



DOWNTOWN
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Advent Lessons and Carols



*We Live Into Jesus' Inclusive Call
to Love Every Person,
Care for Creation,
and Work for God's Justice.*

Celebration of Worship

December 21st, 2025, 11:00 AM

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Lessons and Carols with Trumpet and All-Community Choir

[Click Here to Watch](#)

*If you have a joy or concern you would like to have lifted in prayer today, please complete a **Prayer Request Card**, including the name of the person (and pronunciation) or event, and additional information you'd like to share. Prayer Requests Cards will be collected during the hymn following the 7th Lesson.*

Prelude

Jesu, Joy of Our Desiring
Cole Pringle, trumpet, Jason Cloen, organ

J.S. Bach

Words of Welcome

Lee Wright

Announcements

Sally Allison

Chime

*Introit

Freedom Is Coming
"Freedom is coming! O yes, I know!
Jesus is coming! O yes, I know!"

South African

*Call to Worship (First Lesson—Responsive, based on Galatians 4:4-5)

One: When the time was right, Love entered the world.

Many: Not with force or fear, but as a vulnerable child.

One: Love came close to free and to heal, to gather and call us all as God's own.

Many: So we come with open hearts and singing spirits, preparing to welcome again that Love made flesh: Emmanuel, God with us.

*Carol

Once In Royal David's City
(Verses 1-3, Music may be found on page 12.)

IRBY

Centering Prayer (Second Lesson—Unison, a dialogue with Isaiah 9:2-7)

Holy One, you promise light for those who walk in darkness, and we confess how deeply we long for that light. We long for clarity where our lives feel dim, peace where fear has taken hold, freedom where the yoke of oppression is heavy, and love where we have settled for something less. We admit how often we live as though the darkness is stronger than the dawn, expecting less than the justice, kindness, and peace you promise.

Yet still, you come to us in Jesus, Prince of Peace, and Love enters the world as a gift. In this time of waiting, help us to trust in your love, to lean toward peace, and to make room within ourselves for your light that is already shining there. Amen.

Carol

O Radiant Dawn

James MacMillan

*"O Radiant Dawn, Splendour of eternal Light, Sun of Justice:
come, shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death.
Isaiah had prophesied, 'The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;
upon those who dwelt in the land of gloom a light has shone.' Amen."
Advent Antiphon*

Lighting the Advent Candles (Hope - Peace - Joy - Love)

One: We light again the candles of hope, peace, and joy,
shining light into the shadowed places of our lives.

Many: Now the time is drawing near.

One: Today we light the candle of love.

Many: Love that comes close and makes its home within and among us.

One: May this light open our eyes and make room in our hearts.

Many: Come, Emmanuel, and dwell with us.

Sung Response

Emmanuel, Emmanuel

Bob McGee

**"Emmanuel, Emmanuel, His name is called Emmanuel.
God with us, revealed in us, His name is called Emmanuel."**

Third Lesson

"Every Word of Every Tongue Is"

Fakhr al-Din Iraqi
13th c. Persian

*Carol

People, Look East

BESANÇON

(Verses 1, 2 and 5, Music may be found on page 8.)

Fourth Lesson

Psalm 85:1-7 (NIV)

*Carol

It Came Upon a Midnight Clear

CAROL

During the introduction of the carol, you may wish to move to a place in the sanctuary from which you can see the angel windows in the back of the church while you sing verses 1, 2, 3 and 5.

(Music may be found on page 10.)

Fifth Lesson

Isaiah 11:1-5 (The Message)

Carol

There Is No Rose of Such Virtue

Stephen Caracciolo

"There is no rose of such virtue as is the rose that bare Jesu. Alleluia.

For in this rose contained was heaven and earth in little space, Resmiranda (marvelous thing).

By that rose we may well see there be one God in persons three, Pares forma (equal in form).

Leave we all this worldly mirth, and follow we this joyful birth. Transeamus (let us go).

There is no rose of such virtue as is the rose that bare Jesu. Gaudeamus (let us rejoice)."

