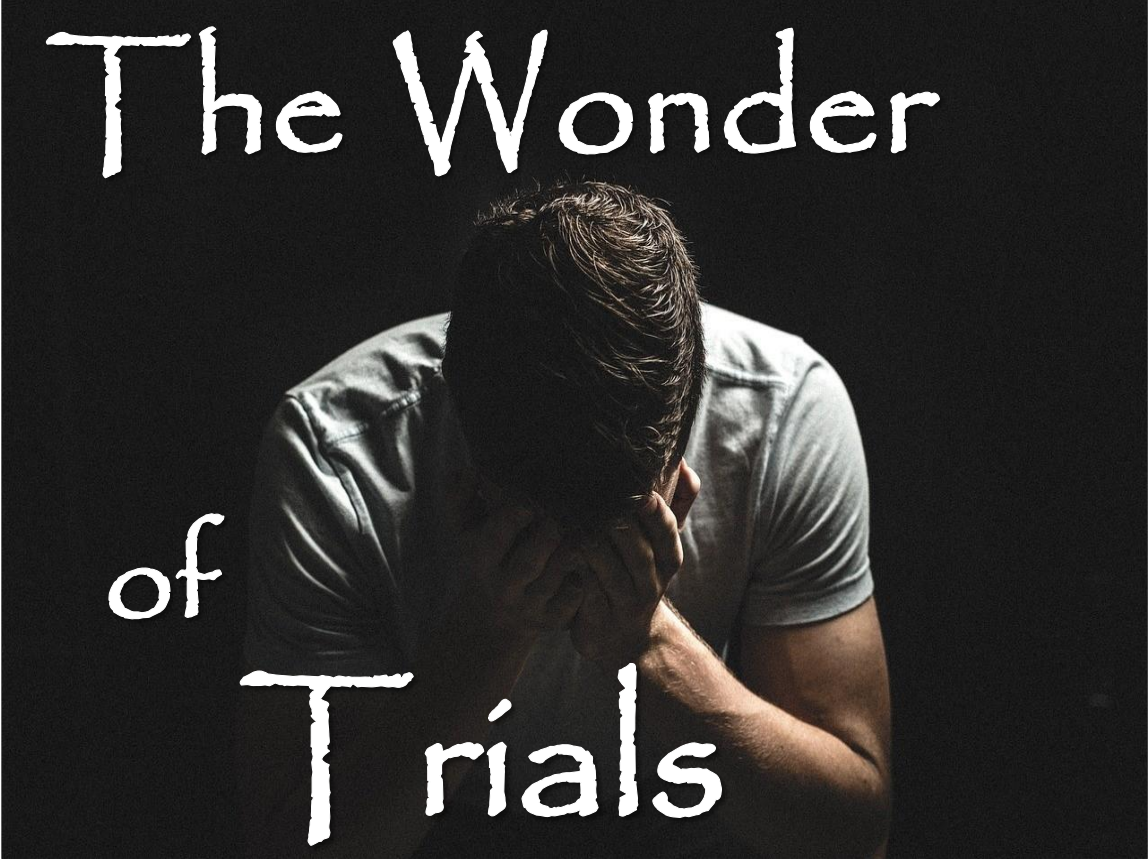


First Presbyterian Church

December 8, 2024



200 N. Lisbon St., Carrollton, OH

(330) 627-4330

firstpresbyteriancarrollton.org



First Presbyterian Church

December 8, 2024

10:30 A.M

PRELUDE – WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS CALL TO WORSHIP

O you who sit in darkness, with no hope of light and drunk with despair, look up. The light of the world is coming into your darkness; hope unearned and not deserved is coming. In the words of the prophet, arise for your light is come!

We light the first candle to remind us that we can trust God to bring light to our darkness and comfort to our loneliness.

Justice can be hard to come by. Many times what actually happened is obscured by a cloud of doubt and legalese to prevent justice. But the day is coming when a descendent of David will appear. The LORD's spirit will rest on him. He will not judge by mere appearances, or make decisions on the basis of hearsay. He will treat the poor fairly, and make right decisions.

We light the second candle in hope for when God's rule over all the world brings justice.

*INVOCATION (*Opening Prayer*)

O God, when you came to earth bringing life and light, you found that even your chosen people rejected you. Yet in love, you paid the ultimate price so that we could be adopted into your family. As we celebrate Christmas, may we live our lives anticipating the time when you will reign in glory, bringing peace and wholeness to our broken, sinful world. **Amen.**

*HYMN

“Angels We Have Heard on High”

#23 BLUE

1 Angels we have heard on high Sweetly singing o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply echoing their joyous strains.

R Gloria, in excelsis Deo; Gloria, in excelsis Deo.

2 Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be which inspire your heavenly song? (R)

3 Come to Bethlehem and see Him whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee Christ the Lord, the newborn King. (R)

CALL TO CONFESSION, CONFESSION AND ASSURANCE OF PARDON

O promised Christ: We are a world at war.

Our peace depends on your coming.

We are a sinful people.

Our pardon depends on your coming.

We are full of good intentions but weak at keeping promises;

Our only hope of doing God's will is that you should come and help us do it.

Lord Christ, Word made flesh, our world waits -

For your peace, pardon, and for your grace. Even so: come, Lord Jesus.¹

(Time of silent personal confession)

When we look back at your first coming into our world, O Lord, we are impressed that you chose ordinary people to attend your birth.

You chose that which is neglected and ignored to do great, incredible things.

Yet, O God, when you call us - your power is sufficient for us to do your will,

We prefer to stay in our darkness, ignoring the light of your presence in our lives.

