

First Presbyterian Church

Serving Christ in Milledgeville

210 S. Wayne Street, Milledgeville, Georgia 31061
478-452-9394; fpchurch@windstream.net; www.fpcmilledgevilleorg
Like us on Facebook

DECEMBER 29, 2024

christmas worship

WORDS

FOR THE BEGINNING

— DON'T FORGET TO LAUGH —

*First
Presbyterian
Church*
OF MILLEDGEVILLE, GEORGIA

Followers of Christ, called to serve our community
and be an actively-engaging light to the world.

We live into our faith, inspired by our worship, encouraged by our fellowship, empowered by our studies. As a Matthew 25 Congregation, we answer the call to provide food and shelter to those in need. As a More Light Presbyterians Congregation, we provide a safe and affirming worshiping community for LGBTQIA+ persons, celebrating the uniqueness and dignity of each person as they seek a home for their faith and confidence in the promises of God for them.

December 29, 2024
First Sunday in Christmas
Lessons and Laughter

PRELUDE

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

Gregg Sewell

CHIMING OF THE HOUR

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

We are delighted that you have joined us this Lord's Day. If you'd like to learn more about our mission and ministry, we invite you to speak to Rev. Susan. Restrooms & changing table are at the end of the hall to the left. Thank you for being with us!

GATHERING AROUND GOD'S WORD

CHORAL INTROIT

With eulogies and scriptures

African-American spiritual

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: We know that joy has a contagious ripple effect, so today for our call to worship, we are going to share our joy. I invite you to close your eyes now. Picture the things in your life that bring you joy. It could be something as simple as a warm cup of coffee on a cold morning, or as grand as a person, a place, or an experience. Now take a moment to reflect on this question: What brings you joy? Now, I invite you to open your eyes and turn and find someone sitting next to you. Share with one another what brings you joy in your life. Talk amongst yourselves for a few minutes. Family of faith, tell me: what are some of the things that bring you joy? Yell it out! Friends, having named so many sources of joy in our lives, join me in the opening litany printed in your bulletin: We have named our joy out loud, and it is clear—

Congregation: God is in our joy.

Leader: God is in this room.

Congregation: We have reason to celebrate.

Leader: We have a reason to sing.

Congregation: Thanks be to God for the bright hope of this day.

*HYMN 611

Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee

CALL TO CONFESSION

Friends, one of the most inherently joyful and beautiful moments in worship comes through the moment of confession. For when we are honest with God in the prayer of confession, we open ourselves up to receive God's grace and mercy. And that gift—that grace—is full to the brim with good news! So join me in this prayer of confession, not out of shame or guilt, but because there is a joy on the other side of this prayer that will take your breath away. Let us pray together; let us choose joy.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Joyful God, You told us that in order to enter the kingdom of heaven, we must be like children.

Did you mean that like children, we must practice unhindered joy? Did you mean that like children, we should lean into laughter, release our cynicism, and open ourselves to delight?

In a world as broken and battered as ours, we admit,

this often seems easier said than done.

Forgive us, patient God, for the moments when we are so focused on the bad that we miss the good.

Forgive us for hearing the nativity story and staying in our seats instead of jumping for joy.

We know that even now you are sowing delight in our lives.

Open our hearts up to it. With gratitude we pray, amen.

HEARING GOD'S WORD

CHORAL RESPONSE

In anxious nights spent fretting

African-American spiritual

DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

Friends, hear and believe the good news of the Gospel:

We are seen. We are loved. We are forgiven.

That is news worth celebrating! That is news that should make us want to cheer, laugh, cry with relief, dance, and sing all at the same time! So in response to God's goodness, I invite you to rise in body or spirit and join me in the sung response. Let us make a joyful noise for God's abundant mercy.