Sixth Lesson

from "In Search of Our Kneeling Places"

by Ann Weems

Carol

Approaching the Manger

Kristopher Fulton

*"Angel wings like bells a-ringing pale wings dipped in silver light
shepherds wondering at their movement as they lay down for the night.*

*Weary from their desert crossing come three wise-men from afar
bearing gifts of worth most precious led by light from yonder star.*

*There's no room at any Inn and a cold wind is in the air
but in the distance is a manger; there's a small communion there.*

*Softly now as we draw closer lest you wake the infant here
in blue and white his mother holds him she will guard him, have no fear.*

Silently these people watch him they don't cheer and they don't sing.

*See how gently Mary holds him tending to her new-born King,
praising her new-born King: "Welcome to the world, our Saviour! Holy is the hour tonight!"*

*Sing you People! Sing your praises to this babe who burns so bright!
Sing all ye to our Lord Jesus! Let us hear your cries of joy! Peace on earth and bless all people!
Bless this heavenly boy!"*
Text: Anonymous

Seventh Lesson Luke 2:9-14 (KJV, alt.)

*Carol Angels We Have Heard on High GLORIA
(Prayer cards will be collected—Music may be found on page 13.)

Joys and Concerns

Prayers for Healing and Justice

One: Holy One, in this season of waiting and hope, we bring before you the prayers of our hearts—spoken and unspoken. Where the world walks in darkness, where violence, injustice, and fear feel heavy, let your light break in.

All (sung): O come, O come, Emmanuel.

One: For places torn by war, for communities aching for peace, for leaders who shape the lives of many—teach us to beat swords into plowshares and to choose the slow, faithful work of justice.

All (sung): O come, O come, Emmanuel.

One: For those who are weary—the grieving, the lonely, the overwhelmed, those carrying burdens unseen—be near to them, as close as breath, as gentle as a child laid in a manger.

All (sung): O come, O come, Emmanuel.

One: For those who feel forgotten or pushed aside, for all who wonder whether there is room for them, remind us that love leaves no one out and that every life is gathered into your care.

All (sung): O come, O come, Emmanuel.

One: For this community, as we wait and sing and listen—help us to live the love we are welcoming, to let it take flesh in our words, our choices, and our care for one another.

All (sung): O come, O come, Emmanuel.

One: Receive now the prayers we hold in silence... (brief silence)

Into all these places, O God—our world, our lives, our hearts—come again.
All (sung): O come, O come, Emmanuel.

† Prayer of Jesus

Our Creator, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy Spirit 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 Spirit,
and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Eighth Lesson "Love Song" by The Rev. Dr. Pat Youngdahl

Invitation to the Offering

One: Love is not only received; it must first be shared.

Many: As we offer our gifts, we join the work of love in the world.

Offertory Music Tomorrow Shall Be My Dancing Day John Gardner

"Tomorrow shall be my dancing day: I would my true love did so chance

To see the legend of my play, to call my true love to my dance:

Ref: Sing O my love, O my love, my love, my love; This have I done for my true love.

Then was I born of a virgin pure, of her I took fleshly substance;

Thus was I knit to human nature, to call my true love to my dance: Ref.

In a manger laid and wrapped I was, so very poor this was my chance,

Betwixt an ox and a silly poor ass, to call my true love to my dance: Ref.

Then afterwards baptized I was; the Holy Ghost on me did glance,

My maker's voice heard from above, to call my true love to my dance: Ref."

Text: Traditional

*Doxology Carol Hark! The Herald Angels Sing (verse 3)

"Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of Righteousness!

Light and life to all he brings, risen with healing in his wings.

Mild he lays his glory by, born that we no more may die,

born to raise us from the earth, born to give us second birth.

Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King"

Prayer of Dedication (unison)

Holy One, receive these gifts and receive our lives.
May what we offer become light for others
and love made visible in the world. Amen.

Ninth Lesson

from "Loving Your Enemies"
By The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

*Carol

Go, Tell It on the Mountain
(Music may be found on page 14.)

GO TELL IT

*Benediction

One: Go now, carrying the light that has found you

Many: We go, sharing the Love made near.

One: Go into a world longing for peace, trusting that even small acts of love
shine in the dark.

