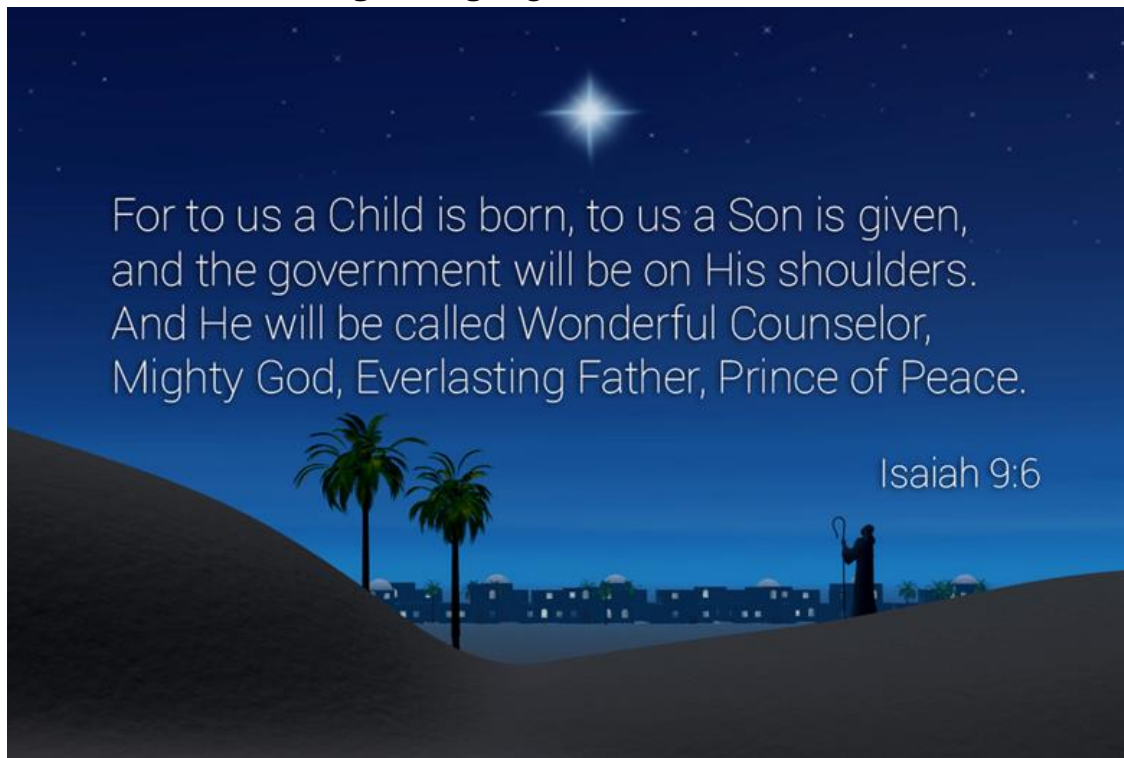




Shine God's Light

As disciples of Christ, we share and rejoice
in the warmth of God's love and light by
teaching the holy word,
serving Christ's community, and
growing together in faith.



December 24, 2023
Fourth Sunday of Advent

The Service for the Lord's Day

Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 24, 2023

9:30 am

Prelude

*Praise Ye, the Lord of Hosts (Christmas Oratorio)
Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming*

Camile Saint-Saéns
Albin C. Whitworth

Call to Worship

One: How does a weary world rejoice?

All: We sing songs of hope.

We allow hope to change us, to strengthen us.

We tell the stories of what could be.

We listen for God's word.

We resist the temptation to give up or give in.

We remember Mary's song.

We gather for worship.

We hope.

We hope.

Against all odds, we hope.

One: Friends, this is the day that the Lord is still making. Let us worship holy God.

Lighting the Fourth Advent Candle of Love

The Sheneman Family

*Hymn

Gentle Mary Laid Her Child

No. 146

Prayer of Confession

Holy God, more days than not, hope feels like the rain. We try to hold onto it with cupped hands, but eventually, it slips right on through. Forgive us for holding hope so loosely. Forgive us for allowing the realities of today to define tomorrow. We know that this world needs people of hope, so today we pray: turn us into those people. Teach us how to sing Mary's song of hope for the world. With open hearts we pray, amen.