GLORIA PATRI

HYMN NO. 581

**Glory be to the Creator, and to the Christ and to the Holy Ghost.
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end!
Amen, amen**

ANTHEM

The Wexford Carol

Don Michael Dicie

*Good people all this Christmas time,/ consider well, and bear in mind
what our Good God for us has done/ in sending his begotten Son.
With Mary holy we should pray / to God with love this Christmas Day.
In Bethlehem this Christmas morn / there was a blessed Messiah born.*

*In Bethlehem did shepherds keep/ their flocks of lambs and feeding sheep,
to which the angels did appear/ which put the shepherds in great fear.*

*"Prepare and go," the angels said,/ "to Bethlehem, be not afraid,
"For there you'll find this happy morn/ a princely babe, sweet Jesus born."*

*With thankful hearts and joyful mind,/ the shepherds went the babe to find,
and as God's angels had foretold/ they did our Saviour Christ to behold.*

*Within a manger he was laid,/ and by his side the Virgin maid,
attending to the Lord of Life/ who came to earth to end all strife.*

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

God of angel choruses and contagious laughter, we know that you speak to us in the quiet. We know that when we bow our heads and fall to our knees, you are there, hovering close, calling our names. However, we also trust that when we throw our heads back in laughter, when we dance and clap with joy, when we skip and sing with gratitude, that even there, you are speaking. So on this Sunday morning we pray: open our ears and hearts to hear what it is that you are saying. Meet us in this joy. Meet us in this delight. Meet us in the hope of this Christmas season and reveal the wisdom we need to hear today. With hearts full of gratitude we pray. We laugh. We listen. We pray. Amen.

LISTEN FOR JOY

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Pew Bible Page #

OLD TESTAMENT

Isaiah 9:2-3

OT P 638

GOSPEL

Luke 2:10

NT P 58

SING FOR JOY

*HYMN 136

Go Tell It On the Mountain

PRACTICE JOY IN SCRIPTURE

CHILDREN'S TIME

Anne Smart

LISTEN FOR JOY

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Pew Bible Page #

PSALM

Psalms 148

OT P 582

GOSPEL

Matthew 2:10

NT P 2

SING FOR JOY

*HYMN 133

O Come, All Ye Faithful

PRACTICE JOY IN COMMUNITY

EXTENDED PASSING OF THE PEACE

LISTEN FOR JOY
SCRIPTURE READINGS

PSALM Psalm 126:1-3
OLD TESTAMENT Isaiah 55:12-13

Pew Bible Page #
OT P 572
OT P 686

SING FOR JOY

*HYMN 119

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

PRACTICE JOY IN PRAYER

JOY FOUND IN PRAYER AND GIVING

On the provided paper squares, write three prayers of gratitude for things that bring you joy. When you are finished writing, we encourage you to come forward and hang your written prayers on the prayer loom. We also encourage you to place your tithes and offerings in the plates on the Communion Table. If it is more graceful for you to remain seated, raise your hand and an usher will collect your prayers and offerings

OFFERTORY

He Shall Feed His Flock

G.F.Handel

*DOXOLOGY

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;

Praise God, all creatures here below;

Alleluia! Alleluia!

Praise God, the source of all our gifts!

Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts!

Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit!

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

BEARING GOD'S WORD INTO THE WORLD

*HYMN 80

You Shall Go Out with Joy

*CHARGE AND BENEDICTION Go in Peace. AMEN!

CHORAL BENEDICTION *When deep fatigue has settled*

African-American spiritual

POSTLUDE

Joy! Joy! Joy!

James Mansfield

Liturgy written by Reverend Sarah Are Speed, Sanctified Art .



