

THE ADVENT WREATH

The Advent Season is the time for preparing for the coming of Christ and the celebration of the Incarnation of the Eternally-begotten Son of God, the second Person of the Holy Trinity. Believers remember how the Hebrews longed for the coming of the Messiah, and how their prophets foretold the birth of Christ. Our anticipation of Christmas is coupled with our anticipation of the Second Advent of Christ, when He will come again. The beauty and symbolism of the Advent Wreath reminds Christians to “prepare the way of the Lord.”

THE FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT ~ The Prophets’ Candle, the first purple candle, which represents Christ’s royalty and the sinner’s repentance, is lighted. The coming of Christ was foretold by the prophets of the Old Testament hundreds of years before the Incarnation of Christ.

THE SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT ~ The Bethlehem Candle, the second candle, is lighted pointing to the Messiah being born of the Virgin Mary in Bethlehem as foretold by the prophet Micah.

THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT ~ The Shepherds’ Candle, the third candle, is lighted to remind us that the birth of the Messiah was announced to humble shepherds, and that we straying sheep must go to Him, believe in Him and tell others the Good News of salvation.

THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT ~ The Angels’ Candle, lighted as the Festival of the Incarnation nears, reminds us of the angelic announcement and calls us to focus on Christ’s finished work on the cross and to anticipate His second coming.

CHRISTMAS EVE ~ The Christ Candle, the white one in the center of the wreath, proclaims the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Light of the World, Who gives the Light of Salvation to those who walked in sin’s darkness. It is lighted on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

The Fourth Sunday of Advent

TRINITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA

DECEMBER 21, 2025

MORNING WORSHIP

THE SILENT MEDITATION UPON ENTERING THE SANCTUARY

If Christ had arrived with trumpets and lain in a cradle of gold, His birth would have been a splendid affair but it would not be a comfort to me. He was rather to lie in the lap of a poor maiden and be thought of little significance in the eyes of the world. Now I can come to Him. Now He reveals Himself to the miserable in order not to give any impression that He arrives with great power, splendor, and aristocratic manners.

MARTIN LUTHER



APPROACHING GOD'S THRONE

The Christian Greeting and Call to Preparation

Rev. Kurt Cooper

The Prelude

Sussex Carol

arr. David Willcocks

*When sin departs before His grace, then life and health come in its place;
Angels and men with joy may sing, all for to see the newborn King.*

The Announcements

Rev. Michael Howell

The Chiming of the Hour

The Choral Introit

*Ah, Dearest Jesus, Holy Child
from Christmas Oratorio*

J. S. Bach

Ah, dearest Jesus, holy Child,
Make Thee a bed, soft, undefiled
Within our hearts, that they may be
All quiet chambers kept for Thee.

† Indicates the congregation standing

• Indicates seating for those detained

† The Call to Worship – Isaiah 40:9 (*congregation reads bold type*)

Go up into a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good news;

Lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good news;

Lift it up, fear not;

Say to the cities of Judah, “Behold your God!”

•† The Hymn No. 157

Angels We Have Heard On High

GLORIA

† The Apostles’ Creed – inside cover of *The Hymnal*

† The Prayer of Invocation

† The Lord’s Prayer

Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name.

Thy kingdom come.

Thy will be done, in 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, for ever. Amen.

† The Doxology

OLD HUNDREDTH

**All praise, eternal Son, to Thee,
Whose advent sets Thy people free;
Whom with the Father we adore
And Holy Ghost forevermore. Amen.**

SEEKING GOD'S FACE

The Call to Confession – James 4:8

Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

The Prayer of Confession – based upon Psalm 51:1-3, 9, 12

**Have mercy on us, O God, according to Your steadfast love;
according to Your abundant mercy blot out our transgressions.
Wash us thoroughly from our iniquity, and cleanse us from our sin!
For we know our transgressions, and our sin is ever before us.
Hide Your face from our sins, and blot out all our iniquities.
Restore to us the joy of Your salvation, and uphold us with a willing spirit. Amen.**

The Silent Prayers of Confession

The Assurance of Pardon – 2 Corinthians 5:21

For our sake He made Him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.

The Pastoral Prayer

Rev. Howell

•† The Hymn No. 159

It Came Upon the Midnight Clear

CAROL

The Offering

*Each one must give as he has decided in his heart,
not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.*

2 Corinthians 9:7

The Anthem

The First Nowell

Trad. English Carol, arr. Wilberg

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.

Refrain: Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell! Born is the King of Israel.

They looked 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. *Refrain.*

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 mankind hath bought. *Refrain.*

HEARING GOD'S VOICE

The Prayer for Illumination

Rev. Cooper

† The Old Testament Reading – Isaiah 7:10-16

pew Bible, page 727

† The New Testament Reading – Matthew 1:18-25

pew Bible, page 1026

*If you are visiting today and do not own a personal copy of the Scriptures,
please take one from the table in the narthex as our gift.*

All men are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field.

