



**December 24, 2023**

**Worship Service**

**8 AM & 11 AM**

***As you enter, begin to worship quietly. Please silence your phone.***

FOR REFLECTION: "Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you. For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the LORD will arise upon you, and his glory will be seen upon you. And nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising" (Isaiah 60:1–3).

PRELUDE

*Ding Dong, Merrily on High*  
*What Child Is This* (Hymn 213)  
*Hark! the Herald Angels Sing* (Hymn 203)  
*Katie Zappitella, piano*

arr. M. Ham

TIDINGS OF THE CHURCH

Dr. Cureton

CALL TO WORSHIP: \* Psalm 98:1–6

SILENT PRAYER/INVOCATION

(8:00) Dr. Kieffer, (11:00) Dr. York

### **Angels We Have Heard on High #214**

- 1. Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o'er the plains,  
and the mountains in reply echo back their joyous strains.  
*Gloria in excelsis Deo, gloria in excelsis Deo.***
- 2. Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?  
Say what may the tidings be, which inspire your heav'nly song?  
*Gloria in excelsis deo, gloria in excelsis Deo.***
- 3. Come to Bethlehem and see him whose birth the angels sing;  
come, adore on bended knee Christ the Lord, the newborn  
King. *Gloria in excelsis Deo, gloria in excelsis Deo.***

## CONFESSION OF SIN \*

**Most holy and merciful Father, we acknowledge and confess before you our sinful nature—prone to evil and slothful in good—and all our shortcomings and offenses against you. You alone know how often we have sinned in wandering from your ways, in wasting your gifts, in forgetting your love. O Lord, have mercy on us, who are ashamed and sorry for all the ways we have displeased you. Teach us to hate our errors, cleanse us from our secret faults, and forgive our sins for the sake of your dear Son. And O most holy and loving Father, send your purifying grace into our hearts, that we may henceforth live in your light and walk in your ways, according to the commandments of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

ASSURANCE OF GOD'S GRACE: \* Isaiah 9:2–3, 6–7

Pastor: This is the grace of God for our salvation.

**People: Thanks be to God!**

CONFESSION OF FAITH: \* *The Nicene Creed*

**We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible;**

**And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of his Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father; by whom all things were made; who for us and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary, and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; he suffered and was buried; and the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father; and he shall come again, with glory, to judge both the living and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end.**

**And we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son; who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified; who spoke by the prophets; and we believe in one holy catholic\* and apostolic church; we acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins; and we look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

*\* The word catholic means universal*

SONG OF PRAISE \* *As with Gladness Men of Old* (Hymn 226, stanzas 1, 3, & 4)

**As with gladness men of old did the guiding star behold; as with joy they hailed its light, leading onward, beaming bright; so, most gracious God, may we evermore be led to thee.**

**As they offered gifts most rare at that cradle rude and bare; so may we with holy joy, pure, and free from sin's alloy, all our costliest treasures bring, Christ, to thee, our heav'nly King.**

**Holy Jesus, ev'ry day keep us in the narrow way; and when earthly things are past, bring our ransomed souls at last where they need no star to guide, where no clouds thy glory hide.**

ANTHEM (11:00)

*Bethlehem of Noblest Cities*

H. Helvey

Sanctuary Choir Cheryl Elliott, *violin*

INTERCESSION AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

**Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come. Your 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 yours is the kingdom, and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.**

OFFERTORY

*O Holy Night*

arr. J. Park

Mandy Sheetz & Nora Kellum, *cellos* Jessica Sheetz, *piano*

**HYMN (overleaf) \***

*The First Nowell*

THE FIRST NOWELL

SCRIPTURE LESSON: Matthew 2:1–12 (Pew Bible Pages 807–808)

SERMON

***Wisely Seeking***

Dr. Barry Cureton

## Good Christian Men, Rejoice #207

1. Good Christian men, rejoice, with heart and soul and voice; give ye heed to what we say: Jesus Christ is born today; earth and heav'n before him bow, and he is in the manger now. Christ is born today! Christ is born today!
2. Good Christian men, rejoice, with heart and soul and voice; now ye hear of endless bliss: Jesus Christ was born for this! He hath opened heaven's door, and man is blessed evermore. Christ was born for this! Christ was born for this!
3. Good Christian men, rejoice, with heart and soul and voice; now ye need not fear the grave: Jesus Christ was born to save! Calls you one and calls you all to gain his everlasting hall. Christ was born to save! Christ was born to save!

BENEDICTION AND CHORAL RESPONSE \*

(11:00) *A Festive Gloria*

P. Kern

POSTLUDE

*O Come, All Ye Faithful* (Hymn 208)

arr. D. Cherwien

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\*Worshippers, please stand if physically able.

