

**THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
OF GREENLAWN**



**Sunday Service of Worship
December 17, 2023 - 10:30 a.m.**

**Meeting ID: 820 9580 8348
Passcode: 128114**

Dial in: 1 (646) 558-8656

**497 Pulaski Road
Greenlawn, NY 11740
Phone: 631-261-2150**

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The Third Sunday of Advent

“A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols”

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This Service tells the story of the fall of humanity, the promise of the Messiah, and the birth of Jesus. It is told in nine short Bible readings from Genesis, the Prophetic Books, and the Gospels, and is interspersed with the singing of Christmas carols, hymns, and other music.

The original format was based on an Order of Worship for Christmas Eve, 1880, in Cornwall, England. It is said that a key purpose of the Service at that time was to keep men out of the pubs on Christmas Eve!

Our Service is based on the one at The King's College in Cambridge, England, where the nine lessons are read by representatives of the congregation and of the local community.

MUSIC BEFORE THE SERVICE

Leonora & Jack Knight

In the Bleak Midwinter

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE RINGING OF THE BELL

Dan Charnews

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES

Rosalie & Emery Schweighardt

One Candle Is Lit

Come, festively – sing, while awaiting the birth.

Join angels in dancing from – Heaven to Earth.

Wave banners of - Good News, lift – high thankful praise.

One –candle is lit for the – joy of these days.

*Once in royal David's city stood a lowly cattle shed,
Where a mother laid her baby in a manger for His bed.
Mary was that mother mild. Jesus Christ, her little child.*

*He came down to Earth from Heaven, who is God and Lord of all.
And his shelter was a stable, and his cradle was a stall.
With the poor, oppressed and lowly, lived on Earth, our Savior holy.*

PRAYER CONCERNS

Elder Betty Chatfield

BIDDING PRAYER (Adapted from The King's Chapel)

Beloved in Christ, it is our care and delight to prepare ourselves to hear again the message of the angels; in heart and mind to go even unto Bethlehem and see this thing which is come to pass, and the Babe lying in a manger.

Let us read and mark in Holy Scripture the tale of the loving purposes of God from the first days of our disobedience unto the glorious Redemption brought us by this Holy Child; and let us make this Sanctuary glad with our hymns of praise.

But first, let us pray for the needs of God's whole world; for peace and good will over all the Earth and for unity and love within the Church, and especially in this, our own community.

And because this would rejoice God's heart, let us remember the poor and the helpless, the cold, the hungry, and the oppressed; the sick and those who mourn; the lonely and the unloved; the aged and the little children, those who have lost faith, and those who by sin have grieved God's heart of love.

Finally, let us remember before God all those who rejoice with us, but on another shore and in a greater Light, that multitude which no one can number, whose hope was in the Word made Flesh, and with Whom in the Lord Jesus, we are one forevermore. These prayers and praises let us humbly offer up to the throne of heaven, in the words which Christ himself taught us:

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 now and forever. Amen.

The Almighty God bless us with grace. Christ, give us the joys of everlasting life, and unto the fellowship of the citizens above may the King of Angels bring us all. Amen.

HYMN # 42

O Come, All Ye Faithful

ADESTE FIDELIS

*O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant.
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem.
Come and behold Him, born the king of angels.*

REFRAIN: *O come let us adore Him, O come let us adore Him,
O come let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.*

*Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, born this happy morning.
Jesus, to Thee be all glory given.
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing. REFRAIN*

*Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation!
Sing, all ye citizens of Heaven above.
Glory to God, all glory in the highest! REFRAIN*

THE FIRST LESSON

The Rev. Kate Jones-Calone

Genesis 3:8-15, 17-19

God tells sinful Adam that he has lost the life of Paradise, and that his seed will bruise the serpent's head.

HYMN # 22

Angels, from the Realms of Glory

REGENT SQUARE

*Angels, from the realms of glory, wing your flight o'er all the Earth.
Ye, who sang Creation's story now proclaim Messiah's birth.
Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the new-born King.*

*All creation, join in praising God the Father, Spirit, Son.
Evermore your voices raising to the eternal Three in One.
Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ the new-born King.*

THE SECOND LESSON

Peggy Monitto

Genesis 22:15-18

God promises to faithful Abraham that in his seed shall all the nations of the Earth be blessed.

MUSICAL SELECTION
'Cello

Arioso (J. S. Bach)

Jack Knight,

Leonora Knight, Piano

THE THIRD LESSON

Maria Bindert

Isaiah 9:2, 6-7

The Prophet foretells the coming of the Savior.