Forgive us, we pray, our sins -

¹ Reprinted by permission from The Worship Sourcebook, Second Edition, © 2013, Faith Alive Christian Resources. P. 447.

For the times we ignore what you want us to do, preferring the darkness of our selfishness to the light of your love.

Grant us the courage to step into the light of your love.

Help us be the lights of your love in this world of darkness this Christmas time.

Hear the good news of God's amazing grace. In Christ we are loved and made new.
Therefore, rejoice because we are forgiven through God's grace!

***PASSING OF THE PEACE**

May the peace, love and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

And also with you.

Let us greet one another in the name of the Lord.

***HYMN "Speak, O Lord"**

INSERT

Speak, O Lord, as we come to You to receive the food of your holy word.

Take Your truth, plant it deep in us; shape and fashion us in Your likeness,

That the light of Christ might be seen today in our acts of love and our deeds of faith.

Speak, O Lord, and fulfil in us all Your purposes, for Your glory.

MESSAGE "The Wonder of Trials"

***HYMN "I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day" #267 GREEN**

1 I heard the bells on Christmas day their old familiar carols play,
And wild and sweet the words repeat of peace on earth, good-will to men.

2 I thought how, as the day had come, the belfries of all Christendom
Had rolled along th'unbroken song of peace on earth, good-will to men.

3 And in despair I bowed my head: "There is no peace on earth," I said,
"For hate is strong, and mocks the song of peace on earth, good-will to men."

4 Then pealed the bells more loud and deep: "God is not dead, nor doth He sleep;

The wrong shall fail, the right prevail, with peace on earth, good-will to men."

5 Then ringing, singing on its way, the world revolved from night to day—
A voice, a chime, a chant sublime of peace on earth, good-will to men!

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH "The Nicene Creed" PAGE 15 BLUE

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became truly human.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

The Lord's Prayer

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.

***HYMN “In the Bleak Midwinter”**

#36 BLUE

1 In the bleak midwinter, frosty wind made moan,
Earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone;
Snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow, in the bleak midwinter, long ago.

2 Our God, Heaven cannot hold Him, nor earth sustain;
Heaven and earth shall flee away when He comes to reign:
In the bleak midwinter a stable place sufficed the Lord God incarnate, Jesus Christ.

3 Angels and archangels May have gathered there,
Cherubim and seraphim thronged the air;
But His mother only, in her maiden bliss, worshipped the beloved with a kiss.

4 What can I give Him, Poor as I am? If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;
If I were a wise man, I would do my part; yet what I can I give Him: give my heart.

CHARGE TO THE PEOPLE

BENEDICTION

O Come, Emmanuel and ransom your captive people,

Restore to us the joy of your salvation.

O Lord, be gracious to us and bless us,

Make your face shine upon us and your peace cover us.

May all the peoples praise you, O Emmanuel.

May all rise and pay homage to you at your coming.

In our hearts and lives may we know that because of your coming, O Emmanuel, O
God who lives with us,

Joy has come to the world and will never leave. Amen.

BENEDICTION RESPONSE –

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Deacon of the Month:

December: Kathy Hutson

Upcoming Events:

Community Prayer Group	Dec. 11	6:00 PM (Nazarene Ch.)
Advent Study (Sunday before worship)	Dec. 15	9:30 AM
Christmas Eve Service	Dec. 24	6:30 PM

Worship Leaders: Kathy and Leonard Hutson, Hannah Mergen, Jay Stoneman, and Pastor Tim Dyck.

Jeremiah 31:31-34

"Indeed, a time is coming," says the LORD, "when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and Judah. It will not be like the old covenant that I made with their ancestors when I delivered them from Egypt. For they violated that covenant, even though I was like a faithful husband to them," says the LORD.

"But I will make a new covenant with the whole nation of Israel after I plant them back in the land," says the LORD. "I will put my law within them and write it on their hearts and minds. I will be their God and they will be my people. "People will no longer need to teach their neighbors and relatives to know me. For all of them, from the least important to the most important, will know me," says the LORD. "For I will forgive their sin and will no longer call to mind the wrong they have done."

Haggai 2:6-9

Moreover, the LORD who rules over all says: 'In just a little while I will once again shake the sky and the earth, the sea and the dry ground. I will also shake up all the nations, and they will offer their treasures; then I will fill this temple with glory,' says the LORD who rules over all.

'The silver and gold will be mine,' says the LORD who rules over all. 'The future splendor of this temple will be greater than that of former times,' the LORD who rules over all declares, 'and in this place I will give peace.'

Luke 1:18-20

Zechariah said to the angel, "How can I be sure of this? For I am an old man, and my wife is old as well."

The angel answered him, "I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, and I was sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news. And now, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time, you will be silent, unable to speak, until the day these things take place."

Matthew 2:1-12

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, in the time of King Herod, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem saying, "Where is the one who is born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him."

When King Herod heard this he was alarmed, and all Jerusalem with him. After assembling all the chief priests and experts in the law, he asked them where the Christ was to be born.

"In Bethlehem of Judea," they said, "for it is written this way by the prophet: 'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are in no way least among the rulers of Judah, for out of you will come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.'"

Then Herod privately summoned the wise men and determined from them when the star had appeared. He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and look carefully for the child. When you find him, inform me so that I can go and worship him as well."

After listening to the king they left, and once again the star they saw when it rose led them until it stopped above the place where the child was.¹⁰ When they saw the star they shouted joyfully. As they came into the house and saw the child with Mary his mother, they bowed down and worshiped him. They opened their treasure boxes and gave him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

After being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they went back by another route to their own country.

Matthew 2:13-15

After they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother and flee to Egypt, and stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to look for the child to kill him." Then he got up, took the child and his mother during the night, and went to Egypt.