

# AWE STRUCK

LOST IN WONDER, LOVE, AND PRAISE



1215 Virginia Episcopal School Road, Lynchburg, VA 24503  
(434) 384-6231 · [www.fpclly.org](http://www.fpclly.org) · e-mail: [info@fpclly.org](mailto:info@fpclly.org)  
<https://www.facebook.com/firstpresoflynchburg/>



# Welcome to First Presbyterian Church- Lynchburg, VA

Welcome! It is a true blessing to have you in worship today on this Christmas Eve. What a glorious day and what a wonderful opportunity we have to worship God and fellowship in community together.

At Christmas, we remember and celebrate the nativity of Christ and the mystery of the incarnation. Whereas during Advent we anticipate the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies of the Messiah, at Christmas we identify with the angels who proclaimed, "Glory to God in the highest"; with the shepherds, who were afraid but nevertheless offered worship in awe of the good news; and with Mary, who responded in humility and pondered the meaning of these events in her heart.

The spirit of the worship and the visuals of the worship space change dramatically from the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent to the celebration of Christmas. White, yellow, and gold are the colors of Christmas, and many visual symbols and images- angels, candles, the star of peace, shepherds, the manger, and so on- come to mind. Christmas carols have their own built-in spirit of celebration. Celebrating Christmas as a season helps us both to enter into a meaning of the incarnation more fully than celebrating a single day and to focus on additional Scripture texts that explore the meaning of Christmas beyond the familiar words of Luke 2.

Christmas is the first in a series of celebrations (Christmas, Epiphany, the baptism of our Lord, and the transfiguration of Jesus) that affirm the identity of Jesus as not only fully human but also fully divine.

Merry Christmas!

Run the Race, Fight the Fight, Keep the Faith... Rev. Dr. Peter Thompson

## Building Hospitality and Welcoming Children

Just as God's arms are open wide with grace and welcome, so too are the doors of FPCLY open wide with hospitality. We are grateful you are here today and pray you feel at home! The following are a few notes to help be a comfort and guide during your time here:

- Ushers are available and willing to assist you in finding your way or answering other questions.
- All visitors are encouraged to stop by the Hospitality (Welcome) Desk near the main entrance for more information or to share your contact information.
- Hearing-assist devices, Large Print Bulletins, and Large Print Hymnals can be found in the Narthex.
- Accessible Restrooms can be located down the main hallway from the Foyer.
- The Nursery (ages 0 to 3) and Nursery Nook are located on this level through the Chapel in Room 101. A Nursery Care Provider is there to help assist you.
- Welcoming Children: Just as Jesus welcomes the little children to come, so we welcome children of all ages in worship. In order to make the worship service as welcoming for our littlest ones as possible, we provide worship carts in the Narthex with a variety of resources to make a worship bag.

## Interested in joining?

First Presbyterian would love to welcome YOU as a new member. If you'd like to be here in a more official capacity, you are invited to join First Presbyterian as a member. Everyone who is part of our community is treated the same. Joining isn't about special treatment, but rather about a commitment you make to following Jesus alongside others trying to do the same. New member gatherings take place throughout the year based on interest. If you are interested in learning more, please contact Rev. Dr. Peter Thompson ([peter@fpcly.org](mailto:peter@fpcly.org)) or Alex Collier ([alex@fpcly.org](mailto:alex@fpcly.org)).

# **Celebrating Christmas Eve with Carols, Communion, and Candlelight**

December 24, 2025

4:00 p.m.

*\*Those who are able, please stand.*

***All are invited to join together in saying liturgy printed in bold.***

## **WE GATHER IN GOD'S NAME**

### **Silent Prayer of Preparation**

Good and gracious God, on this holy night you gave us your Son, the Lord of the universe, wrapped in swaddling clothes, the Savior of all, lying in a manger. On this holy night, draw us into the mystery of your love. Join our voices with the heavenly host, that we may sing your glory on high. Give us a place among the shepherds, that we may find the one for whom we have waited, Jesus Christ, your Word made flesh, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, forever and ever. Amen.

### **Prelude**

### **Welcome and Announcements**

**\*Medley of Christmas Carols:** *(see insert)*

## **WE HEAR GOD'S WORD**

### **Children's Moment**

Following the children's moment, all children are encouraged to return to their families to participate in the remainder of worship together.

### **Prayer for Illumination**

**Gospel Reading:** Luke 2:8-20

**"AWE STRUCK: Lost in Wonder, Love, and Praise"**

Peter Thompson

## **WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD**

### **Celebrating the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper**

*All those who trust and believe in Jesus as Lord and Savior are invited to come forward to receive the bread of life and cup of salvation. Children are welcome too as God's love envelopes them and claims them even before they profess their faith in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.*

*As you come forward to receive the bread of life and cup of salvation, you are invited and encouraged to bring your offerings to God and God's church and place them in the offering plates on the table.*

### **Anthem**

### **O Holy Night**

Arr. W. Fritchie

*Marcia Thom-Kaley, soloist*

## WE GO OUT IN GOD'S SERVICE

### Litany for Christmas

Leader: Jesus is our Savior!  
**All: He gave his life to rescue us.**  
Leader: Jesus is our Shepherd!  
**All: He leads our lives and keeps us safe.**  
Leader: Jesus is our Friend!  
**All: He listens to us; he shares our joys and our sadness.**  
Leader: Jesus is our Prophet!  
**All: He speaks God's promises to us; he declares God's commands.**  
Leader: Jesus is our Priest!  
**All: He pleads our cause daily.**  
Leader: Jesus is our King!  
**All: He guards and keeps us in the freedom he won for us.**  
Leader: Jesus is our Lord!  
**All: He protects us- in life and in death we belong to him.**  
Leader: Jesus is our Life!  
**All: He conquered death for us. Risen with him, we enjoy new life.**  
Leader: Jesus is our Way!  
**All: He guides us to his kingdom.**  
Leader: Jesus is our End!  
**All: Soon we will be with him, and we will worship him forever and ever.**  
Leader: As we celebrate Christmas, the birthday of Jesus, we rejoice that Jesus came to save us, and we look forward to the day when we will join all who love him and crown him Lord of all.  
**All: Jesus Christ, the light of the world!**  
**The light shines in the darkness and the darkness will not overcome it.**

### Lighting the Christ Candle

### Sharing the Light of Christ

*In honor of Christ's light in the world, everyone should have received a candle upon entering the Sanctuary. Once the Christ Candle is lit, the light will be passed to each individual throughout the Sanctuary. Once the light has been shared with all, we will sing "Silent Night, Holy Night" together. All candles may be extinguished following the benediction.*

**\*Hymn #60: Silent Night, Holy Night** (verses 1 and 4 only)

Stille Nacht

**\*Benediction**

**Postlude**

\*\*\*\*\*

*\*Please return your candles by placing them in the bins at the doors as you exit the Sanctuary.\**

# Carols of the Season

## **Hark! The Herald Angels Sing**

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!”  
Hark! The herald angels sing,  
“Glory to the newborn King!”

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.  
Hark! The herald angels sing,  
“Glory to the newborn King!”

## **Away in a Manger**

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,  
the little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head.  
The stars in the bright sky  
looked down where He lay,  
the little Lord Jesus, asleep on the hay.  
Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask Thee to stay  
close by me forever, and love me, I pray.  
Bless all the dear children  
in Thy tender care,  
and fit us for Heaven to live with Thee there.

## **Angels We Have Heard on High**

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.

## **Good Christian Friends, Rejoice**

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 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!

## **Joy to the World!**

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.  
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.

