Advent Lessons and Carols Service at Northminster Presbyterian Church
The First Sunday of Advent, November 29, 2026 at 10:30 A.M.

PROEM ***An Advent Diptych*** *Alte Catholische Geistliche Kirchengesäng*, arr. David M. Kenney, Sr.

I. *Amid the Cold of Winter*
II. *It Came a Floweret Bright*

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS The Rev. Dr. Ralph Hawkins

CHORAL PRELUDE ***Come to Us, Lord Jesus*** free paraphrase of Psalm 24:7; Hal H. Hopson

CALL TO WORSHIP – Isaiah 40:1-5 **(responsive)**

Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins. A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low;
the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain.
Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together,
for the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

CAROL #82 ***Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus***

Come, thou long-expected Jesus, born to set Thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us; let us find our rest in Thee.
Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth Thou art;
dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart.

Born Thy people to deliver, born a Child and yet a King,
born to reign in us forever, now Thy gracious kingdom bring.
By Thine own eternal Spirit rule in all our hearts alone;
by Thine all-sufficient merit raise us to Thy glorious throne.

FIRST LESSON – based on Micah 5:2 Minor Vernon

Listen, O Israel
you Bethlehem Ephratah
listen to God's Word:

Although you are small
among the towns of Judah
you'll be very blessed

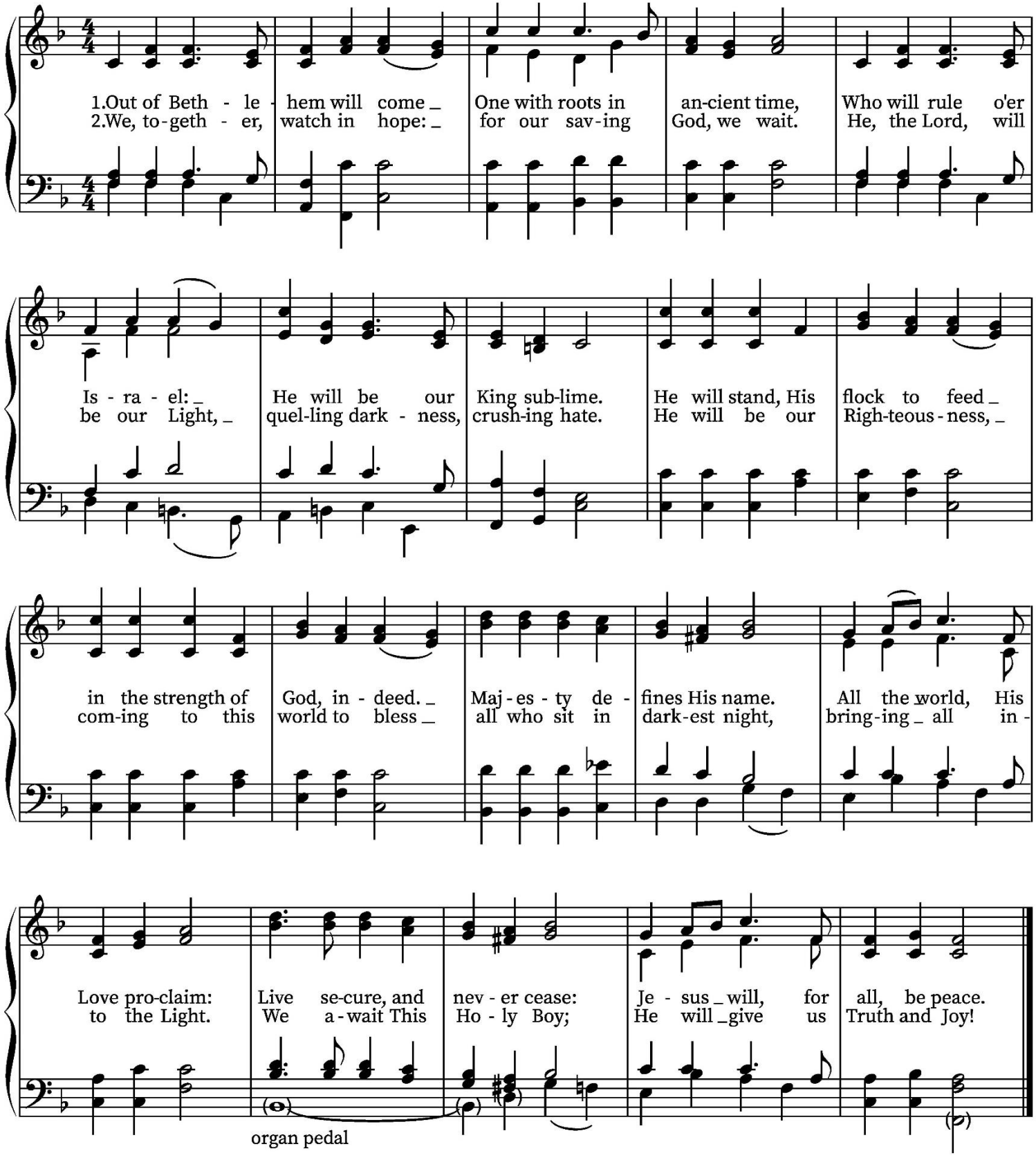
Out of you will come
for Me, a leader Who'll rule
over the nation

