

Nativity of the Lord
Christmas Day
December 25, 2022



Westminster
Presbyterian
Church

Cover photo by
Donovan Drake.

"The time draws near the birth of Christ',
A present that cannot be priced
Given two thousand years ago.
Yet if God had not given so
He still would be a distant stranger
And not the Baby in the manger."

from the poem *Advent 1955* by John Betjeman

GATHERING

(Silence during the Prelude is requested in preparation for worship.)

About the Prelude

The Prelude is a musical offering to help move the hearts and minds of the gathering community from the daily struggles of life to the worship of God.

PRELUDE

Bethlehem Carol Medley

arr. Ramm

Coventry Carol

arr. Ramm

God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen

Wilbur Held

In the Bleak Midwinter

Holst/arr. Ramm

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Let us worship God!

(Those who are able may stand.)

There is good news of great joy for all!

Our Savior is born: The Messiah, the Lord.

The Word became flesh to live among us;

now we have seen the glory of God.

The Season of Christmas

"Christmas" is the church's celebration of the incarnation and nativity of Jesus Christ. At the nativity of the Lord and throughout the season of Christmas, we give thanks that, in the fullness of time, God's Word became flesh to live among us, full of grace and truth. We proclaim this good news of great joy for all people: that God has sent us a Savior, the Messiah, the Lord. We bear witness to the light of Christ that has come into the world, the light that darkness cannot overcome.

*PRAYER OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

All glory to you, great God,

for the gift of your Son,

whom you sent to save us.

With singing angels,

let us praise your name,

and tell the earth his story,

that all may believe, rejoice, and bow down,

acknowledging your love;

through Jesus Christ our Lord,

who lives and reigns with you

in the unity of the Holy Spirit,

one God, now and forever. Amen.

(The Cross and Bible lead the procession, symbolic of the centrality in worship of Jesus Christ - the Living Word, and the Bible - the written Word.)

***FANFARE AND HYMN 133**

ADESTE FIDELES, arr. Joel Treybig

About Hymn 133

O Come, All Ye Faithful

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. TEXT and MUSIC: John Francis Wade, c. 1743.

CALL TO CONFESSION

Jesus our Lord came into an indifferent world,
yet his life revealed the inner thoughts of many.

Let us confess our sins before God and one another
that we may receive release from our sin.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**God of our Savior, we confess that we
are not people of peace.**

**You clothe us with your love,
but we do not love one another.**

**You wrap us in your mercy,
but we do not forgive one another.**

Forgive us, God of grace.

**Teach us to follow your way,
and help us to grow each day**

**in wisdom and favor with you;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

(Silent confession)

Kyrie *(Singing together Hymn 115, verse 3)*

MUELLER

**Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask Thee to stay
close by me forever and love me, I pray.**

**Bless all the dear children in thy tender care,
and fit us for heaven to live with thee there.**

Assurance of Pardon

A declaration of forgiveness proclaims the good news of God's mercy and offers the assurance of pardon in Jesus' name. The liturgist pours water into the font, which reminds us of the grace and cleansing of our Baptism, and the baptismal call to new life in Christ.

ASSURANCE AND PARDON

*(The liturgist pours water, which reminds us of our baptism,
and then speaks words of pardon.)*

Friends, believe the Good News:

In Jesus Christ we are forgiven. Alleluia! Amen!

***The Peace**

Since God in Christ has forgiven us,
let us also forgive one another.

The peace of Christ be with you. **And also with you.**

*(Please exchange the peace with the words,
"The peace of Christ be with you.")*

Act of Praise

The Act of Praise brings together the choir and congregation to sing God's praise.

About Psalm 97, Hymn 365

The theme of rejoicing that unites Psalm 97 is fittingly emphasized here by the refrain that ties together these four stanzas. Instead of the intimacy with God celebrated in other psalms, the primary concern here is to proclaim God's power over all false gods that tempt us. TEXT: Michael Morgan, 1995; MUSIC: Arthur Henry Messiter, 1883.

