,
guide us to thy perfect light!

- 2 **Born a king on Bethlehem's plain,**
gold I bring to crown him again;
king forever, ceasing never,
over us all to reign. *Refrain*
- 3 **Frankincense to offer have I;**
incense owns a deity nigh;
prayer and praising, gladly raising,
worshiping God Most High. *Refrain*
- 4 **Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume**
breathes a life of gathering gloom;
sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying,
sealed in the stone-cold tomb. *Refrain*

Text: John Henry Hopkins Jr., 1820-1891, alt.

SIXTH LESSON: John 1:1-18

Carol: "Joy to the World"

- 1 **Joy to the world, the Lord is come!**
 Let earth receive its King;
 let ev'ry heart prepare him room
 and heav'n and nature sing, and heav'n and nature sing,
 and heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.

- 2 **Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!**
 Let all their songs employ,
 while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
 repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy,
 repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

*NICENE CREED

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven; by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshipped and glorified. He has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

* PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Empowered by the news of Christ's birth, let us pray boldly for the church, creation, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

O God, you reveal yourself wherever two or three are gathered in your name. Be with us now, not only in the infant Jesus and resurrected Christ, but in the beloved people of this assembly. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You reveal yourself in the waters of the womb; in brooks, ponds, and oceans; and in the waters of baptism. Grant us wisdom to tenderly care for the earth as a garden watered by your grace. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You reveal yourself in blessed diversity. Help us to look for you in people near and far, in bodies of all kinds, and in kindred young and old. Let us seek you in many places, praising you in many tongues. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You reveal yourself in new life. Support those beginning a new job, a new relationship, or a new living situation, especially those displaced because of tragedy or loss. Be with all others who need your life-giving touch this day (*especially*). Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You reveal yourself in holy communion. Sustain all who provide food and fellowship in this congregation and in the wider community. Make our tables signs of your welcoming presence among us. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

You promise to turn mourning into joy and to comfort those who weep. We remember those who have died and look to being united with them in your glory. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

With the joy of Christ's birth in our hearts, we commend our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your boundless mercy and eternal love; through Jesus Christ our Savior.

Amen.

*** SHARING OF THE PEACE**

The Peace of the Lord be with you always.

And also with you. (*Worshippers move about and greet one another.*)

OFFERING / SPECIAL MUSIC

* OFFERING SONG

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing



1 Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new - born king;



peace on earth, and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled."

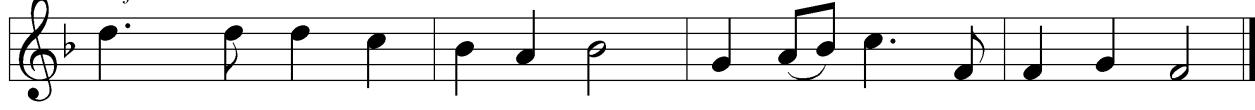


Joy - ful, all you na-tions, rise; join the tri-umph of the skies;



with an - gel - ic hosts pro-claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"

Refrain



Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new - born king!"

* OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray: God of glory, great are your wonders among us and many are the blessings you bestow. Use us and these your gifts for the needs of the world, that all the ends of the earth may rejoice in your saving grace, through Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

* WORDS OF INSTITUTION

With Thanksgiving, we remember that in the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread and gave thanks, broke it, and gave it to the disciples saying: "Take and eat; this is my body given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this in remembrance of me."

For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup, we proclaim:

Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again. Amen.

* 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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen

* INVITATION TO COMMUNION

God is now in flesh appearing. Come to the feast of joy!

We come.

DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

(BAPTIZED CHRISTIANS who believe that the risen Christ is present in the Eucharist to forgive sin and renew life are invited to either come to the altar area for communion as directed or share at your pew. If you come forward, you will receive bread and a pre-filled cup of wine. If you choose to receive at your seat, please remain there, kneel as you are able, and receive the elements using the communion packets available from the ushers. If there are other special needs, please speak to an usher.)

