



DOWNTOWN

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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



Celebration of Worship

December 28th, 2025, 11:00 AM

First Sunday of Christmas

[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 **after the third hymn, "In The Bleak Midwinter."***

Prelude

Meditation on Simple Gifts

Words of Welcome

John DeHority

Announcements

*Call to Worship (*Responsive*)

One: Give praise, sun and moon, give praise, all you shining stars!

Many: Give praise, all universes, the whole cosmos of Creation!

One: Praise the Blessed One! For through Love all was created.

Many: And firmly fixed for ever and ever; Yes, the pattern of creation was established.

One: Praises be to the Blessed One,

Many: the very Breath of our breath, the very Heart of our heart.

*Hymn

For the Beauty of the Earth CREATION AND PROVIDENCE
(*Music may be found on page 5.*)

*Centering Prayer (*Unison, A Prayer for Advent from A New Zealand Book of Prayer*)

Let us be at peace within ourselves

Silence

Let us accept that we are profoundly loved
and need never be afraid.

Silence

Let us be aware of the source of being
that is common to us all
and to all living creatures.

Silence

Let us be filled with the presence of the great compassion
towards ourselves and towards all living beings.

Silence

Realizing that we are all nourished
from the same source of life,
may we so live that others are not deprived
of air, food, water, shelter, or the chance to live.

Silence

Let us pray that we ourselves cease to be
a cause of suffering to one another.

Silence

With humility let us pray for the establishment
of peace in our hearts and on earth. Amen.

The First Story

The Little Book of Joy

(For children of all ages)

Authors: Dalai Lama, Archbishop Desmond Tutu

Illustrated by Rafael López

*Hymn

Joy to the World

ANTIOCH

(Music may be found on page 6.)

Gospel Reading

Matthew 2:13-23

(PG-13)

The Flight into Egypt

Sermonette

Déjà vu

Another Story *Bud Finds Her Gift* (For Children of all ages)
Author: Robin Wall Kimmerer (Author of Braiding Sweetgrass)
Illustrated by: Naoko Stoop

*Hymn In the Bleak Midwinter CRANHAM
(Music may be found on page 7.)

Joys and Concerns
Prayers of the People
† 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 Music Brightest and Best of the Stars of the Morning Alan Jones

*Doxology
Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Let songs rise up from earth below;
Let stars and galaxies enthrone;
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One! Amen.

A Franciscan Benediction

*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.

For the Beauty of the Earth 14

1 For the beau - ty of the earth, for the glo - ry of the skies,
 2 For the won - der of each hour of the day and of the night,
 3 For the joy of ear and eye, for the heart and mind's de - light,
 4 For the joy of hu - man love, broth - er, sis - ter, par - ent, child,
 5 For thy - self, best gift di - vine to the world so free - ly given;

for the love which from our birth o - ver and a - round us lies:
 hill and vale, and tree and flower, sun and moon, and stars of light:
 for the mys - tic har - mo - ny link - ing sense to sound and sight:
 friends on earth, and friends a - bove, for all gen - tle thoughts and mild:
 for that great, great love of thine, peace on earth and joy in heaven:

Refrain

Lord of all, to thee we raise this our hymn of grate - ful praise.

In the course of many revisions, the original eucharistic emphasis of this text has shifted to a hymn of thanksgiving for a wide range of human experience, with a Christological summation. It is set here to the tune that is customary in North America, though not elsewhere.

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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)

In the Bleak Midwinter

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1 In the bleak mid-win-ter, frost-y wind made moan;
 2 Our God, heaven can-not hold him, nor earth sus-tain;
 3 An-gels and arch-an-gels may have gath-ered there;
 4 What can I give him, poor as I am?

earth stood hard as i-ron, wa-ter like a stone;
 heaven and earth shall flee a-way when he comes to reign:
 cher-u-bim and ser-a-phim thronged the air;
 If I were a shep-herd, I would bring a lamb;

snow had fall-en, snow on snow, snow on snow,
 in the bleak mid-win-ter a sta-ble place suf-ficed
 but his moth-er on-ly, in her maid-en bliss,
 if I were a wise man, I would do my part;

‡ in the bleak mid-win-ter, long a-go.
 the Lord God in-car-nate, Je-sus Christ.
 ‡ wor-shipped the be-lov-ed with a kiss.
 yet what I can I give him: give my heart.

Though this text describes winter weather in England rather than in Palestine, the poet is using familiar surroundings as a means of making the Nativity more immediate and personal. The tune name honors a Gloucestershire village near the composer's birthplace in Cheltenham.

TEXT: Christina Rossetti, c. 1872, alt.
 MUSIC: Gustav Holst, 1906

CRANHAM
 Irregular

Thank you to...

Worship Leaders: John DeHority and Alan Jones

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

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Next Sunday we welcome Rev. Val Fowler.

Coming up at Downtown United Presbyterian Church

Sunday, December 28

10:45AM Nursery
11:00AM Worship - Alan Jones
and John DeHority
12:00PM Refreshments, Sanctuary
*No Sunday School, but
Nursery care will be provided*

Thursday, January 1

Happy New Year!
Church
Building Closed



Sunday, January 4

9:45AM Sunday Forum, Hybrid
10:00AM Choir Warm-up
10:45AM Nursery
11:00AM Worship - Rev. Val
Fowler
11:15AM Sunday School
12:00PM Congregational Mtg—
Annual Report Received

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!

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 There is no Sunday School this week. Join us next Sunday when we are back in session.

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	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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