Someone Who's fam'ly
is distinguished and of old,
from eternity.

CAROL ***Out of Bethlehem Will Come***

WORDS: D. M. K. (based on Micah 5:2-5 and 7:7, 8b, and 9c)

MUSIC: *MENDELSSOHN*, Felix Mendelssohn; adapted William H. Cummings



SECOND LESSON – based on Isaiah 11:1-3a — Barbara Fatkin

A shoot will come forth
up from the stump of Jesse;
a branch will bear fruit

The Spirit of God —
The Spirit of wisdom and
of understanding

The Spirit of counsel
and of power and knowledge
and fear of the Lord —

Will be upon Him
His joy and delight will be
In fearing the Lord

CAROL #88 ***O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*** (stanza 1)

O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.

THIRD LESSON – based on Isaiah 7:13-14 — Sharon Sulkers

Isaiah declares
Hear now, O house of David
the Word of the Lord

God gives you a sign:
The virgin will be with Child
(by the Holy Ghost)

She'll have a Son
He'll be called Immanuel
(which means God with us)

CAROL #91 ***Come, Come Emmanuel*** (1st time: CHOIR ONLY; 2nd and 3rd times: ALL SING)

Come, come Emmanuel.
Come, Emmanuel.

FOURTH LESSON – based on Isaiah 9:2, 6-7 — Elizabeth Goode

Walking and living —
People in darkness so deep
Have seen a great light

To us a Child's born
Government will rest on Him
His name will be called:

Wonderful Couns'lor
Mighty God, the Prince of Peace
E'erlasting Father

Government shall grow
Continuously, always
With peace evermore

David's throne, kingdom
He will establish, uphold
With justice so right

Now and forever
The zeal of the Lord of hosts
This He'll accomplish

Jesus, Messiah
Fulfills this prophecy in
Matthew four sixteen

CAROL (Choir) ***The People Who Walked in Darkness*** Mary Louise Bringle and Sally Ann Morris

FIFTH LESSON – Matthew 4:12-22 Ralph Hawkins

Jesus Begins His Ministry in Galilee

Now when Jesus heard that John had been arrested, He withdrew to Galilee. He left Nazareth and made His home in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, so that what had been spoken through the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled:

> "Land of Zebulun, land of Naphtali, on the road by the sea, across the Jordan, Galilee of the gentiles—
> the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and for those who sat in the region and shadow
> of death light has dawned."

From that time Jesus began to proclaim, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near."

Jesus Calls the First Disciples

As He walked by the Sea of Galilee, He saw two brothers, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea—for they were fishers. And He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of people." Immediately they left their nets and followed Him. As He went from there, He saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John, in the boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets, and He called them. Immediately they left the boat and their father and followed Him.