Many: We go, ready to live the hope we have received.

One: And may the love that enters the world at just the right time dwell in
you, move through you, and guide you on your way.

Many: Amen.

Postlude

Go, Tell It on the Mountain

Arr. Glenn Christianson
for trumpet and piano

*Passing of the Peace

The peace of Christ be always with you.

And also with you.

Let us extend the Peace of Christ to one another.

People, Look East

1 Peo - ple, look east. The time is near of the
 2 Fur - rows, be glad. Though earth is bare, one more
 3 Birds, though you long have ceased to build, guard the
 4 Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim one more
 5 An - gels, an - nounce with shouts of mirth Christ who

crown - ing of the year. Make your house fair as you are
 seed is plant - ed there. Give up your strength the seed to
 nest that must be filled. E - ven the hour when wings are
 light the bowl shall brim, shin - ing be - yond the frost - y
 brings new life to earth. Set ev - ery peak and val - ley

Peo - ple, look

a - ble; trim the hearth and set the ta - ble.
 nour - ish, that in course the flower may flour - ish.
 fro - zen God for fledg - ing time has cho - sen.
 weath - er, bright as sun and moon to - geth - er.
 hum - ming with the word, the Lord is com - ing.

This text was written to provide a new Advent text for an existing carol tune, here named for the city in eastern France where it originated. The author has imaginatively expressed the cosmic implications of Christ's coming by addressing each stanza to a part of creation.

east and sing to - day:



Peo - ple, look east: Love, the Guest, is on the way.
 Love, the Rose, is on the way.
 Love, the Bird, is on the way.
 Love, the Star, is on the way.
 Love, the Lord, is on the way.

Peo - ple, look east: (Love is on the way.)




**The Downtown United
Presbyterian Church**



invites you to a blessed

Christmas Eve Worship Service

Wednesday, December 24th 7PM

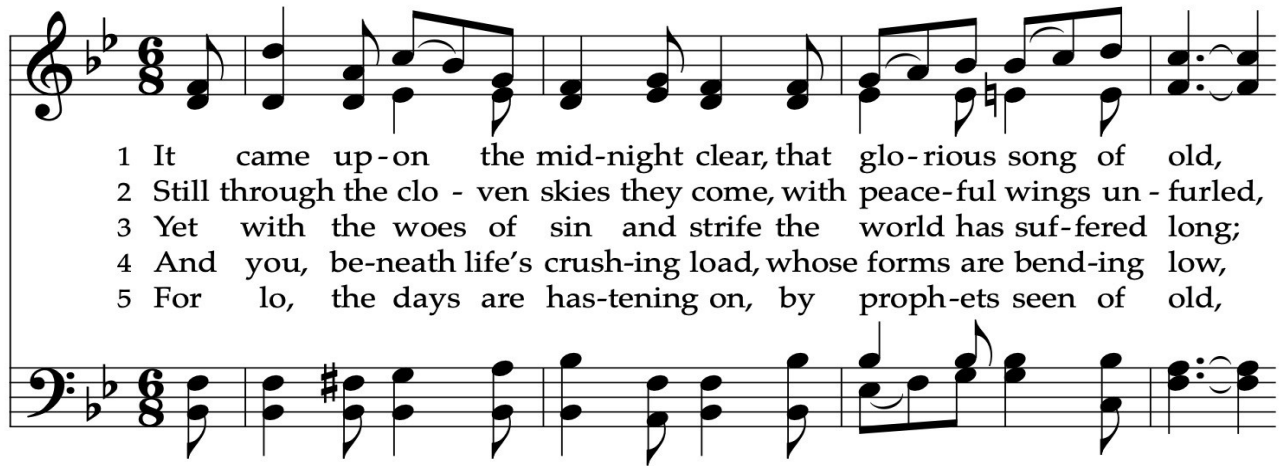
Share in the Wonder of the Christmas Story,
with Carols, Candlelight,
Choir, & Organ

All Are Welcome!

