

Holding

*The Day is here
and we made it to Bethlehem!
The time has come for kneeling
and we've seen the Child!
There is singing in the stable
and we want desperately to hold on to it...
hold on to the Star!
and the angels!
and the spirit of love!
How do we hold on
to the Christmas spirit?
Why can't every day be Christmas?*

*The world mutters "Be realistic,"
and sometimes we church people mutter too.
On our way back from Bethlehem
sometimes we forget
what we've been warned about in a dream:
to return another way.
Once we've seen the Child,
we're left holding hearts
wherein angels dance
and stars sing!
Once we've been to Bethlehem,
every day is Christmas!*

Taken from the book "Kneeling in Bethlehem" by Ann Weems



UNTO
US A Child
IS BORN

ISAIAH 9:6

*Christmas Eve Service
December 24, 2011
7:00 PM*



7:00 PM

Welcome to worship with the Fairgreen family!
The * symbol means, "All who are able, please stand."

Christmas Eve

PRELUDE

Shannon Smith

WELCOME

Please sign fellowship book found in pews

CALL TO WORSHIP

Mary Beth Henning, Liturgist

One: The angel of the Lord announced to Mary that she would bear the Holy Child.

All: He was born in Bethlehem then. We pray that he might be born again tonight in our hearts.

One: The angels reassured the shepherds who were frightened by the Brightness of God's glory saying, "Do not be afraid!"

All: The angels directed them, just as they would direct us, to the gentle light shining from the manger so we will not be afraid.

One: A choir of angels filled the night sky with hymns of praise for God's Christmas gift. Can we do anything less?

All: We gather tonight to join that song with thankful hearts. We gather to offer our best gifts to God's gracious Son. Amen.

*HYMN OF ADORATION ~ #41 (verses 1, 2)

"O Come, All Ye Faithful"

*UNISON PRAYER OF PRAISE

Holy God, come into this holy night with stars to light our way to the cradle of peace. Come with angels to sing to us of a deep joy. Come to this moment and open our hearts so we may hear the familiar story new and fresh. Surprise us and remind us that the child in the manger is Immanuel—God with us now and always. Amen.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

Connie Winslow & Aaron Winslow

Youth: This is the last time this year we will light the Advent candles.
(Light the four candles.)

Adult: For four weeks the candles have been burning as we thought about hope, peace, joy, and love. These are the gifts that Jesus brought to us at Christmas time. The waiting is over and Jesus is born.



*The Fairgreen Presbyterian Church Staff
would like to wish you and your family
a very Merry Christmas and
a Blessed New Year!*

*The poinsettia plants decorating the sanctuary today
are given in Dedication to:*

*"In Celebration of Jesus—Hope for the World"..... Pat Gibson
"In Celebration of Max Campbell..... Ken & Mary Ellen Campbell
"God So Loved The World That He Sent His Only Son...".... Fred & Bev King*

*"In Loving Memory of my parents"..... Marilyn McAfee
"In Loving Memory of Rose Shake & George Stifel... Bob Shake & Ruth Stifel
"Christ Was Born!"..... Marjorie Heaton*

*"In Loving Memory of our parents"..... Rick & Kay Amendola
"In Loving Memory of my husband, Sam"..... Dolores Tippin
"Joy, Joy, Joy!"..... Connie Winslow*

*"In Loving Memory of my husband, Jack, my parents and my two brothers,
Bud & Jim..... Louise Hughes
"In Loving Memory of Dick Burtch"..... The Burtch Family
"In Honor of our mother Louise Hughes and in Loving Memory of our
parents; Jack Hughes and Hank and
Mary Domschot..... Dave & Sharon Domschot*

*"In Loving Memory of C. Webster Cole"..... The Bandfield Family
"We Give Thanks For a Child Born For us, A Son Given To Us, Who
Taught Us To Love All of God's People:
REJOICE! "..... Woody Cole*

*The Chancel Guild thanks all who have made our
sanctuary beautiful this Advent Season. Poinsettia
plants may be taken home after the 7:00pm
Christmas Eve service or the 10:00am Christmas
Day service. Any plants left after the services will
be delivered to shut-ins.*