REFLECTION

CAROL #121 ***O Little Town of Bethlehem*** (stanzas 1, 2, and 4)

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light;
the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary; and, gathered all above,
while mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wond'ring love.
O morning stars, together proclaim the holy birth,
and praises sing to God the King, and peace to all on earth.

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!

SIXTH LESSON – Psalm 80:1-3 **(responsive)** David Kenney, Sr.

Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, You who lead Joseph like a flock! You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh.

Stir up Your might, and come to save us! Restore us, O God; let Your face shine, that we may be saved.

CAROL (Handbells) ***An English Christmas*** Traditional English Carols, arr. Michael Helman
(incorporating ***Gentle Mary Laid Her Child*** and ***God Rest Ye, Merry, Gentlemen***)

SEVENTH LESSON – based on Luke 2:6-7 Al Fatkin

While in Bethlehem
she gave birth to her firstborn,
a Son, as foretold

She wrapped Him in cloths
And laid Him in a manger
'cause the inn was full

"Glory be to God"
sang the angelic choir
"Peace to all on earth"

CAROL #113 ***Angels We Have Heard on High*** (stanzas 1 and 3)

Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o'er the plains,
and the mountains in reply echoing their joyous strains.
Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Come to Bethlehem and see Him whose birth the angels sing;
come, adore on bended knee Christ, the Lord, the newborn King.
Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!

EIGHTH LESSON – based on Luke 2:8-12 Lynn Denny

Here we shepherds were
spending the nights in the fields
next to Bethlehem

One bright starry night
we got the shock of our lives
near scared us to death

One of God's angels
suddenly appeared to us
blazing God's glory

We were terrified
but the said to us
"Do not be afraid

I'm here to announce
a great and joyful event
meant for everyone

A Savior's been born
today, here in David's town
He is Christ the Lord

Here's what to look for:
a Baby wrapped in blankets
laid in a manger"

CAROLS (Choir) ***Rise Up, Shepherd and Follow*** Traditional Spiritual, arr. Greg Gilpin
In the Bleak Midwinter Christina Rossetti and Gustav Holst, arr. Robert J. Powell

NINTH LESSON – Romans 16:25-27 Judy Hill

Now to God who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages, but is now disclosed and through the prophetic writings is made known to all the gentiles, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith—to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to Whom be the glory forever! Amen.

CAROL #145 ***What Child Is This***

What Child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with voices 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!

Why lies He in such mean estate, where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear: for sinners here the silent Word is pleading.
Nails, spears shall pierce Him through; the cross be borne for me, for you.
Hail, hail, the Word made flesh, the Babe, the Son of Mary!
So bring Him incense, gold, and myrrh, come, peasant, king to own Him.
The King of kings salvation brings; let loving hearts enthrone Him.
Raise, raise a song on high, the virgin sings her lullaby.
Joy, joy, for Christ is born, The Babe, the Son of Mary!

TENTH LESSON – John 1:9-14 **(responsive)** Carolyn Goode

The true Light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came into being through Him, yet the world did not know Him. He came to what was His own, and His own people did not accept Him.

But to all who received Him, who believed in His name, He gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen His glory, the glory as of a Father's only Son, full of grace and truth.

CAROL #112 ***On Christmas Night All Christians Sing***

On Christmas night all Christians sing
to hear the news the angels bring;
on Christmas night all Christians sing
to hear the news the angels bring:
news of great joy, news of great mirth,
news of our merciful King's birth.
Then why should we on earth be sad,
since our Redeemer made us glad?
Then why should we on earth be sad,
since our Redeemer made us glad,
when from our sin He set us free,
all for to gain our liberty?
When sin departs before His grace,
then life and health come in its place;
when sin departs before His grace,
then life and health come in its place;
heaven and earth with joy may sing,
all for to see the newborn King.
All out of darkness we have light,
which made the angels sing this night;
all out of darkness we have light,
which made the angels sing this night:
"Glory to God in highest heav'n,
Peace on earth and goodwill. Amen."

