



**New Covenant Presbyterian Church
December 20, 2020 10:00am Service**



**1125 Jamison Corner Road Middletown, DE
(302) 378-4446 www.newcov-church.org**

The Worship of God

4th Sunday of Advent

Welcome, Announcements and Sharing of Our Vision

Lay Leader: Donna Casey

Preparing to Meet God

Preparing Ourselves for Worship During the Prelude...

Encounters with God – *This week, we encounter Mary as the angel Gabriel comes to tell her God’s purpose for her life. Her response is to be perplexed, but shortly she agreed to “let it be with me according to your word.” Todd Townshend says that “Faithfully receiving a message from God requires a certain passivity. It is not weakness, it is the faithful stance of a person who trusts that, given a little space in our lives, God will move. It is to trust that God knows what God is doing, even if we don’t, and God is drawn to those who need divine grace and mercy. So, being perplexed, vulnerable, young, alone, old or tired, these are not necessarily bad states-of-being when it comes to attracting a divine encounter.” In this never-wracking time in which we live, remember that our God is drawn to those who need him. Why not be honest and consider admitting your need?*

Advent Call to Worship

Advent Wreath Lighters: Donna & James Casey

L: The fourth candle is the candle of LOVE. It was because of God’s love that, Jesus, his only Son, was sent into the world.

P: *Because of his coming and love, we, and the rest of creation, may know of our salvation, and God’s constant presence with us.*

L: Nothing makes sense without LOVE. It transforms justice into compassion, interest into concern, and wisdom into understanding. It lasts when all else fails.

P: *Love transforms all things. (The fourth candle is lit.)*

L: Let us pray. God who incarnated love in your Son – help us to love as you have loved us, and then help us to reach out to others with love, even when it isn’t our natural inclination. In the name of Christ we pray. Amen.



Advent Response

He Came Down

*He came down that we may have love. He came down that we may have love,
He came down that we may have love. Hallelujah forevermore.*

*Hymn of Praise

O Come, All Ye Faithful

*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!***



*True God from true God, Light from light eternal, born of a virgin, a mortal he comes;
Very God, begotten, not created! **Refrain***

*Sing, choirs of angels; sing in exultation; sing, all yet citizens of haven above!
Glory to God, all glory in the highest! **Refrain***

*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***

Prayer of Confession

God of all creation, we thank you for being the Light that shines in our darkness, and yet, we confess that too often we refuse to follow that light. Because we won't follow, we forget to BE that light for others, missing opportunities to reveal your love, mercy and peace. The words we speak and things we do, should all be beacons of caring and hope; instead, they often reveal self-centeredness, pride and fear. Forgive us, we pray, for neglecting to share your light and love. Open our eyes to YOUR purpose, and lead us to shine brightly for others. Through Christ we open our hearts and now we turn to you in a time of silent prayer.....Amen.

Assurance of Forgiveness

L: Hear the Good News: God's Word tells us that as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is God's steadfast love for us.

P: ***As far as the east is from the west, so far does God remove our sins from us.***

L: Friends, believe the Good News of the Gospel –

P: ***In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.***



Meeting God in the Word

Children's Message

Prayer for Illumination

First Lesson

Micah 5: 2-5a

The Ruler from Bethlehem

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. 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. 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; and he shall be the one of peace.

Second Lesson Luke 1: 26-45 *The Birth of
Jesus Foretold & Mary Visits Elizabeth*

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, 'Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you.' But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.' Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be since I am a virgin?' The angel said to her, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God.' Then Mary said, 'Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.' Then the angel departed from her.



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

Sermon*God Is Present When*

Responding to the Word

*Hymn

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

*Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king.
Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!"
Joyful, all ye nations rise; join the triumph of the skies;
With the angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"*

Refrain: *Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king!"*

*Christ, by highest heaven adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord,
Late in time behold him come, offspring of the virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see; hail the incarnate deity,
Pleased in flesh with us to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel. **Refrain***

*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. **Refrain***

*Litany for Advent

L: We believe in God Incarnate – in God "with us" -

P: *In a God who was born to be one of us.*

L: We believe in the God who took on flesh -

P: *Who loved and laughed, and wept and prayed.*

L: We believe in the man who was sent by God -

P: *Who was fully human and fully divine.*

L: We believe in the Savior who sacrificed himself, suffering for us -

P: *The One who paid the ultimate price for love.*

L: We believe in the Holy One who triumphed over sin and death –

P: *And who reigns eternally with God.*

L: We believe we are called to reign with him,

P: *And that partnership begins right now – today, in fact!*

A: *May God lead us in being faithful to our covenant relationship, doing all we can to love and serve our wonderful God!*

Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer

Cares Chorus:

*I cast all my cares upon you. I lay all of my burdens down
at your feet. And anytime I don't know what to do,
I cast all my cares upon you.*

The Call to Celebrate Our Gifts

The Invitation *You are invited to place your regular offerings in the basket in the back of the sanctuary, or mail them in. In both struggles and in joy, God is faithful to us. And so, we bring forth our offerings to demonstrate our faithfulness to our God. Let us pray.*

Prayer of Dedication *Holy and loving God, the most majestic music is not an adequate gift to show our adoration of you, and yet, you hear and receive the simplest of songs to honor you. The most precious gift is beneath your notice, and yet, you gladly receive whatever is given out of the most meager of resources. Let our gifts and our lives be worthy of you as they only can be in the grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.*

Going Out to Serve God

* Hymn

Infant Holy, Infant Lowly

*Infant holy, infant lowly, for his bed a cattle stall;
Oxen lowing, little knowing Christ the babe is Lord of all.
Swift are winging angels singing, noels ringing, tidings bringing,
Christ the babe is Lord of all! Christ the babe is Lord of all!*

*Flocks were sleeping; shepherds keeping vigil till the morning new,
Saw the glory, heard the story, tidings of the gospel true.
Thus rejoicing, free from sorrow, praises voicing greet the morrow:
Christ the babe was born for you! Christ the babe was born for you!*



* Blessing

L: May the One born in Bethlehem,

P: Who joined divinity and humanity,

L: Unite heaven and earth,

P: In us, as it was in him,

L: That God's purposes would be fulfilled, and that love would rule the world. And may the blessings of God...

ResponseHe Is Lord*

*He is Lord, He is Lord!
 He is risen from the dead and he is Lord!
 Every knee shall bow, every tongue confess,
 That Jesus Christ is Lord.*

Special Response*Sweet Little Jesus Boy*

Cheryl Shields

*Sweet little Jesus boy,
 They made you be born in a manger.
 Sweet little holy child,
 We didn't know who you were.
 Didn't know you'd come to save us, Lord,
 To take our sins away.
 Our eyes were blind, we could not see.
 We didn't know who you were.*

*Long time ago, you were born.
 Born in a manger, Lord.
 Sweet little Jesus boy,
 The world treats you mean Lord.
 Treats me mean too,
 But that's how things are down here.
 We don't know who you are.*

*You have told us how we are trying, Master.
 You have shown us how.
 Even when you were dying.
 Just seems like we can't do right.
 Look how we treated you,
 But please, Sir, forgive us Lord.
 We didn't know it was you.*

*Sweet little Jesus boy,
 Born a long time ago.
 Sweet little holy child,
 We didn't know who you were.*