HYMN # 38

It Came Upon the Midnight Clear

CAROL

*It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old,
From angels bending near the Earth, to touch their harps of gold.
"Peace on the Earth, good will to all, from Heaven's all-gracious King."
The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing.*

*For lo, the days are hastening on, by prophet bards foretold,
When with the ever-circling years comes round the age of gold,
When peace shall over all the Earth its ancient splendors fling,
And the whole world give back the song which now the angels sing.*

THE FOURTH LESSON

Emery Schweighardt

Isaiah 11:1-3a, 4a, 6-9

The peace that Christ will bring is foreshown.

ANTHEM

The First Noel / Pachelbel's Cannon

The Women's Choir

OFFERING SENTENCES

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE # 44

*O Holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray.
Cast out our sin and enter in. Be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels, the great glad tidings tell.
O come to us, abide with us, Our Lord Emmanuel.*

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Loving God, You have granted us life with such abundant possibilities that we can never do enough to express our gratitude. You have honored us by calling us saints and apostles. Therefore, we offer ourselves and our abundance in that confidence that You will continue to provide for us in whatever circumstances we face. Use us as ministers of Your grace. Amen.

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE # 53

GREENSLEEVES

What Child Is This?

*What Child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet while shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing.
Haste, haste to bring Him laud, the Babe, the Son of Mary.*

THE FIFTH LESSON

Leonora Knight

Luke 1:25-35, 38

The Angel Gabriel salutes the Blessed Mother, Mary

SOLO

A Christmas Prayer

Debbie Eitel, Alto

THE SIXTH LESSON

Kathleen Fitzgerald

Luke 2:1, 3-7

Luke Tells of the Birth of Jesus

HYMN # 57

VENITE ADOREMUS

The Snow Lay on the Ground

*The snow lay on the ground, the stars shone bright,
When Christ our Lord was born on Christmas night.*

Venite adoremus Dominum,

Venite adoremus Dominum

Venite adoremus Dominum, venite adoremus Dominum

*'Twas Mary, daughter pure of holy Ann
That brought into this world the God made man.*

She laid him in a stall at Bethlehem.

The animals all shared the roof with them.

Venite adoremus Dominum, venite adoremus Dominum

Saint Joseph, too, was by to tend the child,

To guard Him and protect His mother mild.

The angels hovered round, and sang this song,

Venite adoremus Dominum,

Venite adoremus Dominum, venite adoremus Dominum

And thus that manger poor became a throne;

For He whom Mary bore was God the Son.

O come, then, let us join the heavenly host,

To praise the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Venite adoremus Dominum, venite adoremus Dominum

THE SEVENTH LESSON

Diane Mahon

Luke 2:8-16

The Shepherds Go to the Manger

HYMN # 25

Away in a Manger

MUELLER

*Away in a manger, no crib for his bed,
The little Lord Jesus lay down his sweet head.*

*The stars in the sky looked down where he lay,
The little Lord Jesus, asleep in the hay.*

*The cattle are lowing, the poor Baby wakes,
But little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes.
I love Thee, Lord Jesus, look down from the sky,
And stay by my side until morning is nigh.*

*Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask Thee to stay
Close by me forever and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in Thy tender care,
And fit us for heaven to live with Thee there.*

THE EIGHTH LESSON

Janice Hago

Matthew 2:1-12

The Magi Are Led by the Star to Jesus

*HYMN # 66

We Three Kings

KINGS OF ORIENT

*We three kings of Orient are bearing gifts we traverse afar.
Field and fountain, moor and mountain, following yonder star.*

*O – star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright.
Westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light.*

*Born a king on Bethlehem's plain, gold I bring to crown Him again.
King forever, ceasing never, over us all to reign.*

*Frankincense to offer have I. Incense owns a Deity nigh.
Prayer and praising we are raising, worshiping God Most High.*

*Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume breathes a life of gathering gloom.
Sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying, sealed in the stone-cold tomb.*

*Glorious now behold Him arise, King and God and Sacrifice.
Alleluia, Alleluia sounds through the Earth and skies.*

*O – star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright.
Westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light.*

REFLECTION

Rev. Dr. Ann M. Van Cleef

THE NINTH LESSON

Dr. Donald Russo

John 1:1-12

John Unfolds the Mystery of the Incarnation

ANTHEM

Tell Us 'Bout a Baby

The Women's Choir

*There's a story being told throughout the land
'Bout a Savior sent down from God's own hand.
We heard about how the angels sang, how Heaven and Earth with praises rang.
Tell us 'bout a baby born in Bethlehem.*

REFRAIN: *Tell us 'bout a baby, glory hallelu! Tell us 'bout a baby. Amen.
Tell us 'bout a baby, glory hallelujah. Tell us 'bout a baby born in Bethlehem.*

*Wise men and shepherds spread the news. (Spread the good news.)
Jesus Christ was born King of the Jews. (King of the Jews.)
Tell us all about His lowly birth, the humble Messiah coming down to Earth.
Tell us 'bout a baby born in Bethlehem. REFRAIN*

*Tell us, tell us, tell us all about that tiny Stranger.
Tell us, tell us, tell us all about that lowly manger.
Tell us, tell us, tell us all about the shepherd's kneeling.
Tell us, tell us, tell us all about God's love revealing.
Heavenly chorus sing out with joy! Fill the skies around us with news of the Boy.
All of God's Creation with one great voice
Join the angel choir, let the nations rejoice! REFRAIN*

BENEDICTION

*HYMN # 40

Joy to the World!