ELEVENTH LESSON - Luke 1:67-72, 76-79 Emory Whitaker

Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied about his son, John the Baptist, who had just been born: "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for He has looked favorably on His people and redeemed them. He has raised up a mighty Savior for us in the house of His child David, as He spoke through the mouth of His holy prophets from of old, that we would be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us. Thus He has shown the mercy promised to our ancestors and has remembered His holy covenant. And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High, for you will go before the Lord to prepare His ways, to give His people knowledge of salvation by the forgiveness of their sins. Because of the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us, to shine upon those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace."

CAROL (Choir) ***Infant Holy, Infant Lowly*** Polish Carol, arr. Josh Sparkman

TWELFTH LESSON – based on John 1:9 Scott Emener

The Light of the world
came to bring light to our lives
that we, too, might shine

CAROL (Vocal Quartet) ***Were You There on that Christmas Night?*** Natalie Sleeth

Carolyn Goode, Elizabeth Goode, Rebecca Goode, and Rosie Miles

THIRTEENTH LESSON – Micah 5:4-5 **(responsive)** Rebecca Goode

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.

CHORAL RESPONSE ***The Peace of God*** John Rutter

BENEDICTION

CAROL #136 ***Go, Tell It on the Mountain***

Refrain: Go, tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere;
go, tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born!

While shepherds kept their watching o'er silent flocks by night,
behold, throughout the heavens there shone a holy light. **[Refrain]**

The shepherds feared and trembled when lo! above the earth
rang out the angel chorus that hailed our Savior's birth. **[Refrain]**

Down in a lowly manger the humble Christ was born,
and God sent us salvation that blessed Christmas morn. **[Refrain]**

POSTLUDE ***On Christmas Night Let Friends Rejoice!*** SUSSEX CAROL and IN DULCI JUBILO, arr. D. M. K.

Information & Announcements

Welcome Friends and Guests!
Whether you are sharing in the worship of God with us for the first time, visiting with family or friends, or returning for a visit to your home church, we welcome you today in the name of Jesus. Please share some contact information in the red book located in the pew so we can follow up with you and make a place for you in our weekly fellowship.

Prayer Concerns
If you have a need or a request for prayer, please contact the church office.
Current Member Concerns: Jane Prentice; Rex & Nita Tidwell; Joan Walker; Mary Alice Wilson; Annette Hutto; Steve Davis; Nancy Sasser (death of her mother, Anne NeSmith); Edward Clark (death of his mother, Evelyn Clark) – *Current Friends and Family Concerns:* Margaret Yawn; Donna Carole Kitchens; Karen Kuebel (Betty Lamb's niece, sodium deficiency); Christopher Oxford (Isabel Davis's grandson); Kimberly Lewis (Frenchie Bowen's niece); Louise Sallstrom; Kyra Osmus; Dave Crowe (Nita Mitchell's brother); Rick Almarode (David Kenney, Sr.'s cousin) – *Military Personnel Prayer List*: Austin Riley (David & Liz Riley's son); Joshua Sulkers (Sharon Sulkers' son); James Watwood; Carter Eddlemon (Doug & Carol Holt's grandson); James Barefoot, Austin Jones, and James Hawkins (family friends of Jennifer Whitehead)

Today's Lessons & Carols Poetry
Northminster Presbyterian Church extends a huge thank you to The Rev. Malcolm Hamblett (of Weston, Vermont), who graciously allowed the use of his poetry, all of which is in the ancient Japanese short-form called haiku. Malcolm is the son of Mary Polhemus Hamblett (of Concord, New Hampshire) and The Rev. S. Benjamin Hamblett, III (1935-2017). Ben was a poet himself as well as a hymn writer. Mary—an alto singer, handbell ringer, and retired teacher—is a friend of David Kenney, whose hymns Mary has been editing for a number of years. Mary has allowed Northminster to use Ben's hymns, some of which were sung during last year's Lessons and Carols service as well as in recent services.

Sanctuary Flowers
Flowers today have been given to the glory of God by Sandra Ridgeway in celebration of their 13th anniversary.