LIMITED MOBILITY

Helen Danuser

CHURCH FAMILY:

Wesley Applebury, cancer recurrence and treatment, attending seminary in Atlanta, **Columbia Theological Seminary, D. Wesley Applebury, Box 289, 701 S. Columbia Dr., Decatur, GA 30030**
Nan Carpenter, ongoing health concerns
Ellen Thompson, waiting on double hip replacement

EXTENDED FAMILY:

Nannette Green Allen, childhood friend of Margaret Ivester with serious health issues
Mark Archer, Sunda Coleman's brother-in-law, hip replacement, recovering at home
Michael Bledsoe, Mary Lucik's grandson, multiple health concerns
Nick Carruthers, Sunda Coleman's great nephew, recovering from car accident in hospital
Blake Connolly, Mary Lucik's great grandson, ongoing health concerns
Taylor Croghan, Craig Callender's niece, EDS diagnosis
Susan Eilers, Mary Lucik's friend, cancer
Don Goggans, Elaine Goggans' son, stage four cancer
Marshall Hodgman, Donna Gautier's son, recovering from heart surgery at home
Alonzo Kelley, Craig Callender's father, Stage 4 Melenoma
Velma Kelley, Craig Callender's grandmother, ongoing health concerns
Elizabeth Knobel, Carolyn Morgan's daughter, ongoing health concerns
Donald Lucik, Mary Lucik's son, recovering from back surgery
Charles Morgan, Jenifer Flory's father, in rehab center following surgery
Joanne Murphy, Kathy Carroll's mother, ongoing health issues- at Carlyle House in Macon
Paul Orman, Barbora Orman's husband, ongoing health concerns
Ambriea Pearson, Sunda Coleman's granddaughter, ongoing health concerns
Chris Pearson, Sunda Coleman's son, recovering at home; dialysis
Shaylee Pearson, Sunda's great-granddaughter, ongoing health concerns
Runette Pounds, Sunda Coleman's mother, ongoing health concerns
Gloria Roberts, Bill Werts' cousin, recovering from a traumatic fall
Bob Smart, Anne Smart's husband, ankylosing spondylitis
Windy Spaide, Craig Callender's sister, ongoing health concerns
Randy Stewart, Haywood Edwards son-in-law, ongoing health concerns
Ike Thomas, ongoing cancer treatments
Dudley Weathers, Anne Weathers' husband, at home in hospice care
Wayne Woodard, Ruby Werts' brother, diagnosed with Parkinson's

IN ASSISTED LIVING

George and Nan Carpenter, PO Box 527, Jefferson, GA 30549
Jude Hirsch, Fellowship Home at Meriwether, 10 Meriwether Place
Nancy Holbrook, The Dublin Place, 504 Fire Tower Rd, Dublin GA 31021
Maryanne Morris, Fellowship Home at Meriwether, 10 Meriwether Place
Runette Pounds, Oaks at Lake Wildwood, Rm 109 Cherry St, 6191 Peake Rd, Macon, GA 31220
Suzy Smith, The Haven 1061 Willow Run Rd., Unit 4, Greensboro GA 30642

THIS WEEK AT OUR CHURCH: December 29- January 5

Today	9:30	Sunday School
	10:15	Children's Sunday School
	11:00	Worship
	12:00	Youth Group
	12:00	Milly Free Fridge Service Opportunity
Tuesday	9:30	Food Pantry
	12:00	Kiwanis
Sunday	9:30	Sunday School
	10:15	Children's Sunday School
	11:00	Worship with Communion
	12:00	Youth Group
	1:00	The Bridge UMC Worship



**PRESBYTERIAN
DISASTER
ASSISTANCE**

OUT OF CHAOS, HOPE



To give by phone, call 800-872-3283. To send a check, please designate where you want your gift to go on the memo line and mail to: Presbyterian Church (USA), P.O. Box 643700, Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3700

Offerings in December	\$25,145.26
Anticipated December expenses:	\$21,014.00
(Monthly expenditures may exceed anticipated amounts)	



Join us for worship in-person, online at Facebook Live or on the radio at 102.3 WKZR radio every week.

