

As we wait faithfully for God's time,
we light the candles
of Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love.



First Presbyterian Church

149 Broad Street
Tonawanda, New York 14150 ~ 2111
Church: (716) 692-1319
Rev. Dr. Rebecca Chaffee

Come, Worship the Lord, Our God
4th Sunday of Advent

CCLI License # 2839486

December 18, 2022

10:30 am

PRELUDE *The First Noel*

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP

Come, Over-flowing joy:

tip-toeing into our lives

like the children on the holiest of nights.

Come, Good News of grace:

prepare our hearts to welcome you,

and all whose hopes have turned to ashes.

Come, Dreamer of peace:

so we may pour our lives and gifts

into a world in need of reconciliation.

***CAROL *O Come All Ye Faithful* #133**

ADESTE FIDELES

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING: Adult Sunday School Class

The prophet Isaiah shared a word with the lonely world. We will not be left alone. God will give us a sign.

All: A young woman will have a baby.

He will be named Emmanuel, which means "God with us."

All: His life and his words will show us how to follow God and choose what is good.

As we wait faithfully for God's time, we light the candles of Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love.

All: In God's time of love, we will learn to love each other.

HYMN: "*Now It's Time to Light the Candle*" vs 4

4. Now it's time to light the candle, shining love in Jesus' name.

When all people join together earth will never be the same.

Light will overcome the darkness: Be the love the Christ Child brings.

OPENING PRAYER

Rev. Dr. Rebecca Chaffee

You watched in silence,

until you spoke in dreams,

sang through angels,

and cried a newborn's lusty wails.

You were born for us,

not to sit in power,

but next to the bullied

on school buses;

not with a silver spoon in your mouth,

but with words of justice,

with songs for hope for the grieving.

You come, like the cold wind of winter,
or a warm breeze in the spring,
to feed hungry souls
with the bread of heaven;
to share peace with those
filled with bitterness and fear.

You came in love to us, for us, to be with us,
God in Community, Holy in One,
so come to us again, as we pray saying,

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.

CALL TO RECONCILIATION

How easy we lost our way on the road to Bethlehem! How quick we are to dismiss the dreams and hopes our God has for us in this holy season! Let us come to the One who approaches, ready to swaddle us in forgiveness and grace, as we pray together, saying,

UNISON PRAYER FOR FORGIVENESS

**Come now, Reconciler of the nations,
for our world, our lives, need your peace more than ever before.
Come, Caller to discipleship,
for we long to let go of our self-interest and narcissism.
Come, Word Gifter,
for we hunger to hear your voice once again, ever always.
Come, Servant of the poor,
so we notice you in all those we push past in this hectic season.**

Come, Silence of our nights and Holiness of our hearts, and forgive us for turning your compassion into commercials, your joy into jingles, your hope into hollow words, your love into lust for the short-lasting offerings of the world. May we find our way to the One born simply, born gracefully, for us – Jesus, the Child of wonder and life.

Silence is kept

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

We may not notice them there, at the back of the pile of presents, but it is God's hope, God's life, God's mercy, which are the true gifts we receive each and every moment. We give thanks to our gracious God, who has forgiven us and blessed us. Amen!

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION (Please be seated.)

Rev. Dr. Rebecca Chaffee

Loving God, by the gift of your Spirit,
teach us, like Mary, to treasure your words and ponder them
in our hearts; through Jesus Christ, your Word made flesh. Amen.

The Christmas Story
by the whole congregation of First Presbyterian Church, Tonawanda

<i>Chapter 1: God's Promise of a Savior</i>	<i>Isaiah 7:14</i>
Hymn #121 (vs. 1, 4) <i>O Little Town of Bethlehem</i>	ST. LOUIS
<i>Chapter 2: The Story Begins</i>	<i>Luke 1:1-4</i>
Solo <i>Breath of Heaven</i> <i>Kelsey Burns</i>	
<i>Chapter 3: Gabriel Visits Mary</i>	<i>Luke 1:28-38</i>
Hymn #88 (vs. 1) <i>O Come, O Come, Emmanuel</i>	VENI EMMANUEL
<i>Chapter 4: The Angel and Joseph</i>	<i>Matthew 1:18-25</i>
Hymn #140 (vs. 1) <i>Once In Royal David's City</i>	IRBY
<i>Chapter 5: Mary and Joseph journey to Bethlehem, and Jesus is born</i>	<i>Luke 2:1-7</i>
Hymn #115 (all 3 vs) <i>Away in a Manger</i>	MUELLER
<i>Chapter 6: Angels appear to shepherds</i>	<i>Luke 2:8-14</i>
Hymn #113 (vs. 1, 3) <i>Angels We Have Heard on High</i>	GLORIA
<i>Chapter 7: Shepherds decide to follow</i>	<i>Luke 2:15</i>
Hymn #135 <i>Rise Up, Shepherd, and Follow</i>	
Billy Welch: There's a star in the East on Christmas morn	
All: Rise up, shepherd, and follow	
Billy: It will lead to the place where the Christ was born;	
All: Rise up, shepherd, and follow	
Follow, follow, rise up shepherd, and follow;	
Follow the star of Bethlehem,	
Rise up, shepherd, and follow.	
Billy Welch: If you take good heed to the angel's words;	
All: Rise up, shepherd, and follow;	
Billy: You'll forget your flocks, you'll forget your herds;	
All: Rise up, shepherd and follow.	
Follow, follow, rise up shepherd, and follow;	
Follow the star of Bethlehem,	
Rise up, shepherd, and follow	

Chapter 8: Shepherds journey to the manger
Still, Still, Still Jessica Schurr

Luke 2:16-19

Chapter 9: Shepherds Praise God
Hymn #151 (vs. 1) **We Three Kings**

Luke 2:20
KINGS OF ORIENT

Chapter 10: Wise men travel from the east
Hymn #151 (vs. 5) **We Three Kings**

Matthew 2:1-8
KINGS OF ORIENT

Chapter 11: Wise men offer gifts to the baby

Matthew 2:9-13

CALL TO THE OFFERING

HYMN: **What Child Is This #145 (vs 1,3)**

GREENSLEEVES

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

We must not take the gifts God gives to us, even the most tangible ones, and hoard them for ourselves. Rather, we offer them, as well as our hearts and lives as offerings to those in true need around us. This we pray in the name of Bethlehem's Babe. Amen.

Chapter 12: Isaiah's prophecy is fulfilled
For Unto Us a Child is Born - Solo

Isaiah 9:6
Contemp. arr./ Handel

CHARGE (Please Stand for the Charge)

Let us go to be the gift another needs,
**sharing God's blessings of love and grace,
running to tell the Story we heard from the shepherds.**
Let us go to be the comfort which can swaddle others,
**sharing Jesus' compassion with the poor and needy,
welcoming the holiness offered by the most vulnerable we meet.**
Let us go to enkindle the lives around us,
**sharing the Spirit's peace with all the broken,
learning the language of hope from the children in our midst.**

***HYMN 134 Joy to the World #134**

ANTIOCH

BENEDICTION

May God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, embolden us to take the light of Christ out into the world!

POSTLUDE

We would like to thank Rev. Dr. Rebecca Chaffee for sharing her gifts with us today.