



DOWNTOWN
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Becoming Light



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

Celebration of Worship
December 24th, 2025, 7:00PM
Christmas Eve Service

[Click Here to Watch](#)

Prelude	O Radiant Dawn There Is No Rose What Sweeter Music How Great Our Joy!	James MacMillan Stephen Caracciolo John Rutter Arr. John Rutter
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Words of Welcome	The Rev. Deb Swift
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Chime

Introit	Lo! How a Rose E'er Blooming	Arr. Hugo Distler
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*Call to Worship <i>(Responsive)</i>	"In the Soft Hour"	Ted Richane
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One: Friends... welcome to this quiet threshold where the old year exhales and Love once again takes on human breath. Welcome to this night of starlight and straw, of angels leaning close, of hope sneaking in through the cracks of the world.

Many: We come as we are—tired, grateful, aching, expectant—ready to witness again how Light finds us.

One: Tonight we remember: God chooses the open-hearted over the powerful, the stable over the palace, the ordinary over the grand.

Many: Let the light of this night gather us in and carry us forward.

*Carol	O Come, All Ye Faithful <i>(Verses 1-3, Music may be found on page 6.)</i>	ADESTE FIDELIS
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Scripture I	Isaiah 9:2-7
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*Carol	O Little Town of Bethlehem <i>(Verses 1, 2 and 4—Music may be found on page 7.)</i>	ST. LOUIS
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Lighting of The Christ Candle

One: Throughout Advent we waited—lighting hope... peace... joy... love...trusting that even the smallest flame can teach our eyes how to see again. Tonight we light the Christ Candle—not because the world is suddenly fixed, but because Love keeps choosing to enter it.

(Light the candle)

Many: Light of Christ, find us this night. Find us in our longing, our courage, our tears, and our joy. Shine in us and through us for the sake of the world you love.

*Carol	Hark, the Herald Angels Sing (Jesus, the Light of the World)	WALK IN THE LIGHT
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(Refrain, Verses 1-2, Refrain, 3-4, Refrain—Music may be found on page 8.)

Scripture II	Luke 2:1-7
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*Carol	Away in a Manger <i>(Music may be found on page 10.)</i>	MUELLER
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Scripture III	Luke 2:8-14
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Message	Becoming Light	Rev. Swift
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Carol	This Christmas Night	Malcolm Williamson
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*"How sweet and clear above the sounds of war
the clamorous bells are pealing their delight!
The angels sing of glory, as they soar
among the man-made stars, this Christmas night.
And, once again, with spices and with gold,
three Kings are riding through the sparkling snow
to this poor lodging in the bitter cold
where Mary kneels within the lantern glow
to watch her Baby lying in the hay,
and think about the wonder of His birth;
And as He sleeps to hold his hands and pray
for peace to come upon this troubled earth."*

Text: Mary Wilson

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

Litany of Light

"Let the Light Be Born in Us"

Responsive

One: Holy One who comes close, on this night we open our hearts again.

Many: Let the Light be born in us—gentle, persistent, brave.

One: Where the world is aching, let compassion take root.

Many: Where fear has hardened us, let tenderness return.

One: Where injustice holds power, let courage rise up.

Many: Where sorrow sits beside us, let comfort keep vigil.

One: Where hope flickers weakly, shield it with your breath
until it burns steady again.

**Many: And now, with the confidence of children and the longing
of grown hearts, we pray:**

† 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.

Invitation to the Offering

Offertory Carol 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 Joy to the World ANTIOCH

(Verses 1-2, Music may be found on page 11.)

*Prayer of Dedication

*Prayers of the People

Sharing of the Light

*Carol Silent Night STILLE NACHT

(Music may be found on page 12.)

After the soft lights come up, let us extinguish our candles and greet one
another with signs of peace and friendship. All are invited to a reception
following the service in the Hall behind the Sanctuary. **Merry Christmas!**

O Come, All Ye Faithful

133

1 O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant; O come
 2 True God from true God, Light from light e - ter - nal, born
 3 Sing, choirs of an - gels; sing in ex - ul - ta - tion; sing,
 4 Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this hap - py morn - ing; Je -

ye; O come ye to Beth - le - hem! Come, and be - hold him,
 of a vir - gin, a mor - tal he comes; ver - y God, be -
 all ye cit - i - zens of heaven a - bove! Glo - ry to God, all
 sus, to thee be all glo - ry given; Word of the Fa - ther,

Refrain

born the King of an - gels!
 got - ten, not cre - at - ed! O come, let us a - dore him; O come, let
 glo - ry in the high - est!
 now in flesh ap - pear - ing!

us a - dore him; O come, let us a - dore him, Christ, the Lord!