Sunday: 9:30AM **Zoom Sunday School Class**, we are studying *The Collected Sermons of Walter Brueggemann*
www.Zoom.com, Meeting ID: 852 8172 1781
Passcode: 085809

Fellowship Sunday School Class, studying *Who Needs God* by Harold Kushner, meeting in the Parlor Room

10:15AM **Children's Sunday School Class**, singing, crafts and stories, meeting in the Craft Room Upstairs

Wednesday: 6:30PM **Wednesday Night Potluck and Bible Study**, studying Letters to the Romans, meeting in the Fellowship Hall

Let Joy Be Your Companion

GO TELL IT 7.6.7.6 with refrain

Words by Anna Strickland, 2024

African-American spiritual

Refrain




Let joy be your com - pan - ion Let laugh - ter ring out ev - ery - where

5




Let joy be your com - pan - ion For joy's a gift from God



With eu - lo - gies and scrip - tures The
As pro - test - ors as - sem - ble, Their
In an - xious nights spent fret - ting When
When deep fa - tigue has sett - led In -

11



mour - ners say good - bye A sto - ry sparks the
griev - an - ces to bring Yes, e - ven in their
chan - ges feel im - mense The dawn is yet ap -
to your ver - y bones Let strength come from the

14



laugh - ter That in - ter - rupts their cries
an - ger They find a song to sing
proach - ing The sun will rise a - gain
mem' - ries Of all the joy you've known

to Refrain

ADORATION

611 Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee

1 Joy - ful, joy - ful, we a - dore thee, God of glo - ry, Lord of love!
 2 All thy works with joy sur-round thee; earth and heaven re-flect thy rays;
 3 Mor-tals, join the hap-py cho-rus which the morn-ing stars be-gan.


Hearts un-fold like flowers be-fore thee, o-pening to the sun a-bove.
 stars and an-gels sing a-round thee, cen-ter of un-bro-ken praise.
 Love di-vine is reign-ing o'er us, join-ing all in heav-en's plan.

Melt the clouds of sin and sad-ness; drive the dark of doubt a-way.
 Field and for-est, vale and moun-tain, flower-y mead-ow, flash-ing sea,
 Ev-er sing-ing, march we on-ward, vic-tors in the midst of strife.

Giv-er of im-mor-tal glad-ness, fill us with the light of day.
 chant-ing bird and flow-ing foun-tain, call us to re-joice in thee.
 Joy-ful mu-sic leads us sun-ward in the tri-umph song of life.

This well-known melody was created to provide a choral setting for J. C. F. von Schiller's poem, "An die Freude" (To Joy), as the final movement of the composer's *Ninth Symphony*. The author, a prominent Presbyterian pastor and author, wrote the words with this tune in mind.

136 Go, Tell It on the Mountain

Refrain 

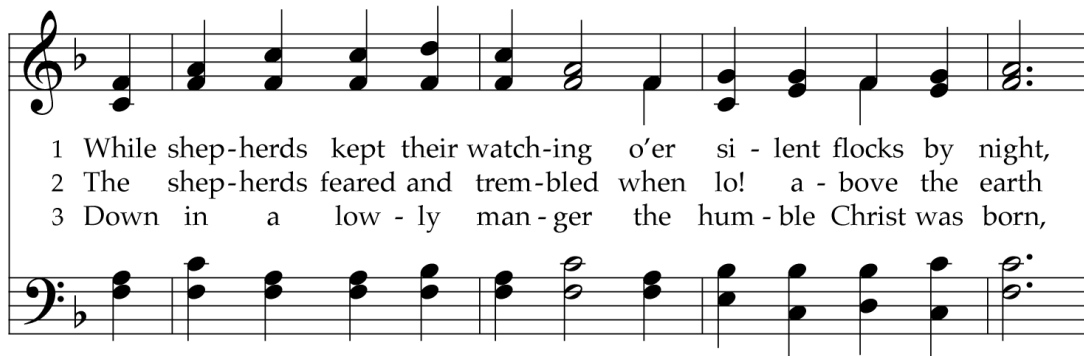


Go, tell it on the moun-tain, o-ver the hills and ev - ery - where;

