

## CELEBRATION OF WORSHIP

December 24, 2020

### PRELUDE

“The Holy Boy”

John Ireland

### WELCOME

### LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES

Leader: On this Christmas Eve, we give thanks for God’s holy design in our lives. God’s very presence surprises and sustains us when we least expect it, ever since a child was wrapped in bands of cloth and laid in a manger in Bethlehem. With all creation we raise our voices in praise and sing a new song: Glory to God in the highest and peace and goodwill to all people on earth.

We light this candle in gratitude for the design God weaves in our lives. We are meant for communion, and God brings us together by the great gift of love we celebrate tonight.

**All: Merciful and loving God, we thank you for the gift of your love and presence, brought home to us in the birth of Jesus. We can only marvel as we come before you in humility and awe. Help us to reach out to others as you have reached out to us. May those of us who are poor and homeless experience your loving presence as surely as Mary and Joseph did, and may all of us come to know that we have no home except in you. Amen.**

### HYMN #133

“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 ye citizens of heaven 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]

### CALL TO CONFESSION Lay liturgist – Kim Bolinger

Leader: The way of life is this: First, you shall love God who made you. And second, love your neighbor as yourself, and only treat others the way you wish to be treated. Do not initiate divisions, but rather let us bring peace to our hearts and to the world.

### PRAYER OF CONFESSION (Unison) Lay liturgist – Kim Bolinger

**God, who comes to us, forgive us, when we care more about what is under the tree, than your creation and your children. Have mercy on us, Healing God, so we might tear down the walls we have built to keep your love away, so our hearts would become cradles for your Son, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.**

Leader: Let us in silence confess our own personal sins. (Silence)

### ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS Lay liturgist – Kim Bolinger

Leader: Friends, believe the good news of the gospel.

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

**PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION (Unison) Lay liturgist – Kim Bolinger**

**Gracious God, we do not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from your mouth. Make us hungry for this heavenly food, that it may nourish us today in the ways of eternal life; through Jesus Christ, the bread of heaven. Amen.**

**HYMN #119**

“Hark! The Herald Angel’s Sing”

MENDELSSOHN

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]

**FIRST SCRIPTURE READING**

Isaiah 9:1-7

**ANTHEM**

“O Holy Night”  
Jeff Tabor, tenor

Adolphe Adam

**SECOND SCRIPTURE READING**

Luke 2:8-20

**HOMILY**

Dr. Bob Spratt

**HYMN #147**

“The First Nowell”

THE FIRST NOWELL

The first Nowell the angel did say  
was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay,  
in fields where they lay keeping their sheep,  
on a cold winter’s night that was so deep.

Refrain:

Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,  
born is the King of Israel.

They looked up and saw a star  
shining in the east beyond them far;  
and to the earth it gave great light,  
and so it continued both day and night. [Refrain]

And by the light of that same star  
three wise men came from country far;  
to seek for a king was their intent,  
and to follow the star wherever it went. [Refrain]

This star drew nigh to the northwest;  
o’er Bethlehem it took its rest,  
and there it did both stop and stay,  
right over the place where Jesus lay. [Refrain]

Then entered in those wise men three,  
full reverently upon their knee,  
and offered there in his presence  
their gold, and myrrh, and frankincense. [Refrain]

Then let us all with one accord  
sing praises to our heavenly Lord,

that hath made heaven and earth of nought,  
and with his blood our life hath bought. [Refrain]

## **PASTORAL PRAYER AND THE LORD'S PRAYER PRESENTATION OF TITHES and OFFERINGS**

### **OFFERTORY**

“Gesù Bambino”  
Jean Coniber, Handbells

by Pietro Yon  
and arranged by Nancy Hascall

### **OFFERTORY PRAYER (Unison) Lay liturgist – Kim Bolinger**

**Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts: ourselves, our time and our possessions. Use us, and what we have gathered, in feeding the world with your love; through the one who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

### **CELEBRATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER**

All who trust in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior are invited to share in this feast.