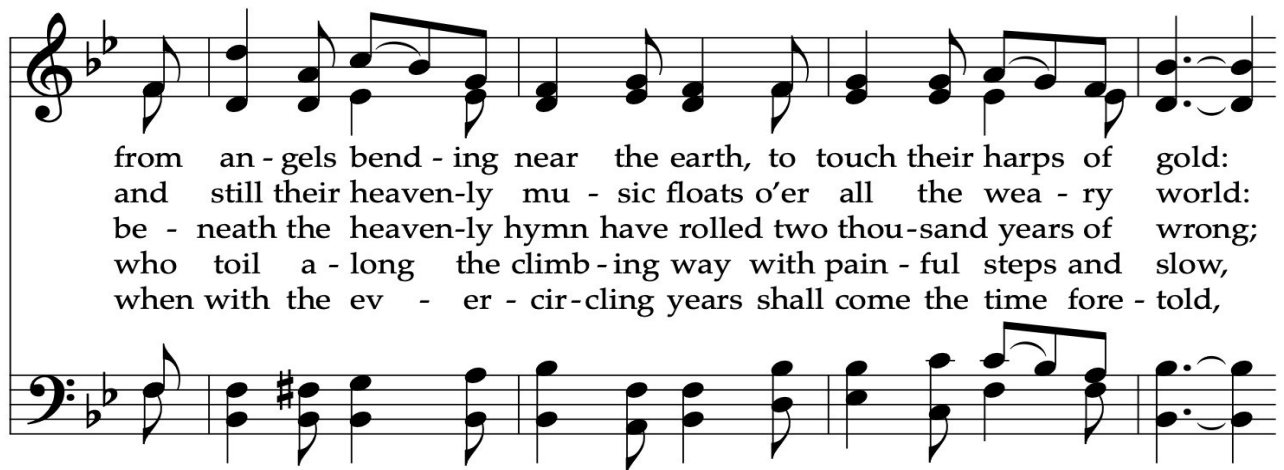


121 North Fitzhugh Street, Rochester, NY 14614

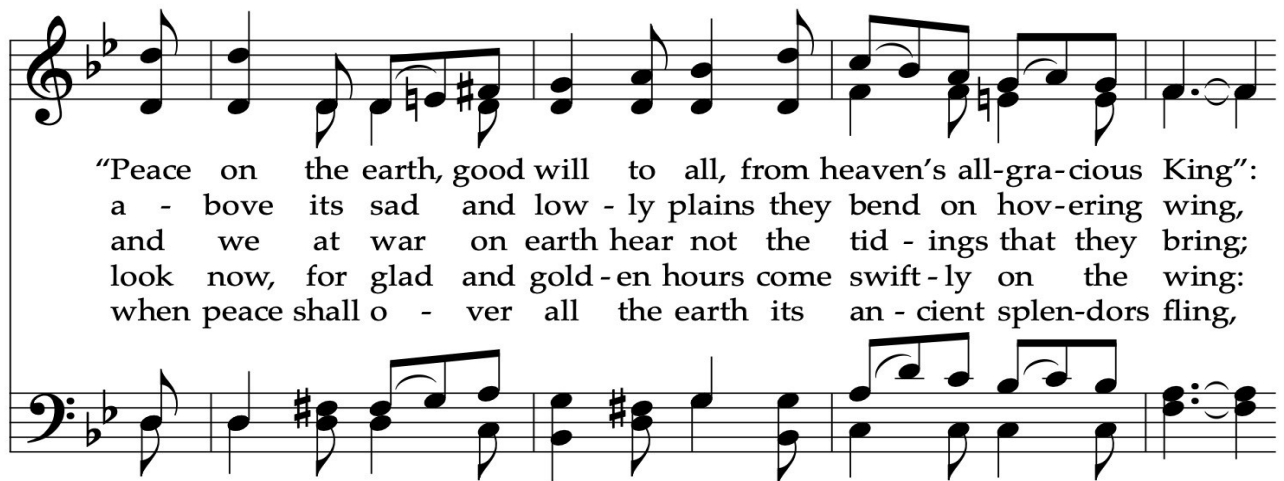
123 It Came Upon the Midnight Clear



1 It came up-on the mid-night clear, that glo-rious song of old,
 2 Still through the clo - ven skies they come, with peace-ful wings un - furled,
 3 Yet with the woes of sin and strife the world has suf-fered long;
 4 And you, be-neath life's crush-ing load, whose forms are bend-ing low,
 5 For lo, the days are has-tening on, by proph-ets seen of old,