**The grass withers and the flowers fade,
but the Word of our God shall stand forever. Amen.**

Isaiah 40:6b, 8

The Personal Meditation and Preparation of the Heart

*Children age four through kindergarten may leave to attend Children's Church.
They may be picked up in Room E-100 after the service.*

The Sermon

A THRILL OF HOPE

Rev. Cooper

IV. Fortunate Son

The Closing Prayer

FOLLOWING GOD'S SPIRIT

† The Hymn No. 149

Good Christian Men, Rejoice

IN DULCI JUBILO

† The Benediction of God's Grace

† The Threefold Amen – No. 657 in *The Hymnal*

The Postlude

The Rejoicing

G. F. Handel, arr. Taylor

LEADING IN WORSHIP

Rev. Kurt Cooper, *Senior Minister*

Rev. Michael Howell, *Assistant Minister*

Dr. Mark Nabholz, *Director of Music*

Dr. Jacob Taylor, *Organist & Music Associate*

THE INSTRUMENTALISTS

Michael Huff, *trumpet*

Bryan Reeves, *trumpet*

Brenda Luchsinger, *horn*

Jonathan Houghtling, *trombone*

Michael Mason, *tuba*

A THRILL OF HOPE

Isaiah 7:10-16

IV. Fortunate Son

I. Isaiah's Context

II. Remarkable Child

III. God's Presence

To all who are spiritually weary and seek rest;
to all who mourn and long for comfort;
to all who struggle and desire victory;
to all who sin and need a Savior;
to all who are strangers and want fellowship;
to all who hunger and thirst after righteousness;
and to all who will come,
this church opens wide her doors and offers welcome
in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ.



TRINITY *A congregation of the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA)*
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH trinitypca.org

157 Angels We Have Heard on High

1. An - gels we have heard on high, sweet - ly sing - ing o'er the plains,
 2. Shep-herds, why this ju - bi - lee? Why your joy - ous strains pro - long?
 3. Come to Beth - le - hem and see him whose birth the an - gels sing;
 4. See with - in a man - ger laid Je - sus, Lord of heav'n and earth!

and the moun-tains in re - ply ech - o back their joy - ous strains.
 Say what may the tid - ings be, which in - spire your heav'n - ly song?
 come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ the Lord, the new - born King.
 Ma - ry, Jo - seph, lend your aid, sing with us our Sav - ior's birth.

Refrain

Glo - ri - a

in ex - cel - sis De - o, glo

ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o.

Angels, from the Realms of Glory 158

1. An - gels, from the realms of glo - ry, wing your flight o'er all the earth;
2. Shep - herds in the fields a - bid - ing, watch - ing o'er your flocks by night,
3. Sa - ges, leave your con - tem - pla - tions, bright - er vi - sions beam a - far;
4. Saints be - fore the al - tar bend - ing, watch - ing long in hope and fear,

ye who sang cre - a - tion's sto - ry, now pro - claim Mes - si - ah's birth:
 God with man is now re - sid - ing, yon - der shines the in - fant Light:
 seek the great De - sire of na - tions; ye have seen his na - tal star:
 sud - den - ly the Lord, de - scend - ing, in his tem - ple shall ap - pear:

Refrain

Come and wor - ship, come and wor - ship, wor - ship Christ, the new - born King.

159 It Came upon the Midnight Clear

1. It came up-on the mid-night clear, that glo-ri-ous song of old,
 2. Still through the clo-ven skies they come, with peace-ful wings un-furled,
 3. And ye, be-neath life's crush-ing load, whose forms are bend-ing low,
 4. For lo, the days are has-t'ning on, by proph-et bards fore-told,

from an-gels bend-ing near the earth to touch their harps of gold:
 and still their heav'n-ly mu-sic floats o'er all the wea-ry world:
 who toil a-long the climb-ing way with pain-ful steps and slow,
 when with the ev-er-cir-cle years comes round the age of gold;

“Peace on the earth, good will to men, from heav'n's all-gra-cious King”;
 a-bove its sad and low-ly plains they bend on hov-’ring wing,
 look now! for glad and gold-en hours come swift-ly on the wing:
 when peace shall o-ver all the earth its an-cient splen-dors fling,

the world in sol-lemn still-ness lay to hear the an-gels sing.
 and ev-er o'er its Ba-bel sounds the bless-ed an-gels sing.
 O rest be-side the wea-ry road and hear the an-gels sing.
 and the whole world give back the song which now the an-gels sing.

WORDS: Edmund H. Sears, 1849 (Luke 2:13-14)
 MUSIC: Richard Storrs Willis, 1850

CAROL
 CMD
 Luke 2:9

149 Good Christian Men, Rejoice



1. Good Chris-tian men, re - joice, with heart and soul and voice;
2. Good Chris-tian men, re - joice, with heart and soul and voice;
3. Good Chris-tian men, re - joice, with heart and soul and voice;



give ye heed to what we say: Je - sus Christ is born to - day;
 now ye hear of end - less bliss: Je - sus Christ was born for this!
 now ye need not fear the grave: Je - sus Christ was born to save!



earth and heav'n be - fore him bow, and he is in the man - ger now.
 He hath o - pened heav - en's door, and man is bless - ed ev - er - more.
 Calls you one and calls you all to gain his ev - er - last - ing hall.



Christ is born to - day!	Christ is born to - day!
Christ was born for this!	Christ was born for this!
Christ was born to save!	Christ was born to save!