From its Roman Catholic origins, this 18th-century hymn has spread to worldwide use by many denominations in both Latin and vernacular versions. Once popular with a wide range of hymn texts, this tune is now firmly associated with this Christmas text from which it is named.

121 O Little Town of Bethlehem

1 O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, how still we see thee lie!
 2 For Christ is born of Mar - y and, gath - ered all a - bove,
 3 How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly, the won - drous gift is given!
 4 O ho - ly child of Beth - le - hem, de - scend to us, we pray;

A - bove thy deep and dream-less sleep the si - lent stars go by.
 while mor - tals sleep, the an - gels keep their watch of won - dering love.
 So God im - parts to hu - man hearts the bless - ings of his heaven.
 cast out our sin and en - ter in; be born in us to - day.

Yet in thy dark streets shin - eth the ev - er - last - ing light;
 O morn - ing stars, to - geth - er pro - claim the ho - ly birth,
 No ear may hear his com - ing, but in this world of sin,
 We hear the Christ - mas an - gels the great glad ti - dings tell;

the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee to - night.
 and prais - es sing to God the king, and peace to all on earth.
 where meek souls will re - ceive him, still the dear Christ en - ters in.
 O come to us; a - bid with us, our Lord Em - man - u - el!

Though he was famed during his lifetime as a great preacher, no sermon Phillips Brooks ever preached has been heard or read by as many people as have sung this carol he wrote in December 1868 for the Sunday School children of Holy Trinity Episcopal Church in Philadelphia.

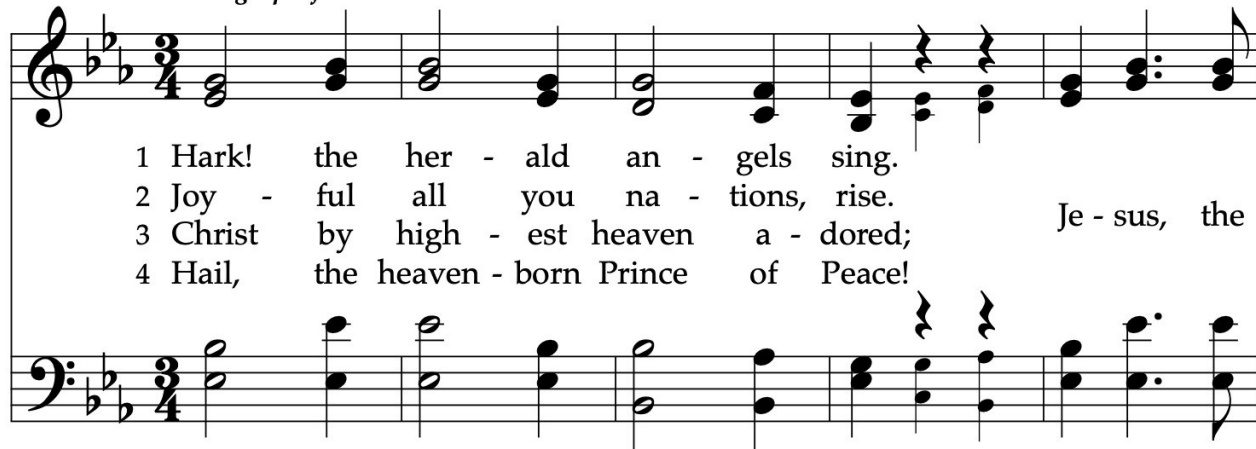
TEXT: Phillips Brooks, 1868
 MUSIC: Lewis Henry Redner, 1868

ST. LOUIS
 8.6.8.6.7.6.8.6
 (alternate tune: FOREST GREEN)

127 Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Jesus, the Light of the World

With a gospel feel



1 Hark! the her - ald an - gels sing.
2 Joy - ful all you na - tions, rise. Je - sus, the
3 Christ by high - est heaven a - dored;
4 Hail, the heaven - born Prince of Peace!



light of the world. Glo - ry to the
Join the tri - umph
Christ, the ev - er -
Hail, the Sun of



new - born King,
of the skies. Je - sus, the light of the world.
last - ing Lord;
righ - teous - ness!