About Hymn 147

"Nowell" is the English form of the French "noel," a shout of joy formerly used at Christmas (as in Chaucer's "Franklin's Tale"), a clue that the word is older than its first printing. It may have Latin and French roots related to "born" (*natus / ne*) as well to "news" (*nova / nouvelle*). TEXT: English carol; *Some Ancient Christmas Carols*, 2nd ed., 1823; MUSIC: English carol; *Sandy's Christmas Carols*, 1833.

***ACT OF PRAISE**

(Singing together Hymn 113, verse 1 and the refrain)

GLORIA

**Angels we have heard on high,
sweetly singing o'er the plains,
and the mountains in reply
echoing their joyous strains.
Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!**

CONCERNS OF THE CHURCH

THE WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE

Hear the Word of God! **Our ears are open.**

Isaiah 52:7-10 *(Old Testament, page 683 in your pew Bible)*

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God!**

Psalm 97, Hymn 365 (all sing)

MARION

Hebrews 1:1-10

(New Testament, page 218 in your pew Bible)

SERMON

"What's In the Package?"

Guy D. Griffith

(A moment for meditation)

***HYMN 147**

The First Nowell

THE FIRST NOWELL

Verses 1-4 and 6 only

***AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

**Jesus Christ is the image of the invisible God,
the firstborn of all creation;
in him all things in heaven and on earth were created,
things visible and invisible.**

**All things have been created through him and for him.
He himself is before all things,
and in him all things hold together.**

**He is head of the body, the church;
he is the beginning, the firstborn of the dead,
so that he might come to have first place in everything.**

**For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell,
and through him God was pleased to reconcile all things,
whether on earth or in heaven,
by making peace through the blood of his cross. Amen.**

(Colossians 1:15-20)

Affirmation of Faith

Responding to the word proclaimed, we affirm our faith in the holy, triune God. This affirmation of faith is drawn from sentences of scripture or the creeds, confessions, and catechisms.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**
Lift up your hearts. **We lift them up to the Lord.**

To GIVE, please scan the QR code below:



THANKSGIVING

OFFERING

Anthem **What Child is This?** **Bernie Walker**

***DOXOLOGY**

CRANHAM

**What can I give him, poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;
if I were a wiseman, I would do my part;
yet what I can give him: give my heart.**

Doxology

A short hymn of praise to the triune God (God, Jesus Christ, Holy Spirit).

***PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

**Loving God,
we give you thanks for the light of the world,
Jesus Christ, through whom we have received
adoption as your children.
With Jesus our brother,
we dedicate ourselves in ministry to the world,
that we may live as heirs of your promises
to the honor and glory of your name. Amen.**

About Hymn 136

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. **TEXT and MUSIC:** African American spiritual; stanzas, John W. Work II, 1940.

About the Postlude

The Postlude is considered the final Alleluia of worship.

***THE LORD'S PRAYER**

(Singing together; see the back inside cover of your hymnal for music and text.)

SENDING

***HYMN 136** Go, Tell It on the Mountain GO TELL IT

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE Hodie Christus Natus Est Gabrieli/arr. Olson

**(Those who are able may stand.)*

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Our Mission

*Ordinary people testifying to the extraordinary light
found in our Lord Jesus Christ.*

“For it is the God who said, ‘Let light shine out of darkness,’ who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in clay jars, so that it may be made clear that this extraordinary power belongs to God and does not come from us.”

(2 Corinthians 4:6-7)

TODAY @ WESTMINSTER

Worship Leaders

Preaching

Rev. Dr. Guy D. Griffith
*Associate Pastor for Adult Education and
Spiritual Nurture*

Liturgist

Rev. Margie Quinn
Director of Youth and Young Adults

Lay Liturgist

11:00 AM Hamilton Proctor

Music

Dr. John Semingson
Director of Music Ministries and Organist

Joel Treybig, trumpet
Preston Bailey, trumpet
Jennifer Kummer, french horn
Ian Maser, trombone
Neil Konouchi, tuba

Flowers

*The flowers in the Sanctuary
are given to the glory of God
and in loving memory of
family and friends
by Janet R. Hirt.*

Sanctuary and Parlor Flowers for 2023

If you would like to provide flowers for the Chancel urns in the Sanctuary or the refectory table in the Parlor during 2023, please email Terri Eckert at teckert@nashvillewpc.org to select your Sunday. Please note that reservations for flowers do not carry over from year-to-year. Arranged by members of Westminster's talented Flower Guild, this is a wonderful way to celebrate or honor your loved ones.



