



# First Sunday of Christmas

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## First Presbyterian Church

25 West Main Street | North East, PA 16428  
(814) 725-8641 | [FPCNE.ORG](http://FPCNE.ORG) | Follow us on Facebook

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December 28, 2025, 10:30 AM | First Sunday of Christmas  
Gregg D. Townsend, Pastor | Jane M. Livingston, Director of Music

### GATHERING AROUND THE WORD

\* CAROL

“O Little Town Of Bethlehem”

#44

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 wondering love.  
O morning stars together proclaim the holy birth. And praises sing to God the King and peace to all on earth.

How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is giv’n.  
So God imparts to human hearts, the blessings of His heaven.  
No ear may hear His coming but in this world of sin.  
Where meek souls will receive Him still, the dear Christ enters in.

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.

## **WELCOME**

Pastor Gregg Townsend

## **\* GREETING**

## **\* CALL TO WORSHIP**

Psalm 148

Leader: Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord from the heavens; praise him in the heights! Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his host!

**Congregation: Praise him, sun and moon; praise him, all you shining stars! Praise him, you highest heavens, and you waters above the heavens!**

Let them praise the name of the Lord, for he commanded and they were created. He established them for ever and ever; he fixed their bounds, which cannot be passed.

**Praise the Lord from the earth, you sea monsters and all deeps,  
fire and hail, snow and frost, stormy wind fulfilling his command!  
Mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars! Wild animals and all cattle, creeping things and flying birds!**

Kings of the earth and all peoples, princes and all rulers of the earth!

Young men and women alike, old and young together!

**Let them praise the name of the Lord, for his name alone is exalted; his glory is above earth and heaven.  
He has raised up a horn for his people, praise for all his faithful, for the people of Israel who are close to him. Praise the Lord!**

## **\* CAROL**

“Angels We Have Heard on High”

#23

Angels, we have heard on high sweetly singing over the plains.  
And the mountains in reply echoing their joyous strains. Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Shepherds why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?  
What the gladsome tidings be, which inspire your heavenly song?  
Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!

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

## **PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

Today we celebrate that Jesus, our Lord, came to earth as a human, just like us but without sin. He came so that we who sin may be freed from sin. With the peace that comes from knowing Jesus came, let us confess our sins and be forgiven.

**God of love, all year long we pursue power and money, yet you come in weakness. All season long we covet great material gifts, when you alone offer what is lasting.**

**Through the work of this Lord Jesus, who comes among us full of grace and truth, forgive us, heal us, correct us. Then open our lips, that we may sing your praise with the angels, and remake our lives, that we may witness to your transforming love. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

## **ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

When the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, 'Abba! Father!'

**Thanks be to God!**

Galatians 4:4-6

**\* CAROL**

“Good Christian Friends, Rejoice”

#28

Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice.

Give ye heed to what we say: Jesus Christ is born today.

Ox and ass before him bow and He is in the manger now. Christ is born today! Christ is born today!

Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice.

Now ye hear of endless bliss: Jesus Christ was born for this.

He hath opened Heaven's door and we are blest forevermore. Christ was born for this! Christ was born for this!

Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice.

Now ye need not fear the grave. Jesus Christ was born to save.

Calls you one and calls you all to gain the everlasting hall. Christ was born to save! Christ was born to save!

## **LESSON**

Isaiah 60:1-6

**CAROL**

“It Came Upon the Midnight Clear”

#38

It came upon the midnight clear that glorious song of old.

From angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold.

Peace on the earth, good will to all from heaven's all gracious King.

The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come with peaceful wings unfurled.

And still their heavenly music floats o'er all the weary world.

Above its sad and lowly plains, they bend on hovering wing.

And ever o'er its Babel sounds, the blessed angels sing.

And ye, beneath life's crushing load whose forms are bending low.

Who toil along the climbing way with painful steps and slow.

Look now for glad and golden hours, come swiftly on the wing,

O rest beside the weary road and hear the angels sing.

For lo, the days are hastening on by prophet bards foretold.

When with the ever-circling years, comes round the age of gold.

When peace shall over all the earth, its ancient splendors fling.

And the whole world give back the song, which now the angels sing.

## **GOSPEL LESSON**

Matthew 2:1-12

**CAROL**

“We Three Kings of Orient Are

#66

We three kings of Orient are bearing gifts we traverse afar.

Field and fountain moor and mountain, following yonder star.

**O star of wonder. Star of night. Star with royal beauty bright.  
Westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to Thy perfect light.**

Born a King on Bethlehem's plain. Gold, I bring to crown Him again.  
King forever, ceasing never over us all to reign. **(Chorus)**

Frankincense to offer have I. Incense owns a Deity nigh.  
Prayer and praising, we are raising, worshiping God Most high. **(Chorus)**

Myrrh is mine, its bitter perfume breathes a life of gathering gloom.  
Sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying, sealed in the stone-cold tomb. **(Chorus)**

Glorious now behold Him arise. King and God and sacrifice  
Alleluia! Alleluia! Sounds through the earth and skies. **(Chorus)**

**\* CAROL**

“The First Nowell”

#56

The first Nowell the angel did say was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay.  
In fields where they lay akeeping their sheep on a cold winter's night that was so deep.  
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.  
Nowell! Nowell! Nowell! Nowell! Born is the King of Israel.