This blues-tinged setting of a familiar Christmas carol participates in a longstanding African American practice of adapting Anglo-European texts, as is done here by incorporating a repeated internal line and by appending a refrain that expands that line's language and imagery.

Refrain

We'll walk in the light, beau - ti - ful light.

Come where the dew - drops of mer - cy shine bright.

O, shine all a - round us by day and by

night. Je - sus, the light of the world.



115

Away in a Manger

Capo 3: (D) F (G) B $\flat$ (D) F



1 A - way in a man - ger, no crib for his bed,
 2 The cat - tle are low - ing; the poor ba - by wakes,
 3 Be near me, Lord Je - sus; I ask thee to stay

(A7) C7 (D) F



the lit - tle Lord Je - sus laid down his sweet head.
 but lit - tle Lord Je - sus, no cry - ing he makes.
 close by me for - ev - er and love me, I pray.

(G) B $\flat$ (D) F



The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,
 I love thee, Lord Je - sus; look down from the sky,
 Bless all the dear chil - dren in thy ten - der care,

(A7) C7 (D) F (Em) Gm (A7) C7 (D) F



the lit - tle Lord Je - sus a - sleep on the hay.
 and stay by my side un - til morn - ing is nigh.
 and fit us for heav - en to live with thee there.

Though erroneously attributed to Martin Luther, this anonymous carol has North American roots, probably originating among Pennsylvania Lutherans. Although more than forty melodies have been connected with these words, this tune was among the earliest written for them.

134

Joy to the World

1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re - ceive
 2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their songs
 3 No more let sins and sor - rows grow, nor thorns in - fest
 4 He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the na -

her king; let ev - ery heart pre - pare him room,
 em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
 the ground; he comes to make his bless - ings flow
 tions prove the glo - ries of his righ - teous - ness

and heaven and na - ture sing, and heaven and na - ture
 re - peat the sound - ing joy, re - peat the sound - ing
 far as the curse is found, far as the curse is
 and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his
 and heaven and na - ture sing,

and

sing, and heaven, and heaven and na - ture sing.
 joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
 found, far as, far as the curse is found.
 love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.

heaven and na - ture sing,

While Isaac Watts did not write this text strictly for Christmas use, he did purposely cast his paraphrase of Psalm 98:4-9 in Christian terms, titling it "The Messiah's coming and kingdom." So "the Lord" here is Jesus Christ, rather than the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

TEXT: Isaac Watts, 1719, alt.

MUSIC: Attr. George Frederick Handel, 1742; arr. Lowell Mason, 1836

ANTIOCH

CM with repeat

(alternate tune: RICHMOND, 266)

Silent Night, Holy Night!

122

1 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! All is calm, all is bright
 2 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Shep - herds quake at the sight;
 3 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Son of God, love's pure light
 4 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Won - drous star, lend thy light;

'round yon vir - gin moth - er and child! Ho - ly In - fant, so ten - der and
 glo - ries stream from heav - en a - far, heav - en - ly hosts sing "Al - le - lu -
 ra - diant beams from thy ho - ly face, with the dawn of re - deem - ing
 with the an - gels let us sing Al - le - lu - ia to our

mild, sleep in heav - en - ly peace, sleep in heav - en - ly peace.
 ia: Christ the Sav - ior is born; Christ the Sav - ior is born!"
 grace, Je - sus, Lord, at thy birth, Je - sus, Lord, at thy birth.
 King: Christ the Sav - ior is born; Christ the Sav - ior is born.

GERMAN

1 *Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht!*
Alles schläft, einsam wacht
nur das traute, hochheilige Paar.
Holder Knabe im lockigen Haar,
schlaf in himmlischer Ruh,
schlaf in himmlischer Ruh!