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### **At the Morning Worship Service:**

**Organist:** Frank Dodd

**Choral Director:** Floyd Rawleigh

(Overleaf)

The First Nowell

1. The first Nowell 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. *Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, born is the King of Israel.*
2. They look-ed 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. *Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, born is the King of Israel.*
3. And by the light of that same star three wise men came from country far; to seek for a king was their intent, and to follow the star wherever it went. *Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, born is the King of Israel.*
4. This star drew nigh to the northwest; o'er Bethlehem it took its rest, and there it did both stop and stay, right over the place where Jesus lay. *Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, born is the King of Israel.*
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. *Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, born is the King of Israel.*
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. *Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, born is the King of Israel.*

## Visitors

**Welcome visitors:** Please complete the Connect Card in the pew and drop it in the offering plate. You will receive an informational, one-time mailing.

**Connections class** is held the first and second Sunday of each month. This monthly, two-week informal session is offered for visitors and those who desire an informative introduction to the life and ministry of Westminster Church—without obligation. *Connections* is located in the library (located across the Gathering Space), 9:30–10:30 AM.

## Everyone

**Help us minister to you;** complete a Connect Card each week you worship with us.

**Hearing devices** to use in the Sanctuary are available from the ushers.

**Sanctuary flowers** are given by Dawn Fortna in loving memory of her husband, Donald, and her parents, Mark and Cora Martin; and by Dr. and Mrs. Thomas Winters Jr. in memory of their parents, Dr. and Mrs. George Beacher Jr. and Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Winters Sr.

**If you would like to place flowers in the Sanctuary** in *memory* of a loved one or in *honor* of a 50<sup>th</sup>, 55<sup>th</sup>, or 60<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary, there is availability in January and February. Please contact James L. Adams (610.406.3229 or flowers4505@aol.com). The cost is \$35.

### Christmas Eve Service Times

#### **No Sunday school classes today**

6 PM (prelude begins at 5:40) *tableaux, childcare available*

10 PM (prelude begins at 9:30) *candle lighting service*

**Session has designated the Christmas offering** be split equally between Korah Kids School, recently renamed Bridge School, where missionary Molly De Bruin serves in a community located in a trash dump in Ethiopia, and a partnering seminary's highly sensitive "Project M," which will enable believers in a closed country to receive theological training. Use the "Christmas Offering" envelope, mark a gold pew envelope "Christmas," or give online at [westpca.com/give](http://westpca.com/give).

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# Ministry Highlights

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- **Offering envelopes for 2024** are available today in the Narthex (the area between the Sanctuary and Gathering Space). To request envelopes, please contact our financial coordinator, June Robinson, at [robinson@westpca.com](mailto:robinson@westpca.com).
- **Attention WPC Parents!** Teaching children to be generous is a gift that will bless them their entire lives. Learn how to disciple young church members to start giving early by using children's offering envelopes available in the Narthex with the 2024 offering envelopes. Parents can pick up a box for their children to practice giving now. **Please take only 1 per family.**
- **Wednesday evening dinner, kids' clubs, and Bible study groups** have ended for the year and resume on **January 10**.
- **2024 Bible Reading Plan pamphlets** are available in the kiosks and online at [www.westpca.com/adult-ministries](http://www.westpca.com/adult-ministries). The pamphlet includes 2024 Communion dates.
- **Short-term mission trip information is available!** We hope to send teams to Colombia, Easton, Lancaster (Kingdom Builders), LEAP, and Yakama. Find details and applications on the website ([westpca.com/outreach/stm](http://westpca.com/outreach/stm)), at the kiosk, or in the jr./sr. high Sunday school rooms. Teams may reach capacity prior to deadlines; do not delay. Yakama team is now closed. Contact Jen Barrall with questions ([barrall@westpca.com](mailto:barrall@westpca.com)).

**Please note:** the church office will have limited hours during the Christmas holiday. The office is closed on Monday, December 25, and Monday, January 1. It will be open Tuesday–Friday (12/26–29), 9 AM–2 PM.

*There is no announcements sheet this week.*

Get more information on these and other announcements in any of the following ways: our Westminster Announcements sheet, online at [westpca.com/bulletin](http://westpca.com/bulletin), in the weekly update sent via email, or on the WPC App. **To be added to the email update or to get more information on the WPC App, visit the Information Counter or contact the church office (717.569.2151).**

## Pastoral Staff

Dr. Christopher Walker  
*Senior Pastor*

Dr. John Light  
*Senior Associate Pastor*

Dr. Tucker York  
*Executive Pastor/Missions*

Dr. David Kieffer  
*Associate Pastor/Discipleship &  
Outreach*

Dr. Barry Cureton  
*Associate Pastor/Shepherding &  
Visitation*

Rev. Matthew Collins  
*Associate Pastor/Youth*

Dr. Michael Rogers  
*Pastor Emeritus*



Worship: 8 AM & 11 AM, 6 PM Sunday School: 9:30 AM

2151 Oregon Pike, Lancaster, PA 17601

Church Office Hours:

Monday–Friday, 8 AM–4 PM

717.569.2151 / [www.westpca.com](http://www.westpca.com)