

Gaithersburg Presbyterian Church – December 19, 2021

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Church in person at 9:30 and 11:00 a.m.

Livestream on YouTube at 11:00 a.m.



Opening Music

“Now the Heavens Start to Whisper”

Wade Meyers (9:30)

“Gentle Mary Laid Her Child”

arr. Bill Ingram (11:00)

The Gaithersburg Bell Ensemble

Welcome

Please register your attendance with the QR code on the back of the bulletin, or with the online link, or on paper in the church Gathering Space. Need help? Ask any usher.

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Call to Worship [*responsive*]

Come. Worship God. Bring hopes and longings, joy and sadness, everything you are.

The eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped. The lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.

Come! Enter God’s future. Step into hope and worship God.

Common Prayer [*together*]

Gracious God, keeper of the secrets of creation, visit us through the cry of need, the unforeseen stranger, and the unexpected guest, that we may be ready for the coming of Christ in the midst of life, at the end of life, and at the end of time. Amen.

Hymn [*stand*]

“Of the Father’s Love Begotten” *verses 1, 5 and 6* Glory to God #108

Call to Confession and Prayer of Confession [*together*]

Holy God, you are always with us and always coming. We confess that we do not know how to truly prepare our lives for that reality. We have forgotten how to hope. We have ignored your promises. We have been distracted by the cares of this world. Forgive us, Lord. Grant us the simple wonder of the shepherds, the courage of the magi, and the quiet faith of Mary and Joseph, that we may journey with them toward Bethlehem and find the good news of a child born for us. Amen.

[*Silence for Personal Prayer*]

Assurance of Pardon [*responsive*]

Friends, believe the good news that is proclaimed today and every day. Hear the good news God speaks: I love you. I forgive you. I restore you to new life. Friends, in Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. **Thanks be to God.**

We Listen to God's Word

Children's Message

Carolyn Hayes

Children and youth leave for class. Children can be picked up after church in Room 30/31 or Room 32/33. Youth will be released from class to find you.

Sung Response

"He Came Down"

Glory to God #137

Scripture

Matthew 1:18–21

¹⁸ Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah^[a] took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. ²⁰ But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins."

Luke 4:16–21

¹⁶ When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, ¹⁷ and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:

¹⁸ "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to bring good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to let the oppressed go free,
¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

²⁰ And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. ²¹ Then he began to say to them, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."

Hear the good news! **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

Be An Angel

Rev. Mary Beth Lawrence

We Respond to God's Grace

Hymn

"Angels We Have Heard on High"

Glory To God #113

Invitation to Generosity and Prayer of Thanksgiving

Offertory

"People, Look East"

Wade Meyers (9:30)

"A Handel Christmas Medley"

arr. Linda Lamb (11:00)

The Canterbury Ringers

Prayers of the People and The Lord's Prayer [*together*]

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

We Depart for Service

Announcements

Sending Song [*stand*] "My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout!"

Glory to God #100

Passing the Peace

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

Closing Blessing

May the peace of God be in your heart, the grace of God be in your words, the love of God be in your hands, the joy of God be in your soul, and may your life be a song of praise. **Glory be to God! Amen.**

Closing Music

“Go Tell It On The Mountain”

Wade Meyers (9:30)

“Fantasy on Hyfrydol”

arr. Hal H. Hopson (11:00)

The Canterbury Ringers

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Participating in the service:

Elder Vivian Chefor, Worship Leader (9:30)

Allison Howlett, Worship Leader (11:00)

Mr. Wade Meyers, Director of Music and Worship Arts

Ms. Carolyn Hayes, Director of Children and Young Families

Rev. Mary Austin

Rev. Mary Beth Lawrence

The Prayer of Confession and Assurance of Pardon are adapted from the *Follow Me* curriculum.

The Call to Worship and Common Prayer were written by Brian Wren.

The Closing Blessing is adapted from the writings of John Birch.



CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR'S SERVICES

December 24 | Christmas Eve Service | 4:00 PM
Suitable for all ages

December 25 | Christmas Day Service | 11:00 AM
Carols and stories

December 26 | Worship Service | 11:00 AM

January 2 | Worship Service | 11:00 AM | Communion

January 9 | Worship Services | 9:30 & 11:00 AM
Ordination and Installation of Church Officers at 11:00

All services will be available in person and via livestream.



Please sign the guest book by using your smartphone camera to scan the QR code (gpchurch.org/guestbook)