If you would like to contribute to the weekly flower arrangements, whether in celebration of a special event or in memory of a loved one, please sign up on the board in the foyer. Arrangements are $65 (payable to Northminster) and can be taken home with you or gifted to one of our homebound or sick members.

Choir Rehearsal Schedules
Every Wednesday: Handbell ringers meet at 6:00 p.m. in the library. Singers meet at 7:00 p.m. in the choir room. ALL AGES AND ABILITIES ARE WELCOME!! Just bring your wrists, arms, vocal cords, and willing spirits, and we will welcome you into the music fold!

Adult/Youth Sunday Studies
We will gather for Sunday lessons December 6th and 13th in the community room downstairs beginning at 9AM, then break for the Christmas holidays.

Kidventures – Children's Sunday School & Sharing Box
Our Northminster kids are having a blast to be more like Jesus and "Growing in God's Love" with a new lesson book of the same title, containing 150 Old and New Testament stories. We are enjoying our time in church and learning even though we're young, we are part of the Northminster family. Childcare begins at 9 a.m. for those wanting to attend adult Sunday school. We have a sharing box in the foyer where you can bring new or gently used children's winter clothes and accessories which will be shared with children at Rosa Taylor who might need extra help staying warm this winter.

Alternative Christmas Fair – Sunday, December 6th
Give the gift that gives twice this Christmas! Mark your calendars for our annual Alternative Christmas Fair, where you can donate to one of our supported missions in honor of anyone on your Christmas list. Cards will be available for each ministry so you can let your loved one know of your donation. Check your weekly emails and bulletins for more details to come.

Christmas Eve Candlelight & Communion Service – Thursday, December 24th at 6PM
All are invited to join us for our annual worship service on the eve of Christmas, where we will celebrate and honor the birth of our Lord, Jesus through music, scripture, communion and the tranquil stillness of candlelight. Invite your friends and family and join us at 6PM in the sanctuary.

NORTHMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Our calling at Northminster is to make disciples, to grow in faith together, and to serve others in Christ.
CONGREGATION: Ministers of the Good News; SESSION of Ruling Elders: Scott Emener; Amy Maley; Nita McCord; Brad Miles; Renae Preyna; Gregg Reed; Jeanne Roddenberry; Amanda Smith; Sharon Sulkers; Natalie Vernon
RALPH HAWKINS, Pastor and Teaching Elder DAVID KENNEY, SR., Music Director PAUL EVANS, Parish Associate
SAM ALDERMAN, III, Clerk of Session JENNIFER WHITEHEAD, Ministry Assistant
Office hours: Monday – Thursday 9:00-1:00; Jennifer Cell: 478-318-7911

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May the Peace of the Lord Christ Go with You, by Peter Sutcliffe.
From ***Morning Prayer***, from the Northumbria Community's ***Celtic Daily Prayer***, published by Collins. Used with permission.

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Sanctuary Flowers
Flowers today have been given to the glory of God by Martha Hopkins in loving memory of her husband's birthday.

Updated Choir Rehearsal Schedules
Vocal Choir will rehearse at 7:00 p.m. on the following Wednesdays: December 2, 9, and 16, 2026, then begin our holiday break. We will resume regular rehearsals at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, January 6, 2027. The handbell choir will be on break after today's Lessons & Carols service and will resume rehearsals at 6 p.m. on Wednesday, January 6.

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THANK YOU to all singers, ringers, & string players for leading us in worship!

Vocal Choir
Carolyn Goode, Elizabeth Goode, Jennifer Goode, Judy Hill, Rosie Miles, Lynn Davis, Lynn Denny, Rebecca Goode, Natalie Vernon, Genny Whitaker, David Goode, Minor Vernon, Frank Ellis, Al Fatkin, and Emory Whitaker

Handbell Choir
Frank Ellis, Pat McCall, Gregg Reed, Julie Reed, Sharon Sulkers, Jennifer Whitehead

Generation Fusion Quartet
Violin - Kyla Gwyn
Violin - Pat McCall
Viola - Jaris Tobler
Cello - Spencer Brewer

THANK YOU, also, to all the Scripture and poetry readers, whose names are listed within the order of worship.

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