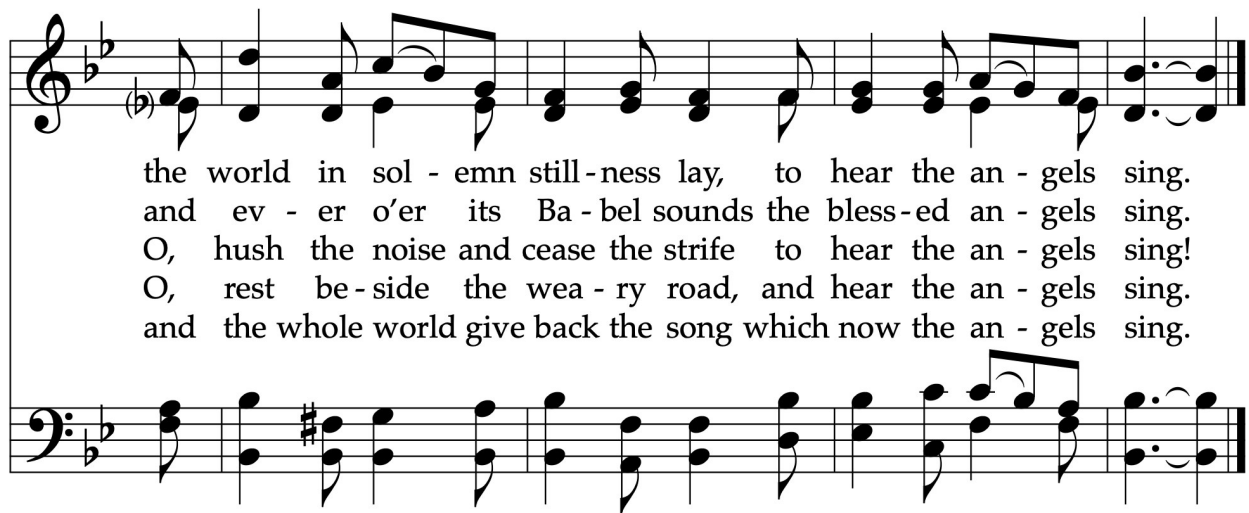


from an - gels bend - ing near the earth, to touch their harps of gold:
 and still their heaven-ly mu - sic floats o'er all the wea - ry world:
 be - neath the heaven-ly hymn have rolled two thou-sand years of wrong;
 who toil a - long the climb-ing way with pain - ful steps and slow,
 when with the ev - er - cir-cling years shall come the time fore - told,



"Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heaven's all-gra-cious King":
 a - bove its sad and low - ly plains they bend on hov-ering wing,
 and we at war on earth hear not the tid - ings that they bring;
 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 "it" of the first line of this text by a Unitarian minister does not refer to the birth of Jesus, but to "that glorious song of old," the angelic tidings of peace on earth. The restored third stanza laments how often the noise of human strife has obscured that message.



the world in sol - emn 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, hush the noise and cease the strife to hear the 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.

Coming up at Downtown United Presbyterian Church

Sunday, December 21

9:45AM Sunday Forum, Hybrid
 10:00AM Choir Warm-up
 11:00AM Worship -
 Lessons & Carols
 12:00PM Refreshments, Sanctuary
 7:00PM Sophia Circle, Zoom

Wednesday, December 24

7:00PM* Christmas Eve Service -
 Rev. Deb Swift

*Choral prelude begins at 6:45PM

Thursday, December 25

Merry Christmas!
 Church Building Closed

Sunday, December 28

10:00AM Choir Warm-up
 10:45AM Nursery*
 11:00AM Worship - Alan Jones
 and John DeHority
 12:00PM Refreshments, Sanctuary

*No Sunday School, but
 Nursery care will be provided.

