Order of Worship

December 14, 2025

Third Sunday of Advent

8:30AM

CENTRAL
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Welcome to Central

Get connected at Central

Whether you're just beginning to explore the Christian faith or a longtime believer, we're glad you're here and pray you will experience the love and grace of Jesus today. Central is for anyone who wants to learn more about Jesus Christ and grow together in real community.

Especially if this is your first time as our guest, welcome. We are thrilled you are here, and would love to connect with you. You are encouraged to fill out a connection card at one of our welcome tables in either lobby or in the Fellowship Hall, or simply scan the QR code.

Sundays at Central

Worship: 8:30am & 11:15am

Worshiping as a Family

Children are always welcome to participate in worship with their families.

During both services, nursery care is available for families with children ages 8 weeks through 3 years. The nursery entrance is on the first floor.

A nursing mother's room is located on the first floor off of the Fellowship Hall.

For kids ages 3 through kindergarten, we offer "children's worship" during the sermon. After worshipping with their family during the first part of the service, kids ages 3 through kindergarten will be invited to join our leaders at the front of the sanctuary. After the sermon, the kids return to the sanctuary to meet their parents.

Accessibility

Large print bulletins are available from our ushers. Amplification devices are also available from the ushers at the rear of the sanctuary.

Welcome Registry

Located in each pew is a "Welcome Registry." We encourage you to please use this to let us know you worshiped at Central today. After putting your name down, please pass the book down your pew.

Prayer

At Central, we believe in the power of prayer. You are invited to submit your prayer requests using the cards located in the pew, or online at *centralpres.com/prayer*. You can also email your prayer requests to *prayer@centralpres.com*. If you would like to pray with someone today, please visit the prayer room after either service.

Advent

The colors at the front of the church are now purple, the color of royalty that marks the season of Advent. Advent means "coming," for in this season we remember Jesus' first coming and on that basis look forward with confident faith to his coming again. In Advent, we remember how God fulfilled his promises to send our Savior to his people Israel waiting for the Messiah to come. And we learn to walk with God now with patience and hope as we wait for God to fulfill all of his promises to us in Jesus' second coming.

Songs of worship are used with permission. CCLI #100150

Prelude

Away in a Manger
Chancel Ringers
Jennifer Mazzoni, flute

Murray/Kirkpatrick
Arr. Martha Lynn Thompson

God Calls Us To Worship

God gathers us before his heavenly throne for a special time to renew our relationship with him together.

Standing (if able)

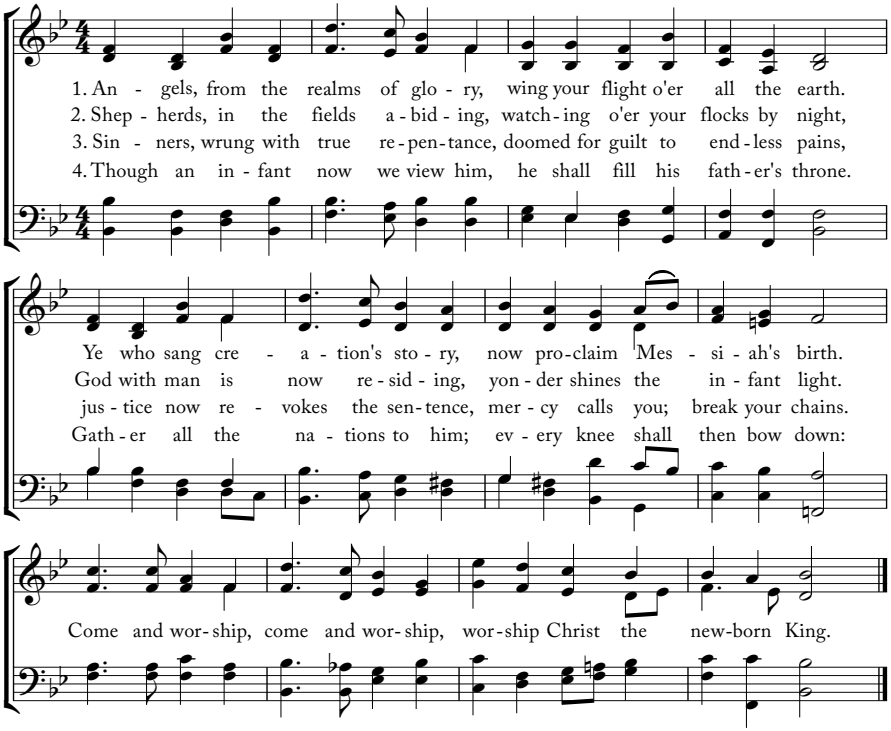
from Luke 2:11, 14

Our help is in the name of the Lord,
the Second Adam and image of God,
the true God become true man.
Give glory to God in the highest through Jesus,
who is Christ the Lord!
Hallelujah, Amen!