Assurance of Forgiveness

One: Body of Christ, no matter how many times we let hope slip through our fingers, we still belong to God. So hear and repeat these words after me:

All: I am God's beloved. I am God's beloved. I am forgiven. I am forgiven. I am blessed and sent to serve. I am blessed and sent to serve. This is the good news of the Gospel. This is a hope we can hang our hats on. Thanks be to God for God's unending love. Amen.

*Gloria

Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!

No. 113

Welcome and Announcements

Children's Message

Children's offering will be collected as they come forward for the message.

After the message, children and youth may depart for Sunday School or return to their pew.

Prayer for Illumination

Emily Russell

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 9:2-7 (page 555)

Anthem

Come and See the Child

Mark Patterson

Come and see the child of Bethlehem, come hear the angels sing. Come and see the child, come honor him, come and worship the new-born King. Come see the One who was foretold, the blessed Prince of Peace. Come and see the child, Immanuel, who has come for you and me. Come and see the child, the holy One, the everlasting King. Come and see the Savior, Christ the Lord, come share the joy He brings. Come see the One who was foretold, the blessed Prince of Peace. Come and see the child, Immanuel, who has come for you and me. Come and see the child, come lift your voice and join the song of praise. Come and share the Savior's gift of joy this blessed Christmas day!

Margaret Sheneman, flute

Gospel Reading

Luke 2:1–20 (page 832)

Sermon

Good News of Great Joy

Rev. Amy Lincoln

*Affirmation of Faith

We believe that hope can change the world. We believe that God uses ordinary people, like an unwed teenage mother, for extraordinary good. And we believe that each of these ordinary people can make a difference. We know that grief, fear, and suffering abound. We know that suffering quells joy and makes it harder to hope. But we choose hope anyway. In the face of hardship, we hope together. We hope with God. We hope for a better world. This is our song. We believe; help our unbelief. In Christ's name we pray, amen.

Anthem

Infant Holy, Infant Lowly

Robert Lau

Infant holy, infant lowly, for his bed a cattle stall. Oxen lowing, little knowing: Christ the child is Lord of all. Swiftly winging, angels singing, bells are ringing, tidings bringing: Christ the child is Lord of all! Flocks were sleeping, shepherds keeping vigil till the morning new, saw the glory, heard the story, tidings of a gospel true. Thus rejoicing, free from sorrow, praises voicing, greet the morrow: Christ the babe was born for you!

Offering

We invite you to consider giving out of gratitude to God either as we pass the offering plate or by placing your offering in the wooden box hanging on the wall at each exit, scanning the QR code in your pew and/or giving online through the church website at www.flemingtonpres.org, or mailing a check to the church office at 10 East Main Street, Flemington, NJ 08822. We give thanks for your generosity, allowing our mission and ministry together to continue.

Prayer of Dedication

*Doxology

No. 145

So bring him incense, gold and myrrh; come, one and all to own him. The King of kings salvation brings; let loving hearts enthrone him. Raise, raise the song on high. The virgin sings her lullaby. Joy, joy, for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mary!

Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer (in unison)

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, forever. Amen

*Hymn

O Little Town of Bethlehem

No. 121

*Charge and Benediction

Response

Love Has Come

Ken Bible

Love has come: a light in the darkness! Love shines forth in the Bethlehem skies. See, all heaven has come to proclaim it; hear how their song of joy arises: Love! Born unto you, a Savior! Love! Glory to God on high.

Postlude

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Robert W. Thygerson

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Rev. Amy E. S. Lincoln, Pastor
Cindy Hall, Office Manager
Jennifer Miller, Youth Coordinator

J. Jay Smith, Director of Music/Organist
Margaret Sheneman, Director of Handbells
Marion Barry, Sexton

Steve Lederach, audio/video engineer

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