Once in Royal David's City 140

1 Once in roy - al Da - vid's cit - y stood a low - ly
 2 He came down to earth from heav - en who is God and
 3 Je - sus is our child - hood's pat - tern; day by day like
 4 And our eyes at last shall see him, through his own re -

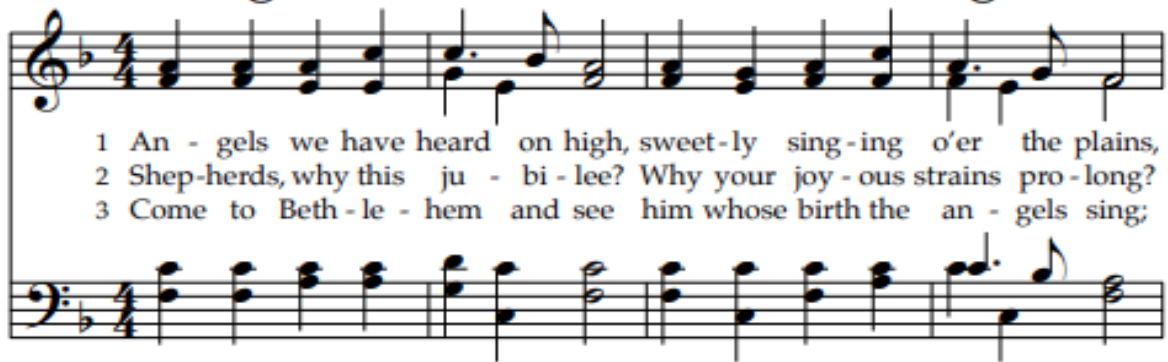
cat - tle shed, where a moth - er laid her ba - by in a
 Lord of all, and his shel - ter was a sta - ble, and his
 us he grew; he was lit - tle, weak and help - less; tears and
 deem - ing love; for that child so dear and gen - tle is our

man - ger for his bed: Mar - y was that moth - er
 cra - dle was a stall; with the poor and meek and
 smiles like us he knew; and he feels for all our
 Lord in heaven a - bove; and he leads his chil - dren

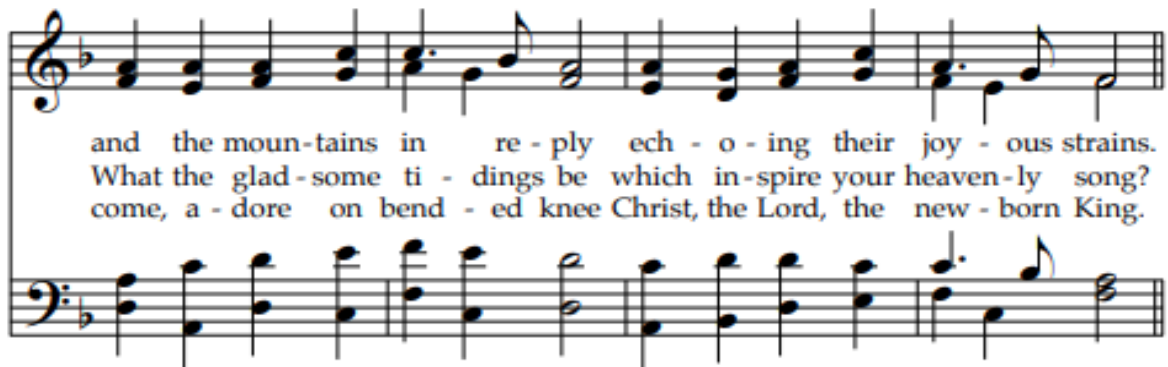
mild; Je - sus Christ, her lit - tle child.
 low - ly, lived on earth our Sav - ior ho - ly.
 sad - ness, and he shares in all our glad - ness.
 on to the place where he is gone.

Like "All Things Bright and Beautiful" (see no. 20), this popular Christmas hymn was written by an Irish poet to illustrate for children the various articles of the Apostles' Creed. It is not known which of several English villages the composer had in mind when naming this tune.

113 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;



and the moun-tains in re - ply ech - o - ing their joy - ous strains.
 What the glad - some ti - dings be which in - spire your heaven - ly song?
 come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ, the Lord, the new - born King.