We Praise God

We respond to God's call by honoring his majesty and goodness in song.

Angels From the Realms of Glory



Text: James Montgomery, 1816
Tune: REGENT SQUARE; Henry T. Smart, 1866

We Pray For God To Help Us Worship

We ask the Lord to work in us by his Holy Spirit to give us the desire and ability to respond to him in worship.

Christ is coming!
He is coming indeed,
and all the earth will see the salvation of our God!

Seated

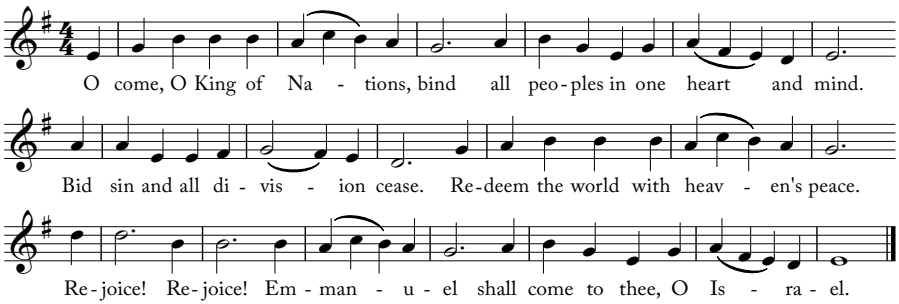
Lighting the Advent candle this morning are David Conner & Ursula Lovemore, Finn, Sam.

We Confess Our Sin

Together as the people of God, we acknowledge honestly to God what is wrong and broken in us and ask for his forgiveness and transforming grace.

from Ezekiel 34:11, 22-24

For thus says the Lord God: Behold, I, I myself will search for my sheep and will seek them out. . . I will rescue my flock; they shall no longer be a prey. And I will judge between sheep and sheep. And I will set up over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he shall feed them: he shall feed them and be their shepherd. And I, the Lord, will be their God, and my servant David shall be prince among them.



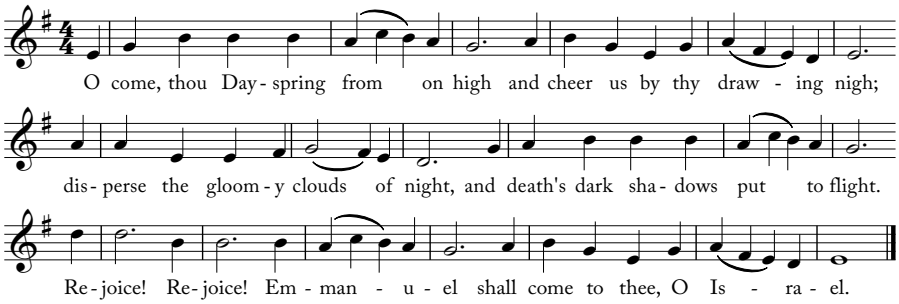
Text: Latin Hymn, tr. J. M. Neale, 1 851
Tune: VENI EMMANUEL; Plainsong, 15th C

Our help is in the name of the Lord, our joy.
Let us confess our sin and sorrow to him.

Messiah, you have come as the promised righteous ruler from David
to help us wait in hope and holiness as you bring true justice to the world.
But we often live without patient hope by resisting your rule,
disobeying your law, and treating others unjustly.
You have come as the promised refiner
to help us wait in hope and repentance as you purify your people.
But we often live without patient hope by refusing to repent
and rebelling with impure and shameful thoughts, words, and deeds.
You have come as the promised king
to help us wait in hope and joy as you rejoice over us with glad songs of delight.
But we often live without patient hope by forgetting your love
and pursuing our deepest joy in created things rather than you.
You have come as the promised shepherd
to help us wait in hope and peace as you lead us by your strength
to dwell securely with you.
But we often live without patient hope by rejecting your peace
and striving for our own honor and protection with anxious fear.
Messiah, have mercy on us.