ANTIOCH

*Joy to the world! The Lord is come. Let Earth receive her King.
Let every heart prepare Him room, and Heaven and nature sing,
And Heaven and nature sing, and Heaven, and Heaven and nature sing.*

*Joy to the world! The Savior reigns. Let us our songs employ,
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
Repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy, repeat, repeat the sounding joy.*

*No more let sin and sorrow grow, nor thorns infest the ground.
He comes to make His blessings flow far as the curse is found,
Far as the curse is found, far as, far as the curse is found.*

*He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness, and wonders of His love,
And wonders of His love, and wonders, wonders of His love.*

JOYS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today's Service

Thank you to everyone who participated in today's Service. There will be a reception in the Narthex immediately following our Service, and we invite everyone to stay.

Christmas Offering

We have been asked by the Presbytery to take up a special offering to help needy retired ministers and missionaries with their bills. (Many of them have very low pensions.) There will be envelopes in next week's bulletin. Even a few dollars will help. Thank you!

Christmas Tree Lighting

This evening at 5:00, we will have a special community event: the lighting of our Christmas tree outside. After we light the tree, we'll come inside ('Cause baby, it's cold outside!) to CE Hall for some hot chocolate, Christmas cookies, Christmas carols, and some Christmas fun. Please plan to attend, and invite a friend.

Christmas Eve at Our Church – Next Sunday, December 24

Our 10:30 a.m. Service will be based on the Advent IV liturgy.

Christmas Eve liturgy will be celebrated at 5:00 p.m. It will be simulcast on Zoom, using the same log-on numbers that we use for our regular Sunday Services.

The Service will end with the traditional lighting of individual candles held by the congregation, while "Silent Night" is sung by those in attendance. We welcome everyone to this Service.

"God's Creation" Wall Calendars

The beautiful "God's Creation" wall calendars have arrived. Every month features a full-color picture and a Scripture verse. Each Sunday has a Scripture verse notated as well. The price is \$8 / calendar; please see Debbie Eitel.

New Year's Eve Celebration

They say that for those of us "of a certain age," 9 p.m. is the new midnight. Most of us will *not* be staying up to watch the festivities in Times Square.

But New Year's Eve must be celebrated! So, please join us after our Service on Sunday, December 31, for a special celebration welcoming in 2024. We'll have hors d'oeuvres, some non-alcoholic "bubbly," and a few surprises. We will also have our annual Holiday Sweater Contest, with a prize for the prettiest and the ugliest.

Don't miss the fun!

Participants in Today's Service

Readers:

Reader 1:... Rev. Kate Jones-Calone, Interim Executive Presbyter, Presbytery of LI
Reader 2: Peggy Monitto, Aide, Syosset School District
Reader 3: Maria Bindert, Teacher, Pulaski Road Elementary School
Reader 4: Emery Schweighardt, Long Island Railroad Signal Department
Reader 5: Leonora Knight, Professional Musician
Reader 6: Kathleen Fitzgerald, Retired, IRS
Reader 7: Diane Mahon Retired Medical Office Manager
Reader 8: Janice Hago, Court Officer (Sergeant)
Reader 9: Dr. Donald Russo, Project-Genesis Interfaith and Retired Teacher

Pastor The Rev. Dr. Ann M. Van Cleef
Worship Accompanist Leonora Knight
Prayer Concerns Betty Chatfield
Greeter at the Door Arlissa Dean
The Church Bell Ringer Dan Charnews
Coffee Hour Coordinators..... Debbie Eitel and Arlissa Dean

Special Music:

Piano, Soprano, Choral Accompanist..... Leonora Knight
Choir Director, Descant Singer Ann Van Cleef
Cellist Jack Knight
Alto Soloist and Soloist in Anthem Debbie Eitel

Choir:

Soprano I Marian Adams, Barbara Charnews, Kathie Gerlach,
Meg Lawrence, Susan Perrotta
Soprano II Olivia Evola, Priscilla Jahier Catarina Rasizzi
Alto Arlissa Dean, Debbie Eitel, Claire Proctor, Jill Wilson