Refrain



Glo - ri - a

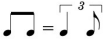


in ex - cel - sis De - o! Glo



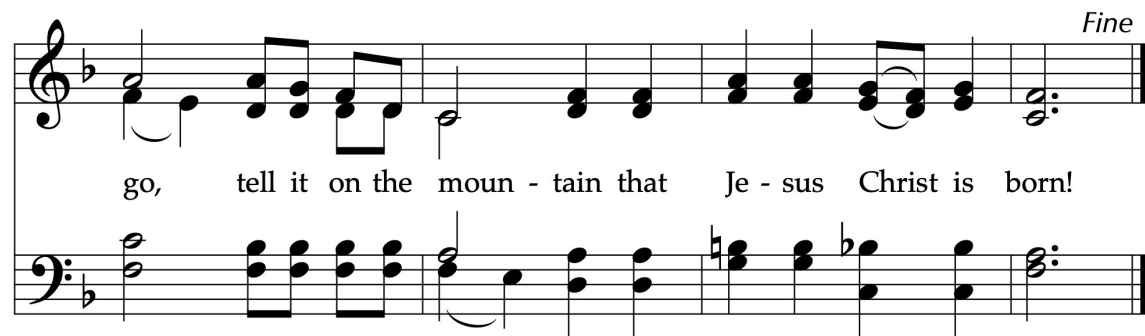
ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o!

136 Go, Tell It on the Mountain

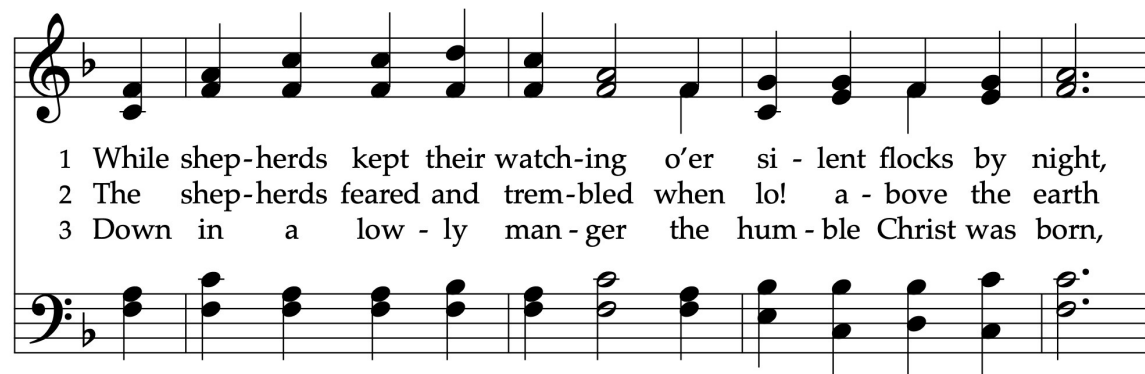
Refrain 



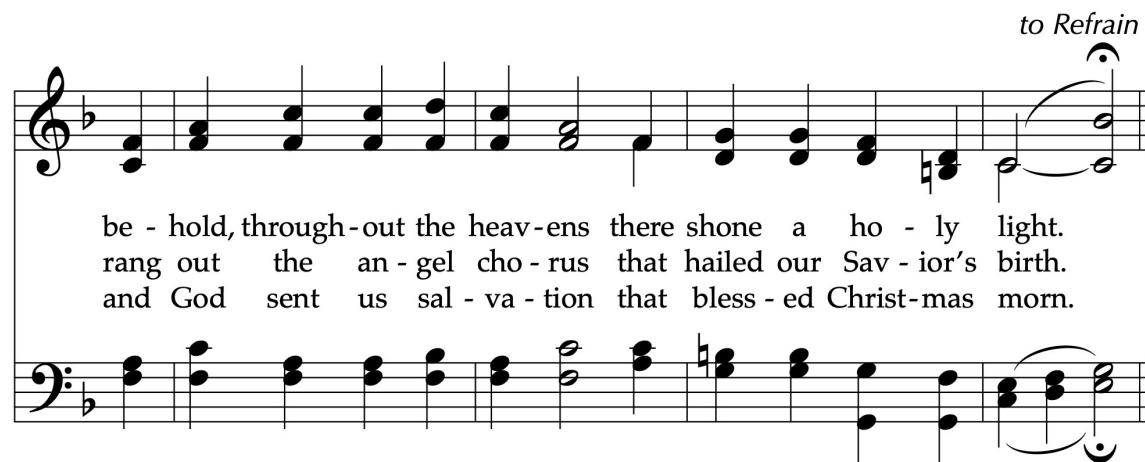
Go, tell it on the moun-tain, o-ver the hills and ev - ery - where;



