

# WEST BERLIN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Established 1876

Dr. Robert J. Gustafson, Pastor

Lou Ann Shy, Liturgist

Julia Roll, Organist

Amy Martindale, Principal Vocalist

**4th Sunday of Advent**

**December 22, 2024**

## WELCOME & PRELUDE

God is Good. **All the time.** & All the time. **God is good.**

## ADVENT LITURGY – LOVE

Ruth Stichter and Tom Wiebell

## CALL TO WORSHIP

L: Not in the mighty places of power, but in little Bethlehem, in a room out back:

**P: The Messiah is coming.**

L: Not born in nobility and wealth, but of Mary and Joseph, who pondered and planed wood:

**P: The Messiah is coming.**

L: Not announced by prophets, priests, and kings, but by two women, who were the first to know:

**P: The Messiah is coming.**

L: Nothing will be impossible for God, but when and where we least expect it, look among the straw and the stars:

**P: The Messiah is coming.**

## CALL TO CONFESSION

In the world, and in this season, there are many claims on our lives. We take this time to remember that in our baptism, Christ claimed us as his own. We acknowledge before God and one another that we have not followed Jesus Christ with all our heart and mind and strength. Trusting in God's grace, let us pray.

## PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**God our Savior, we ask for your mercy. Though we have heard Mary's song, we still seek security in pride and power and possessions. Though we know your story, we resist the costs of following you. We pass by those considered lowly in this world. We turn away from hungry people who still wait to be filled. Forgive us, we pray. Help us to work for the justice you intend. Make us messengers of the peace you bring. As we wait for you, turn our apathy into acts of love and service. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, Emmanuel. Amen.**

## DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

Friends, God is for us and not against us. For that very reason, God sent the Son into the world—not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him. Believe the good news: In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!

## CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE

"Gloria Patri"

No. 9

**Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.**

## PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION & FIRST READING

Micah 5:2-5a

The Ruler from Bethlehem

<sup>2</sup> But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days. <sup>3</sup> Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has brought forth; then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel. <sup>4</sup> And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth; <sup>5</sup> and he shall be the one of peace. The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

**YOUTH MESSAGE**     The Gift of Love

**SPECIAL MUSIC**

**SECOND READING**     Luke 1:39-55

**Mary Visits Elizabeth** <sup>39</sup>In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, <sup>40</sup>where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. <sup>41</sup>When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit <sup>42</sup>and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. <sup>43</sup>And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? <sup>44</sup>For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. <sup>45</sup>And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."

**Mary's Song of Praise**     <sup>46</sup>And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, <sup>47</sup>and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, <sup>48</sup>for he has looked with favor on the lowly state of his servant. Surely from now on all generations will call me blessed, <sup>49</sup>for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name; <sup>50</sup>indeed, his mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. <sup>51</sup>He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. <sup>52</sup>He has brought down the powerful from their thrones and lifted up the lowly; <sup>53</sup>he has filled the hungry with good things and sent the rich away empty. <sup>54</sup>He has come to the aid of his child Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, <sup>55</sup>according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever."

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

**SERMON**                     "Anchors in Advent"

**HYMN**                     "There's a Song in the Air"                     No. 196                     (See attached)

**ANNOUNCEMENTS - JOYS & CONCERNS – PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE – 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.**

**CALL TO OFFERING - PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING – DOXOLOGY**

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow. Praise him, all creatures here below. Praise him above, ye heav'nly host. Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

**HYMN**                     "I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day"                     No. 195                     (See attached)

**CHARGE, BENEDICTION AND POSTLUDE**

**May the Lord, mighty God, bless and keep you forever.**

**Grant you joy, perfect peace, strength in every endeavor.**

**Lift your eyes and see his face, feel his grace forever.**

**May the Lord mighty God bless and keep you forever.**

## There's a Song in the Air

You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger. Luke 2:12

1. There's a song in the air;      There's a star in the sky.  
 2. There's a tu - mult of joy      O'er the won - der - ful birth,  
 3. In the light of that star      Lie the a - ges im - pearled;  
 4. We re - joice in the light,      And we ech - o the song

There's a moth - er's deep prayer      And a Ba - by's low cry.  
 For a vir - gin's sweet Boy      Is the Lord of the earth.  
 And that song from a - far      Has swept o - ver the world.  
 That comes down thro' the night      From the heav - en - ly throng.

And the star rains its fire while the beau - ti - ful sing,  
 Ay! the star rains its fire while the beau - ti - ful sing,  
 Ev - 'ry hearth is a - flame, and the beau - ti - ful sing  
 Ay! we shout to the love - ly e - van - gel they bring,

For the man - ger of Beth - le - hem cra - dles a King!  
 For the man - ger of Beth - le - hem cra - dles a King!  
 In the homes of the na - tions that Je - sus is King!  
 And we greet in His cra - dle our Sav - ior and King!

# I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day 195

*He will be their peace. Micah 5:5*

1. I heard the bells on Christ - mas day Their  
2. I tho't how, as the day had come, The  
3. And in de - spair I bowed my head. "There  
4. Then pealed the bells more loud and deep: "God  
5. Till, ring - ing, sing - ing on its way, The

old fa - mil - iar car - ols play, And wild and sweet the  
bel - fries of all Chris - ten - dom Had rolled a - long th'un -  
is no peace on earth," I said, "For hate is strong, and  
is not dead, nor doth He sleep; The wrong shall fail, the  
world re - volved from night to day - A voice, a chime, a

words re - peat Of peace on earth, good - will to men.  
bro - ken song Of peace on earth, good - will to men.  
mocks the song Of peace on earth, good - will to men."  
right pre - vail, With peace on earth, good - will to men."  
chant sub - lime, Of peace on earth, good - will to men!