Youth: Each week another candle glowed, and our wreath shone more brightly. Today we light our white candle, the candle that represents Jesus. It is the center of our wreath, just as Jesus is the center of our lives. Happy birthday, Jesus!!! (*Light the Christ candle.*)

All: **God, our hearts sing with joy and praise because of Jesus. At this happy season, we rejoice that Jesus came among us. By his birth and life he has shown us that we are your people and that we are greatly loved. Help us to remember Christmas all year long by giving to others the gifts of life: hope, peace, joy, love, kindness, and understanding. Amen.**

***HYMN ~ #2095**

"Star-Child"

PASTORAL PRAYER

Rev. Pat

ANTHEM ~ "Mary, Did You Know?"

The Praise Ensemble

THE WORD OF THE LORD

SELECTIONS FROM THE INFANCY NARRATIVE

"The Candle Crèche"

**ANTHEM ~ "Breath of Heaven" ~ The Praise Ensemble
Congregational Hymn ~ #25 "Away in the Manger"**

**ANTHEM ~ "The Shepherds" ~ The Geneva Choir
Congregational Hymn ~ #2091 "The King of Glory Comes"**

**CHRISTMAS HOMILY ~ Rev. Pat Lawrence Shafer
ANTHEM ~ "Joy to the World" ~ The Geneva Choir**

**THE OFFERING AND THE CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING
OFFERTORY ~**

Mary Beth Henning

ANTHEM ~ "Were You There on That Christmas Night"

The Praise Ensemble

***DOXOLOGY FOR CHRISTMAS**

**Praise God whose Son was born this night.
Praise Christ who came to give us light.
Praise Holy Spirit, Three in One;
Let praises ring, thy will be done. Amen.**

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

Mary Beth Henning

THE CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION

THE INVITATION

Friends this is the joyful feast of the people of God! They will come from east and west, and from north and south, and sit at the table in the kingdom of God.

According to Luke, when our risen Lord, was at the table with his disciples, he took bread, and blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him. This is the Lord's table. Our Savior invites those who trust him to share the feast which he has prepared.

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

God is with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

On a night like tonight we have much to thank you for, Gifting God: For you sent your Child to shine among us while we were still under the shadow of death. You broke the yoke of sin and loneliness that burdened us. You dwelt among us in justice and truth, giving grace and peace. And so we join the angels' song to the shepherds:

Glory to God in the highest heaven and peace on earth to all of good will.

Teach us, Child of Bethlehem, Prince of Peace, to follow your example of righteous living and good will to all. As you broke your life open in our midst at Christmas, as Jesus grew to share bread with his disciples and followers, so we remember you as we break bread together this night. Be among us as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ was promised; Christ is born; Christ will dwell among us.

At this table unify our hearts and lives that we may be your people who return to the world glorifying and praising you through our living,

**Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Spirit, Three-in-One.
Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer (Debts)

The Blessing of the Bread and Cup
Communion of the People of God

Unison Prayer after Communion

**God of grace, you renew us at your table with the bread of life.
May this food strengthen us in love and help us to serve you in
each other, not just on Christmas day but everyday. We ask this
in the name of Jesus the Lord. Amen.**

ANTHEM ~ "Lullaby for Christmas Eve" The Geneva Choir and The Praise Ensemble

*THE CANDLE LIGHTING LITURGY

One: The light that was lighted in Bethlehem so long ago has never been put out.

All: It has become the light of the world.

One: Jesus said, "I am the light of the world, whoever follows me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the light of life."

All: Now let us spread this precious light, the Spirit of Christ; a celebration of Christmas throughout the world.

(The liturgist and pastor will pass the candlelight through the congregation. Please pass the flame along your row, tipping your unlit candle into the flame.)

***HYMN OF THE HOLY BIRTH ~ #60**

"Silent Night, Holy Night"

Congregational Response ~ "Let There Be Peace on Earth"

Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me:

Let there be peace on earth, the peace that was meant to be.

With God our creator, children all are we

Let us walk with each other in perfect harmony.

Let peace begin with me, let this be my solemn vow:

To take each moment and live each moment in peace eternally.

Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.

POSTLUDE

Shannon Smith