KOREAN

1 고요한밤 거룩한밤
 어둠에 묻힌밤
 주의부모 앉아서
 감사기도 드릴때
 아기잘도 잔다
 아기잘도 잔다

SPANISH

1 *¡Noche de paz, noche de amor!*
Todo duerme en derredor,
entre los astros que esparcen su luz,
bella, anunciando al niño Jesús,
brilla la estrella de paz,
brilla la estrella de paz.

The tradition that this carol's tune was created for guitar accompaniment at its first singing on Christmas Eve 1818 seems reliable, though a recent find shows that the text was about two years old. But there is no question that this is now a favorite Christmas carol worldwide.

Coming up at Downtown United Presbyterian Church

Wednesday, December 24

6:45PM Choral Prelude
7:00PM Christmas Eve Service -
Rev. Deb Swift

Thursday, December 25

Merry Christmas!
Church Building Closed

Sunday, December 28

10:00AM Musicians 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.

Thank you to...

Worship Leader: Rev. Deb Swift
Liturgist: Ted Richane

Chancel Choir Members

Soprano: Cecelia Allchin, Morgan Cox, Isa Apodaca, Nicole Knickerbocker,
Lindsey Puc, Joan Sussman

Alto: Alyssa Koh, Leah Rosenman

Tenor: Olivia Anderson, Jason Cloen, Shawn Cox, Mark Darling

Bass: Rob Brown, John DeHority, Elijah Gebers,
Alan Jones, Stephen Lloyd, Sumner Tessier

Live Stream Team: Don Fairman, David McDowell, Jim Parks, Sally Allison

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Arts Link

at Downtown United Presbyterian Church

Coming in 2026!

All Community Choir Sunday

January 18, 11AM

Music-led worship with community choir and congregational participation.



First Inversion

First Inversion Concert “Holding on Through Song”

Friday, January 23 & Sunday, January 25

Celebration of Adolphus Hailstork Concert

Saturday, February 7, 3:30PM

With college, community, and high school choruses



Sunday Forum ~ January 2026

Progressive Presbyterians: Working for God's Justice

Sundays,
9:45 AM
Shaw Rm.

January 4

A Strong Progressive Theology: Seeking a Pastor

Presenters: Nancy Brown, John DeHority,
Cori Wolfgang Rainbeaux, & Mary Rees

January 11

Conveying Progressivism Through Music:

DUPC's Resonant Ministry

Presenter: Lee Wright, Director of Music Ministry

January 18

The Social Gospel and More Light:

130 Years of Progressivism

Presenters: Ralph Carter and Ry Foye

January 25

From Integrating Water Fountains to Marching on Washington: One Man's Progressive Spirituality

Presenter: Windsor Wade

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



Welcome Visitors!



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. Tonight's offering will be the special Joy Offering . You can find more information in the bulletin insert.

† **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 spirit and body if you feel comfortable doing so."

We hope you will join us after worship for conversations and refreshments! Cookies and drinks are available in the area to the west 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. You can place your Card in the offering plate and they will be shared with the church Deacons.

There is **no nursery care for this service**. All children are welcome along with the joyful noises they make.

The Downtown Church Staff

Cheryl Bittle, Weekend Receptionist	Robin Sheikh, Office Administrator &
Jason Cloen, Associate Musician	Sunday School Teacher
Eileen Dietsch, Director of Operations	Ebony Smalls, Evening Receptionist
Alan Jones, Associate Musician	Michael Stagles, Maintenance Lead
David Mear, Business Manager	Joseph Taylor, Maintenance Supervisor
Moses Nhial, Maintenance	Ed Verna, Maintenance
Baker Mohammed, Bookkeeper	Lee S. Wright, D.M.A.,
Penelope Paredes,	Director of Music Ministry
Nursery Coordinator	

Parish Leaders

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

Session

The Rev. Val Fowler,	Lea Kone	Jim Vesper
Moderator	Bob Richane	Pat Tweet
Nancy Brown	Sally Allison	Mary Rees
John DeHority	Sam King	

Deacons

Bob Carlisle	Jacque Hancock	Becky Parks
Andrea Folan	Elizabeth Katz	Susan Richane
Helen Ganotis	Stephen Lloyd	Kelley Sheils
Cindy Hamilton	Grania Marcus	Marilyn Terpening
	Sandy Morales	

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