(silent prayers of confession)

Gracious Father, please lead our faltering, wayward hearts back to you. By your Spirit's power, help us remember your faithfulness, wait with hope, and walk in your holiness, joy, and peace as we follow Jesus, our promised Shepherd and King. Amen.



God Declares Our Forgiveness

God responds joyfully to our confession by declaring his forgiveness and the security of his grace and delight in us as his beloved daughters and sons.

Standing (if able)

from Hebrews 12:2; Romans 5:1-2

Look to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. Since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

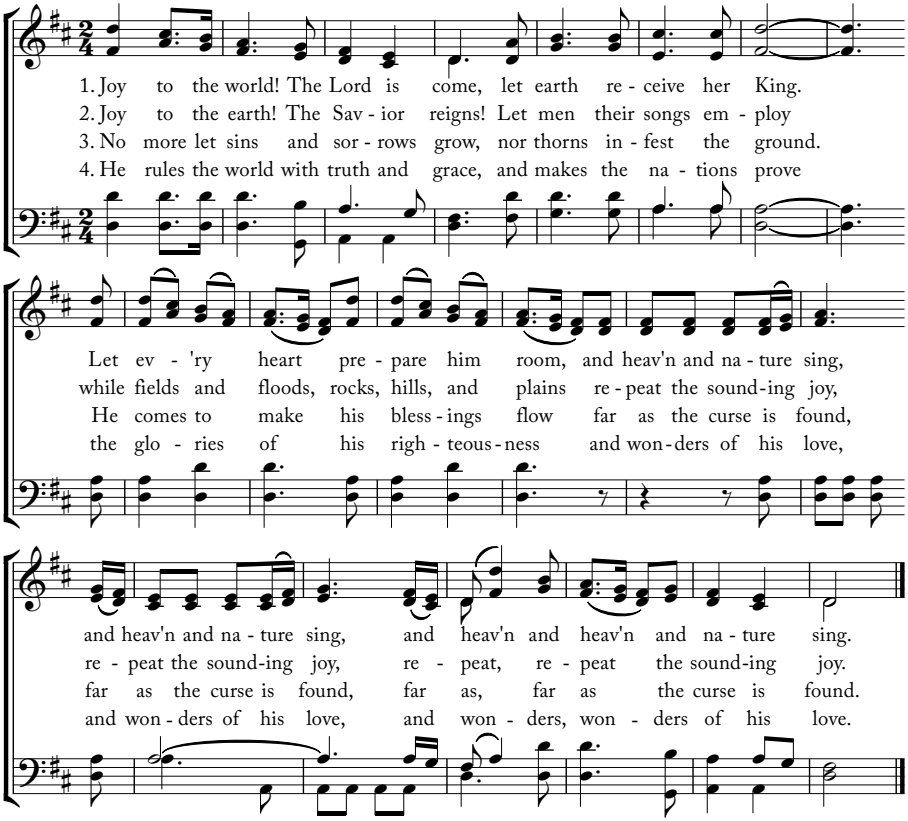
For all who have turned from sin in sorrow and look to God for mercy, this is God's gift. In Jesus Christ, God loves you, God forgives you, God accepts you, and God rejoices over you as beloved daughters and sons.

Hallelujah, Amen!

We Praise God

Having been assured of God's favor, we offer thanks and praise for salvation from sin and reconciliation with God through Jesus Christ.

Joy to the World



Text: Isaac Watts, 1719
Tune: ANTIOCH; G. F. Händel, 1742; adapt. Lowell Mason

Seated

The Shepherd's Carol

Chancel Choir

We stood on the hills, Lady, our day's work done,
Watching the frosted meadows that winter had won.
The evening was calm, Lady, the air so still,
Silence more lovely than music folded the hill.
There was a star, Lady, shone in the night,
Larger than Venus it was and bright, so bright.
Oh, a voice from the sky, Lady, it seemed to us then
Telling of God being born in the world of men.
And so, we have come, Lady, our day's work done,
Our love, our hopes, ourselves we give to your son.

Text: Anonymous; Music: Bob Chilcott

Children ages 3 - kindergarten are invited to Children's Worship and will return during the offering.

Zephaniah 3:14-20 pew Bible page 790

God Instructs Us In Scripture Reading

God speaks to us through the Bible to instruct, encourage, correct, comfort, and equip us to know, love, and follow him.

This is God's good news of great joy. Luke 2:10, 14

Glory to God in the highest!

