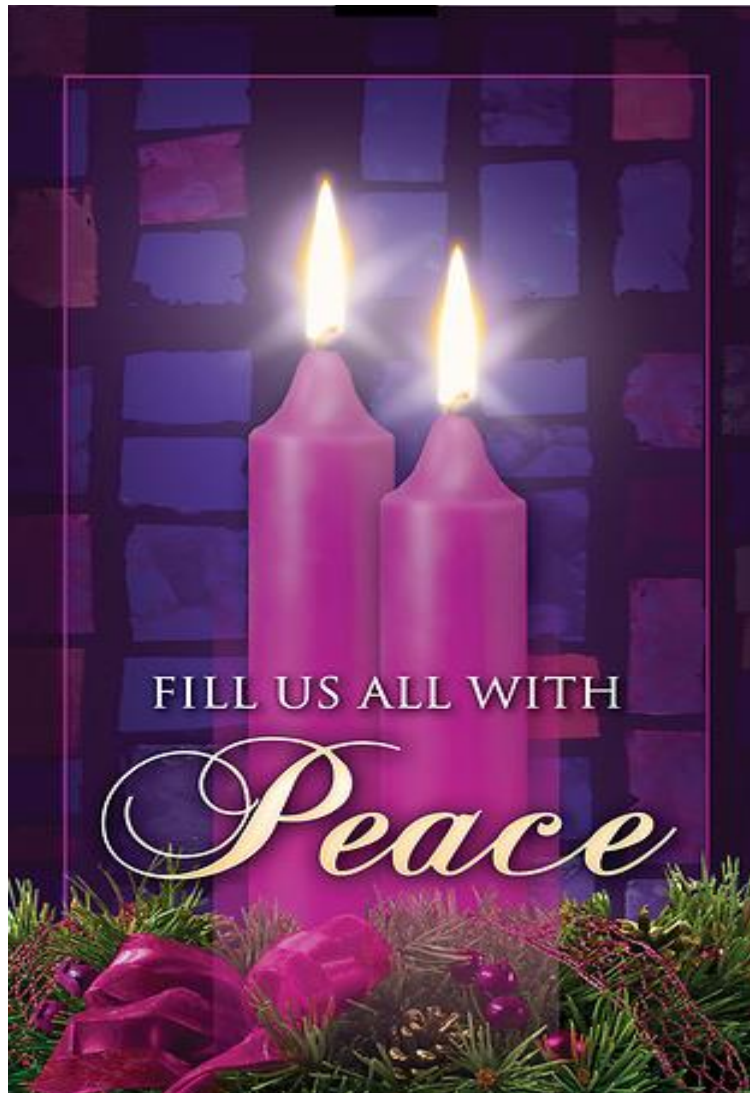


**December 10, 2023**  
**Rockville Presbyterian Church, Rockville, MD**  
[www.rockvillepres.org](http://www.rockvillepres.org)



**Pastor: Rev. Susan Graceson**

**Minister of Music: Huai-En Tsai**

**Lay Leader: Amy Macomber**

**Ushers: Sean Macomber & Dave Anderson**

**We are filled with joy at your presence and hope you experience God's Spirit as you worship and meet with those around you. If you would like more information about RPC, please talk with anyone wearing a name tag or the Pastor.**

**Bold Letters** Indicate congregational response.

\*-- Indicates that all who are able may stand.

## GATHERING

**Prelude**                      *Angels We Have Heard on High*                      **Traditional**

**Welcome**

**Lighting of Advent Candle**

Advent prayer:

**Faithful God, renew us in peace, that we may know  
Christ's birth in our hearts and in our minds, and in  
your world. Amen.**

**Advent Choral Response**                      *Advent Song*                      **STF#2090 (vs.1, 2)**

**Light the Advent Candle, one:  
Now the waiting has begun;  
we have started on our way,  
time to think of Christmas day.**

**Chorus:  
Candle, candle, burning bright,  
shining in the cold winter night;  
candle, candle, burning bright,  
fill our hearts with Christmas light.**

**Light the Advent Candle, two:  
Think of humble shepherds,  
who filled with wonder at the sight  
of the child of Christmas night. (Chorus)**

**Announcements (see pages 6-9 in purple)**

**Prayer of Invocation**

Holy One, in this season of waiting, shower us with your spirit. As we journey to Bethlehem, we lift up songs, prayers, and scripture to you, oh Heavenly One. As we prepare for the birth of hope, we know that you are with us. We feel your presence. We know you more deeply. Amen

## Prayer of Confession:

**Holy One, you know our nature. You know that we are not patient. You know that we do not trust your sacred timing. You know that we desire instant everything. We want to rush ahead. We want to fast forward into the future. We want what we want, and we want it now. Help us. Save us from ourselves. Slow us and heal us.**

**Silence is kept for personal confession.**

## Assurance of Pardon

### \*Choral Response

### He Came Down

STF#2085 (vs. 2, 3 times)

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

## THE WORD

### Children's Sermon

### Prayer of Illumination

Loving God, on this glorious Sunday, we ask that you quiet our minds, open our souls, and expand our hearts, that we may hear your Word read, spoken, sung, and proclaimed. Let us now fully devote ourselves to worship. In Christ's name we pray,  
Amen.