3900 West End Avenue
Nashville, Tennessee 37205-1899
615.292.5526 | www.nashvillewpc.church

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,

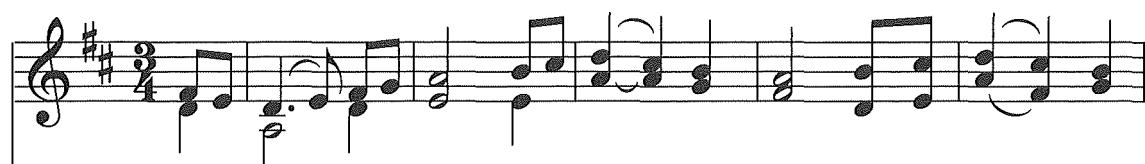
Refrain

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

us a - dare him; O come, let us a - dare 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.

The First Nowell



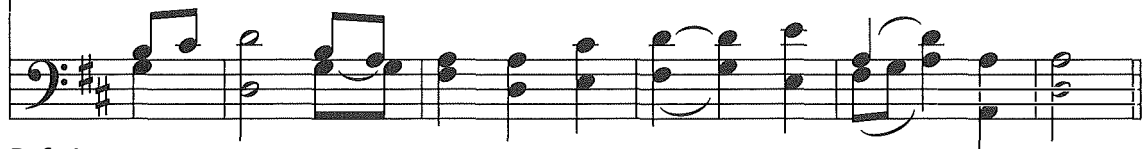
1 The first Now-ell the an-gel did say was to cer-tain poor
 2 They look - ed up and saw a star shin-ing in the
 3 And by the light of that same star three wise men
 4 This star drew nigh to the north-west; o'er Beth - le -



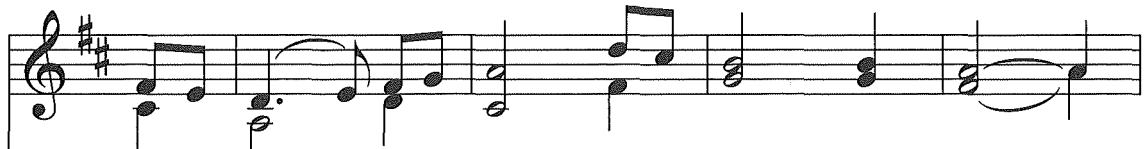
shep-herds in fields as they lay, in fields where they lay keep-ing
 east be-yond them far; and to the earth it gave
 came from coun - try far; to seek for a king was their
 hem it took its rest, and there it did both stop



their sheep, on a cold win-ter's night that was so deep.
 great light, and so it con - tin - ued both day and night.
 in - tent, and to fol - low the star wher-ev - er it went.
 and stay, right o - ver the place where Je - sus lay.



Refrain



Now - ell, Now - ell, Now - ell, Now - ell,



"Nowell" is the English form of the French "noel," a shout of joy formerly used at Christmas (as in Chaucer's "Franklin's Tale"), a clue that the word is older than its first printing. It may have Latin and French roots related to "born" (*natus I ne*) as well to "news" (*nova I nouvelle*).

born is the King of Is - ra - el.

The image shows a musical score for two staves. The top staff is in treble clef and the bottom staff is in bass clef. Both staves are in the key of D major (two sharps). The melody is written in the treble staff, and the bass line is in the bass staff. The lyrics 'born is the King of Is - ra - el.' are written below the treble staff, with hyphens under 'Is' and 'ra' to indicate syllables. The music consists of eighth and quarter notes, with some phrases connected by slurs.

5 Then entered in those wise men three,
 full reverently upon their knee,
 and offered there in his presence
 their gold, and myrrh, and
 frankincense.

Refrain

6 Then let us all with one accord
 sing praises to our heavenly Lord,
 that hath made heaven and earth of nought,
 and with his blood our life hath bought.

Refrain

136 Go, Tell It on the Mountain

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,

to Refrain
I:..

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.

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.