go, tell it on the moun - tain that Je - sus Christ is born!



1 While shep-herds kept their watch-ing o'er si - lent flocks by night,
2 The shep-herds feared and trem-bled when lo! a - bove the earth
3 Down in a low - ly man-ger the hum - ble Christ was born,



to Refrain

be - hold, through-out the heav-ens there shone a ho - ly light.
rang out the an - gel cho - rus that hailed our Sav - ior's birth.
and God sent us sal - va - tion that bless - ed Christ-mas morn.

Like other material from oral traditions, 19th-century African American spirituals flourished without being written down. Their refrains were their most stable parts, and narrative stanzas were often improvised to fit. These Nativity stanzas attempt to recall that tradition.

TEXT: African American spiritual; stanzas, John W. Work II, 1940

MUSIC: African American spiritual; arr. John W. Work III, 1940; harm. Melva Wilson Costen, 1987

Music Harm. © 1989 Melva Wilson Costen

GO TELL IT
7.6.7.6 with refrain

We live into Jesus' inclusive call to love all people,
care for creation, and work for God's Justice.

Welcome Visitors!

Nursery Care is available for young children beginning in the library and moving to C-23 on the second floor. Parents are welcome to come up with their kids if they would like.

Sunday School Children not in nursery care will be invited forward during the "Time with Our Youth" and then will follow their teacher to the Sunday School room.

You may place your offering in the offering plates as they are passed. If you would like to donate online, you can use the QR code to the right to make your contribution to the church.



† **We seek** to use diverse images and liberating language about divine presence in our services of worship. Please feel free to adapt the words in hymns and prayers as needed so that they express your faith.

This is a Hearing Loop equipped sanctuary – please switch your hearing aid to the "T" (telephone) position.

*** An asterisk indicates** "please rise in body or spirit."

We hope you will join us after worship for conversations and refreshments! Cookies and drinks are available in the front of the sanctuary.

Joys and Concerns – If you have a joy or concern that you would like to lift in prayer today, please complete a Prayer Request card (available by the worship bulletins) naming the person (s), situation or event, and any other information that you would like to be shared. The requests will be collected during the hymn following the sermon and provided to the Deacons.

The Downtown Church Staff

Cheryl Bittle, Weekend Receptionist
Jason Cloen, Associate Musician
Eileen Dietsch, Director of Operations
Alan Jones, Associate Musician
David Mear, Business Manager
Moses Nhial, Maintenance
Baker Mohammed, Bookkeeper
Penelope Paredes,
Nursery Coordinator

Robin Sheikh, Office Administrator &
Sunday School Teacher
Ebony Smalls, Evening Receptionist
Michael Stagles, Maintenance Lead
Joseph Taylor, Maintenance Supervisor
Ed Verna, Maintenance
Lee S. Wright, D.M.A.,
Director of Music Ministry

Parish Leaders

Mary Rees and Pat Tweet - Clerks of Session
Cindy Hamilton, Jacque Hancock - co-Moderators of Deacons

Session

The Rev. Val Fowler,
Moderator
Nancy Brown
John DeHority

Lea Kone
Bob Richane
Sally Allison
Sam King

Jim Vesper
Pat Tweet
Mary Rees

Deacons

Bob Carlisle
Andrea Folan
Helen Ganotis
Cindy Hamilton

Jacque Hancock
Elizabeth Katz
Stephen Lloyd
Grania Marcus
Sandy Morales

Becky Parks
Susan Richane
Kelley Sheils
Marilyn Terpening

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