### 1st Reading

### Micah 5

Now you, oh Bethlehem, are walled around with a wall;  
**a siege is laid against us;**  
with a rod they strike the ruler of Israel upon the cheek.

**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.**

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**2nd Reading:**

**Luke 1:26-33**

26 In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, 27 to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. 28 And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." 29 But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. 30 The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. 31 And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. 32 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. 33 He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Sermon**

**Mary and the Angel**

**Unity Hymn**

***Song of Mary***

**#99**

**1 My soul gives glory to my God;**

**my heart pours out its praise.**

**God lifted up my lowliness**

**in many marvelous ways.**

**2 My God has done great things for me:  
yes, holy is God's name.  
All people will declare me blessed,  
and blessings they shall claim.**

**3 From age to age to all who fear,  
such mercy love imparts,  
dispensing justice far and near,  
dismissing selfish hearts.**

**4 Love casts the mighty from their thrones,  
promotes the insecure,  
leaves hungry spirits satisfied;  
the rich seem suddenly poor.**

**5 Praise God, whose loving covenant  
supports those in distress,  
remembering past promises  
with present faithfulness.**

## **RESPONDING**

### **Invitation to Present Our Tithes and Offerings**

Church offerings can be made electronically through our website:  
[www.Rockvillepres.org](http://www.Rockvillepres.org) *or* by scanning our QR code with your phone.



**Offering Anthem**

***Wherever God Leads I'll Go***

**B. B. McKinney**

**\*Doxology**

**Praise God, From Whom All Blessings Flow**

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;  
praise God, all creatures here below;  
praise God above, ye heavenly host;  
Creator, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen**

### **\*Prayer of Dedication**

You called forth this church and entrusted it to us, Great God. We bring our offerings to further your reign among us and only you know how adequately we are responding in return for the abundance you have given to us. May what we dedicate here, and the causes that engage our devotion, represent the life you bring to this church.

**\*Affirmation of Faith:**(adapted from The Confessions of 1967, PC USA *Book of Confessions*)

**In Jesus Christ, God was reconciling the world to God's self. Jesus Christ is God with man. Jesus Christ is the eternal son of the Father, who became man and lived among us to fulfill the work of reconciliation. He is present in the church by the power of the Holy Spirit to continue and complete his mission. In Jesus of Nazareth, true humanity was realized once for all. Jesus, a Palestinian Jew, lived among his own people and shared their needs, temptations, joys, and sorrows. He expressed the love of God in word and deed and became a brother to all kinds of people. Amen.**

### **Prayers of the People**

#### **Lord's Prayer**

**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 sins as we  
forgive those who sin against us.  
Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil,  
for thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, forever.  
Amen.**

### **SENDING**

**\*Sending Hymn**

***No Wind at the Window***

**#101**

**1 No wind at the window,  
no knock on the door;  
no light from the lampstand,  
no foot on the floor;  
no dream born of tiredness,  
no ghost raised by fear:  
just an angel and a woman  
and a voice in her ear.**

2 "O Mary, O Mary,  
don't hide from my face.  
Be glad that you're favored  
and filled with God's grace.  
The time for redeeming  
the world has begun,  
and you are requested  
to mother God's Son."

3 "This child must be born  
that the kingdom might come:  
salvation for many,  
destruction for some;  
both end and beginning,  
both message and sign;  
both victor and victim,  
both yours and divine."

4 No payment was promised,  
no promises made;  
no wedding was dated,  
no blueprint displayed.  
Yet Mary, consenting  
to what none could guess,  
replied with conviction,  
"Tell God I say, Yes."

## **Benediction**

**Postlude**

*O Come, All Ye Faithful*

**John Francis Wade**

## **PRAYERS & BLESSINGS**

### **New to the Prayer list:**

Bernice Brown on the recent passing of her sister Betty and Bernice's upcoming cataract surgery.

## We continue to pray for:

Betty Harbaugh's, granddaughter Michelle who is now in hospice care; Jeff Taylor (Bob Taylor's son) who has recently been diagnosed with melanoma; Barbara Grewe; Bernice Brown's family member, Evan; Carine Nouna request: Sere, Ruth, and Esame (Shaney), Susan's friend Ann who is receiving chemotherapy to treat lung cancer; Verlin Morton (Pastor Doty's husband).