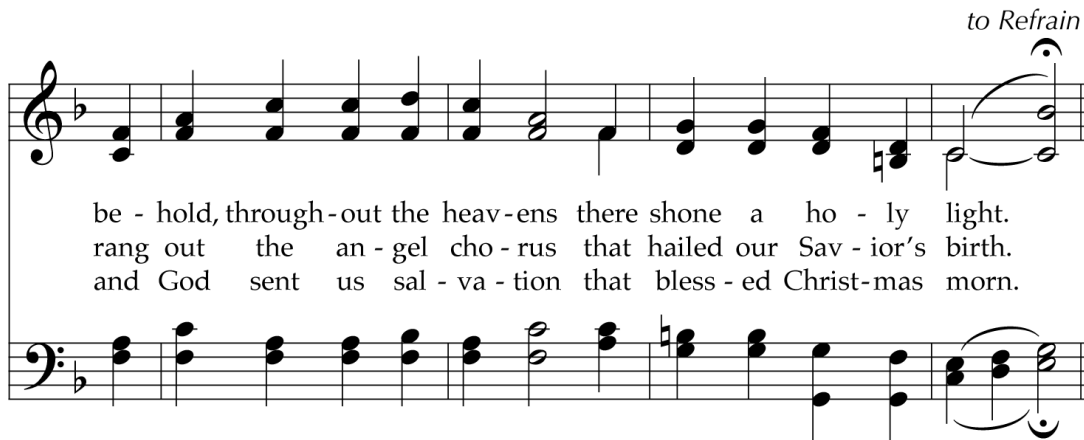


go, tell it on the moun - tain that Je - sus Christ is born!

Fine



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 low - ly man - ger the hum - ble Christ was born,



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.

to Refrain

Like other material from oral traditions, 19th-century African American spirituals flourished without being written down. Their refrains were their most stable parts, and narrative stanzas were often improvised to fit. These Nativity stanzas attempt to recall that tradition.

O Come, All Ye Faithful 133

1 O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant; O come
 2 True God from true God, Light from light e - ter - nal, born
 3 Sing, choirs of an - gels; sing in ex - ul - ta - tion; sing,
 4 Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this hap - py morn - ing; Je -

ye; O come ye to Beth - le - hem! Come, and be - hold him,
 of a vir - gin, a mor - tal he comes; ver - y God, be -
 all ye cit - i - zens of heaven a - bove! Glo - ry to God, all
 sus, to thee be all glo - ry given; Word of the Fa - ther,

Refrain

born the King of an - gels!
 got - ten, not cre - at - ed! O come, let us a - dore him; O come, let
 glo - ry in the high - est!
 now in flesh ap - pear - ing!

us a - dore him; O come, let us a - dore him, Christ, the Lord!

From its Roman Catholic origins, this 18th-century hymn has spread to worldwide use by many denominations in both Latin and vernacular versions. Once popular with a wide range of hymn texts, this tune is now firmly associated with this Christmas text from which it is named.

You Shall Go Out with Joy 80

The Trees of the Field

Em B7 Em B7 Em

You shall go out with joy and be led forth with peace;

G C G D

the moun-tains and the hills will break forth be -

B N.C. Em B7 Em

fore you; there'll be shouts of joy, and all the

B7 Em B7 Em B7 Em

trees of the field will clap, will clap their hands.

D7 N.C. G C G D

And all the trees of the field will clap their hands;

D7 G D7 G

the trees of the field will clap their hands;

C G D

the trees of the field will clap their hands

B7 Em B7 Em

while you go out with joy.

*Clap hands.

This text paraphrases Isaiah 55:12, which is generally understood to describe a "second exodus," this time from Babylon rather than from Egypt. This release of God's people and their return to their own land gives rise to a joyful celebration involving all creation.