#### **Invitation to the Lord's Supper**

#### **Words of Institution**

#### **Distribution of the Bread and Cup**

*Please eat the bread as you are served as a sign that Christ nourishes and strengthens each one. Please hold the cup that we might drink it together to symbolize the way Christ nourishes and strengthens our unity.*

#### **Prayer of Commitment (Unison)**

**Great God, as you came at night when all was still, so enter our lives this night. Illumine our paths with the light of Christ's presence, so that we may clearly see the way before us, the truth to speak and the life to live for Him, our Lord Jesus Christ, now and forever. Amen.**

### **THE CANDLELIGHTING CEREMONY**

The center candle of the Advent wreath represents Christ, the Light of the world. The light is passed from person to person until the day when all the world comes to know that God is light.

#### **LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES**

### **HYMN #122**

“Silent Night, Holy Night”

Silent night, holy night! All is calm, all is bright,  
Round yon virgin mother and child!  
Holy Infant, so tender and mild,  
Sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night!  
Shepherds quake at the sight,  
Glories stream from heaven afar,  
heavenly hosts sing: “Alleluia;  
Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born.”

Silent night, holy night! Son of God, love's pure light  
Radiant beams from Thy holy face,  
With the dawn of redeeming grace,  
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth, Jesus, Lord at Thy birth.  
Silent night, holy night!  
Wondrous star, lend thy light;  
With the angels, let us sing, Alleluia to our King;  
Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born.

### **BLESSING**

### **POSTLUDE**

“Hallelujah! From the Messiah, HWV 56”

George Frideric Handel

**LIVESTREAMING UPDATE:** We are continuing to work on improving the quality and features of our Sunday Worship live-streaming experience. This Sunday we are upgrading our camera and will also begin using a new streaming interface called "BoxCast". One of the features that BoxCast provides is the ability to transmit high-quality audio and video to the BoxCast streaming channel. If you have a Smart TV or connect to internet channels on your television with Roku, Amazon Fire Stick, Apple TV, or Chromecast you can add the BoxCast channel and view our Sunday Services live on your TV. Past services will also be available on the BoxCast channel, so you can get caught up or re-watch any time.



1. Add the BoxCast Channel to your internet-connected TV
  2. Click on [Find an Organization]
  3. Type: **bethany presbyterian**  
(Two organizations are named "bethany presbyterian", ours is the one with the picture of the sanctuary)
  4. Click on our "bethany presbyterian" to select this channel
  5. View a recent broadcast or live worship service here
  6. Return to the BoxCast main page when finished
  7. Bethany Presbyterian Church will be saved to the main page - just click for future viewing
- Sunday services will continue to be available on Zoom and Facebook and you can continue to use Facebook chat for sharing your prayer requests during the service.

#### Link to Boxcast

<https://boxcast.tv/view/bethany-sunday-service-143354>

**LIFE GROUP #2: Will now resume via Zoom Meeting** 7:00 to 8:30pm, the second and fourth Mondays of each month. *[There will be no class on December 28 due to holiday week.] Due to Covid-19 regulations and session guidelines this group is currently at their maximum of 10 people.*

**SERENDIPITY LIFE GROUP #3:** is one of the Life Studies groups at Bethany. The meetings are relaxed and based around passages from the Serendipity Bible. The discussions are not "heavy" and are relatable to our everyday lives and experiences. It is an enjoyable experience to get to know the other members of our church family. Any questions, please call Jack Bansbach at 227-1265. We are currently meeting via Zoom every other week, Monday's at 3PM, next meeting December 28.

**LIFE GROUP #4:** Are you looking for a light, casual Bible study that meets in the afternoon? Join Bev Bennett on Friday, January 22, 2021 at 3:00 in the Large Hall. Bev is open to any ideas the group may have and has suggested continuing the fun and fellowship with a pot-luck dinner or going out for a fish fry together afterwards. Due to Covid-19 guidelines and session regulations, there is a maximum of 10 for in-person meetings. Please call Bev Bennett (585)-225-0206 in advance to sign-up.

Join Zoom by phone only by calling +1 (646) 558-8656 on your land line or (646) 558-8656 on your cellular phone (there may be a long distance charge) and enter the following Meeting ID# 243 911 4010 when prompted, followed by the # sign.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2439114010>



### **Bethany Presbyterian Church**

We are a welcoming Christian family who worships God and nurtures spiritual growth through friendship, learning, music and serving others.

**Bethany Presbyterian Church**  
**3000 Dewey Avenue, Rochester, NY 14616**  
**[www.bethanyrochester.org](http://www.bethanyrochester.org)**  
**663-3000**