## Our Homebound:

❖ Beth McDonald (Landfair), Bill Landfair and Nancy Webert.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Nursery Care:** Professional childcare workers are available to care for your children during the worship service. They are CPR-trained and have undergone full criminal background checks. The nursery is colorfully decorated and stocked with age-appropriate toys, changing tables, cribs, and childcare supplies. Speak to one of the ushers if you need help placing your child in the care of our wonderful workers.



We'll have choir practices in the **Sanctuary** (this is a change from previous announcements) on the following Sundays, **12/17** and **12/24**, at **9:15-10:00 am** for the Christmas season. All are welcome to join!!



**Thank You** Thanksgiving Baskets – Thank you to everyone who contributed to our Thanksgiving basket collection. We filled 7 Thanksgiving baskets that were distributed by Community Reach to those in need.



**Today, December 10<sup>th</sup> Advent Fair** - after worship. Everyone is invited to join together as we celebrate Advent with holiday craft making and a service project at our annual Advent Fair in the Calvin Room. Karen Barnes from Noonday Collection will also be selling jewelry and accessories from artists living in vulnerable communities from around the world. Noonday uses

fair trade practices to sell items and provide financial support to those in deep need. *You don't want to miss this year's Advent Fair!*





**Tuesday, December 12th from noon to 2:00pm - Lunch Bunch -** Bring your own lunch and meet in the Calvin Room to break bread together in fellowship. We will be decorating holiday cookies for our guests at Rainbow Shelter! All are welcome.



**Sunday, December 17th during Worship - Children's Christmas Pageant -** Come see the kids of RPC dress up in fun costumes and use props to act out a story that celebrates Jesus' birth. Lead for the first time by our own Minister of Music, Dr. Huai-En Tsai. It's sure to bring smiles to kids of all ages! **NO SUNDAY SCHOOL.**



**CHRISTMAS JOY**  
**SPECIAL OFFERINGS**  
LEADERSHIP: PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

Christmas Joy is a PC(USA) collection that helps support past, present, and future leaders in the Presbyterian Church. 50% of the gift assist current and retired church

workers and their families with critical financial needs. 50% of the gift makes it possible for students to learn and grow in faith at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. You can contribute to this collection by using the Christmas Joy envelopes in the pews, or by giving in-person or electronically and marking your gift for Christmas Joy.



**Community Reach Toy Drive:** This year, Community Reach plans to provide holiday gifts to 200 families. Toys should be new and for children aged 0-12. Gift cards should be \$25 or \$30 and are for children aged 13-17. Recommended gift card locations are Target, Amazon, Visa, or Mastercard. *Bring toys or gift cards to church by*

*Sunday, December 17<sup>th</sup> to support Community Reach's Holiday Distribution.*



**Sunday, December 24th at 10:30 am - Christmas Eve Morning Worship -** Enjoy a holiday celebration featuring a baptism and filled with special music and scripture as we retell the nativity story this Christmas Eve during morning worship. **NO SUNDAY SCHOOL.**



**Sunday, December 24th at 5:00 pm Evening Christmas Eve Candlelight Service.**

We will combine services with Emanuel Indonesian Presbyterian Church (EIPC). Children and Adults alike are welcome to celebrate the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ, during a worship service filled with carols and candlelight.

**THOSE SERVING TODAY**  
**SUNDAY, DEC. 10<sup>th</sup>**

*Advent Fair immediately following worship*  
**Pastor:** Rev. Susan Graceson  
**Minister of Music:** Huai-En Tsai  
**Lay Leader:** Amy Macomber  
**Ushers:** Sean Macomber & Dave Anderson  
**Advent Wreath Reading:** The Dawson Family  
**Fellowship:** Advent Fair food  
**Counters:** Ann & Jack Baur  
**Sunday School Teachers:** Mary Williams & Elke Herzfeld

**THOSE SERVING NEXT SUNDAY**  
**DEC. 17<sup>th</sup>**

*Children's Christmas Pageant during service*  
**Pastor:** Rev. Susan Graceson  
**Minister of Music:** Huai-En Tsai  
**Soloist:** Shinae Choi  
**Lay Leader:** Anne Baur  
**Ushers:** Kathy & Phil Ruxton  
**Advent Wreath Reading:** The Macomber Family  
**Fellowship:** *Can you help?*  
**Counters:** The Macomber's  
**NO SUNDAY SCHOOL**



**MORE LIGHT**  

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**PRESBYTERIANS**

***Rockville Presbyterian Church is a member of the More Light network of Presbyterian churches. We welcome everyone without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, age, disability or marital status. We also welcome and encourage the full participation of persons without regard to sexual orientation.***