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.  
Nowell! Nowell! Nowell! Nowell! Born is the King of Israel.

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.  
Nowell! Nowell! Nowell! Nowell! Born is the King of Israel.

Then entered in those wise men three. Fell rev'rently upon their knee.  
And offered there in His presence, their gold and myrrh and frankincense.  
Nowell! Nowell! Nowell! Nowell! Born is the King of Israel.

Then let us all with one accord, sing praises to our heavenly Lord.  
That hath made heav'n and earth of nought and with His blood mankind hath bought.  
Nowell! Nowell! Nowell! Nowell! Born is the King of Israel.

**LESSON**

Matthew 2:13-18

**CAROL**

“What Child Is This”

#53

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

This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing.  
Haste, haste to bring Him laud, the Babe, the Son of Mary.

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.  
This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing.  
Haste, haste to bring Him laud, the Babe, the Son of Mary.

## LESSON

Matthew 2:19-23

### \* CAROL

“As With Gladness Men of Old”

#63

As with gladness men of old, did the guiding star behold.  
As with joy they hailed its light, leading onward, beaming bright.  
So most gracious Lord may we evermore be led to Thee.

As with joyful steps, they sped to that lowly manger bed.  
There to bend the knee before Him whom heav’n and earth adore.  
So may we with willing feet ever seek Thy mercy seat.

As they offered gifts most rare, at that manger rude and bare.  
So may we with holy joy, pure and free from sin's alloy.  
All our costliest treasures bring, Christ to Thee our heavenly King.

Holy Jesus ev'ry day, keep us in the narrow way.  
And when earthly things are past, bring our ransomed souls at last.  
Where they need no star to guide. Where no clouds Thy glory hide.

## PASTORAL PRAYER AND THE 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 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.**

### \* CAROL

“Joy to the World”

#40

Joy to the world! The Lord is come. Let earth receive her King. Let every heart prepare Him room  
And heaven and nature sing. And heaven and nature sing and heaven and heaven and nature sing

Joy to the world! The Savior reigns. Let us our songs employ. While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains,  
Repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy, repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

No more let sins and sorrows grow, nor thorns infest the ground. He comes to make His blessings flow.  
Far as the curse is found, far as the curse is found, far as, far as the curse is found.

He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the nations prove. The glories of His righteousness  
And wonders of His love, and wonders of His love, and wonders, wonders of His love.

### \* CAROL

“Go, Tell It on the Mountain”

#29

**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. **(Chorus)**

The shepherds feared and trembled when lo above the earth.  
Rang out the angel chorus that hailed our Savior's birth. **(Chorus)**

Down in a lowly manger, the humble Christ was born.  
And God sent us salvation that blessed Christmas morn. **(Chorus)**

**\* OFFERING OUR TENTH AND GIFTS BEYOND**

**\* BENEDICTION AND POSTLUDE**

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## **First Presbyterian Church**

Announcements and Things to Know

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**THERE WILL BE NO BELL OR CHANCEL CHOIR PRACTICES** on Thursday, January 1 or 8. We will resume practices on Thursday, January 15. Bell Choir Practice is held on Thursdays at 6:00 PM followed by Chancel Choir Practice at 7:00 PM. We welcome new members to join. Speak with Jane Livingston for more information.

**PLEASE SIGN UP TO BRING IN FLOWERS FOR OUR CHANCEL OR TO HOST COFFEE HOUR.**  
Sign-up sheets are in the Assembly Room.

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**PLEASE SUBMIT ALL BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENTS BY WEDNESDAYS** to Pastor Gregg or Jane.

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**WEDNESDAY EVENING PRAYER AND DEVOTIONAL** is held on Facebook on Wednesday evenings at 7:00 PM (ET). Please contact Pastor Gregg directly to share any prayer requests.

### **CONTACT INFO YOU MIGHT NEED**

- Contact Pastor Gregg anytime at (814) 460-3123 (call or text) and [pastortownsend@yahoo.com](mailto:pastortownsend@yahoo.com).
- Contact music director Jane Livingston at (814) 504-1135 (call or text) and [jmlivingston20@outlook.com](mailto:jmlivingston20@outlook.com).

### **OFFERING OUR TENTH AND GIFTS BEYOND**

1. Place your envelopes in the plates at the back of the sanctuary.
2. Give through PayPal at [paypal.me/fpcne](https://paypal.me/fpcne) or [FPCNE.ORG](https://FPCNE.ORG).
3. Scan the QR code in the pew pocket to go right to the church's Paypal account.
4. Speak with Pastor Gregg for details on setting up direct deposit.

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