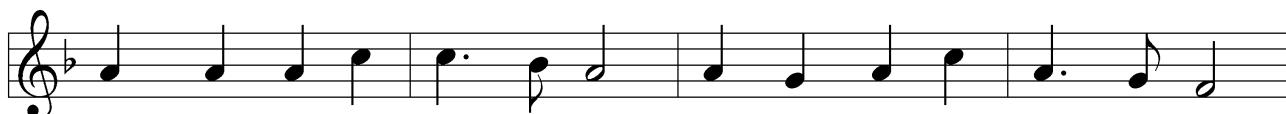
* POST COMMUNION BLESSING

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

Amen

* POST COMMUNION HYMN

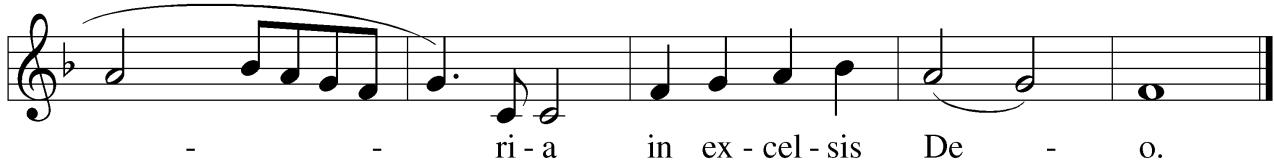
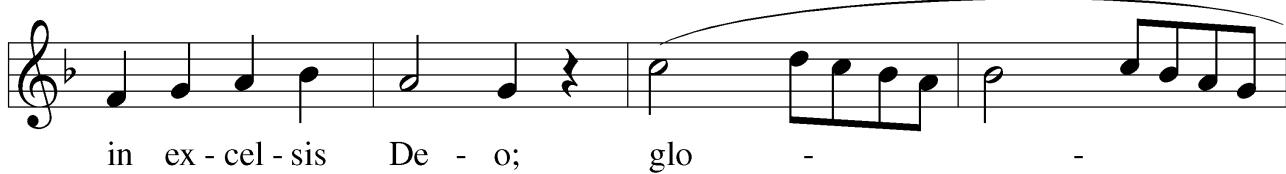
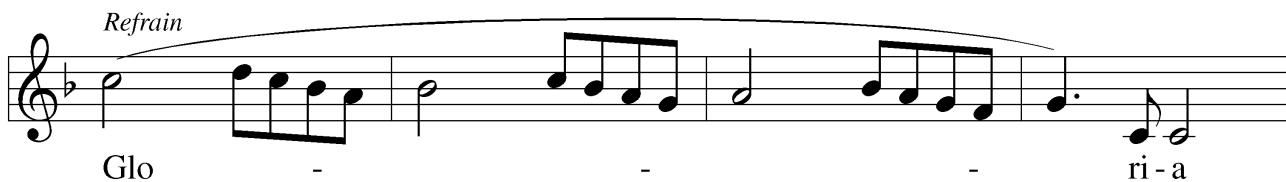
Angels We Have Heard on High



1 An - gels we have heard on high, sweet - ly sing - ing o'er the plains,
2 Shep-herds, why this ju - bi - lee? Why your joy - ous strains pro-long?
3 Come to Beth - le - hem and see him whose birth the an - gels sing;



and the moun-tains in re - ply, ech - o - ing their joy - ous strains.
What the glad - some tid - ings be which in - spire your heav'n - ly song?
come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ the Lord, the new - born king.



* PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray: Incarnate God, you are among us at this table. May we treasure this gift and ponder in our hearts the mystery of your presence. Move us to discover the wonders of your love in the everyday moments of our lives, through Christ born in us. **Amen.**

* BLESSING

And now a blessing: The triune God, glorious Mystery, holy Incarnate One, abiding Comforter, **☩** bless you with endless grace, peace, and joy. **Amen.**

* CELEBRATIONS

* CLOSING SONG

Go Tell It on the Mountain

Refrain



Go tell it on the moun - tain, o-ver the hills and ev - 'ry - where;



go tell it on the moun - tain that Je - sus Christ is born!



- 1 While shep-herds kept their watch-ing o'er si - lent flocks by night,
- 2 The shep-herds feared and trem-bled when, lo, a - bove the earth
- 3 Down in a lone - ly man - ger the hum - ble Christ was born;

Refrain



be - hold, through-out the heav-ens there shone a ho - ly light.
rang out the an - gel cho - rus that hailed our Sav - ior's birth.
and God sent us sal - va - tion that bless-ed Christ-mas morn.

Text: African American spiritual, refrain; John W. Work Jr., 1872–1925, stanzas, alt.

Music: GO TELL IT, African American spiritual

* SENDING

Glory to God in the highest!

And peace to God's people on earth!

Go in joy. Embody God's redeeming grace.

Thanks be to God.

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