We respond to God by affirming our trust in his word.

"Waiting for Jesus' Song" – Rev. Dr. Clay Smith

God Instructs Us In Preaching

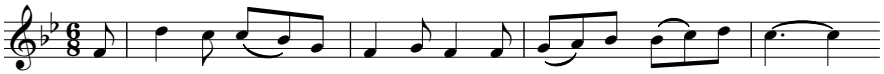
God speaks to us to explain what his word means and how to respond to him with loving obedience in our daily lives.

We Offer Ourselves in Gifts and Song

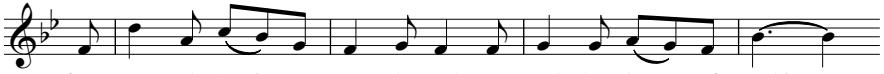
We respond to God's word by offering ourselves to God with renewed love and commitment both in song and in gifts of money to support God's mission in the world.

Give electronically at centralpres.com/giving, or by texting CENTRALPRES to 77977

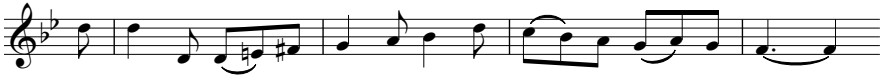
It Came Upon the Midnight Clear



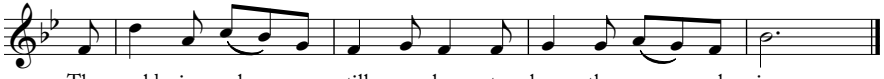
1. It came up - on the mid - night clear, that glo - rious song of old,
2. Still through the clo - ven skies they come with peace - ful wings un - furled,
3. And ye, be - neath life's crush - ing load, whose forms are bend - ing low,
4. For lo, the days are has - t'ning on, by proph - ets seen of old,



from an - gels bend - ing near the earth to touch their harps of gold:
and still their heav'n - ly mu - sic floats o'er all the wea - ry world.
who toil a - long the climb - ing way with pain - ful steps and slow,
when with the ev - er - cir - cling years shall come the time fore - told,



"Peace on the earth, good - will to men, from heav'n's all - gra - cious King!"
A - bove its sad and low - ly plains they bend on hov - 'ring wing,
look now! For glad and gold - en hours come swift - ly on the wing.
when the new heav'n and earth shall own the Prince of Peace their King,



The world in sol - emn still - ness lay to hear the an - gels sing.
and ev - er o'er its Ba - bel sounds the bless - ed an - gels sing.
O rest be - side the wea - ry road and hear the an - gels sing.
and the whole world send back the song which now the an - gels sing.

Text: Edmund Sears, 1849
Tune: CAROL; Richard Willis, 1850

Standing (if able)

(prayers for the church and the world)

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.

Seated

Central welcomes all Christians who actively trust in Jesus Christ for salvation, who are willing to forsake their sin, and who are members of congregations that proclaim the gospel to receive Holy Communion with us. If you are not ready to receive communion, we invite you to meditate on one of the prayers below.

Prayer for those searching
Lord Jesus, you claim to be the way, the truth, and the life. Help me to be undaunted by the cost of following you as I consider the reasons for doing so. If what you claim is true, please guide me, teach me, and open me to the reality of who you are. Give me an understanding of you that is coherent and convincing and that leads to the life you promise. Amen.

Prayer of new belief
Lord Jesus, I admit that I am weaker and more sinful than I ever dared believe, but through you I am more loved and accepted than I ever dared hope. I thank you for paying my debt on the cross, taking what I deserved in order to offer me complete forgiveness. Knowing that you have been raised from the dead, I turn from my sins and receive you as my Savior and Lord. Amen.

Is your child interested in receiving communion for the first time? Please email *family@centralpres.com* for more information.

We Pray For The Church And The World

We respond to God's word by asking him to transform our lives, our communities, and the world through the renewing work of Jesus with the Lord's Prayer as a summary prayer for the mission of God's kingdom.

God Feeds Us at His Table

We celebrate Jesus' triumph over sin, Satan, and death through his death and resurrection by eating and drinking symbols of Jesus' body and blood. The Holy Spirit works through this act to nourish us by the life of Jesus, to unite us with God and with one another in friendship, and to give us a foretaste and promise of Jesus' return to make all things new.

Please hold the elements until all have been served, and we will eat and drink together as directed by the pastor. The communion bread is gluten-free.

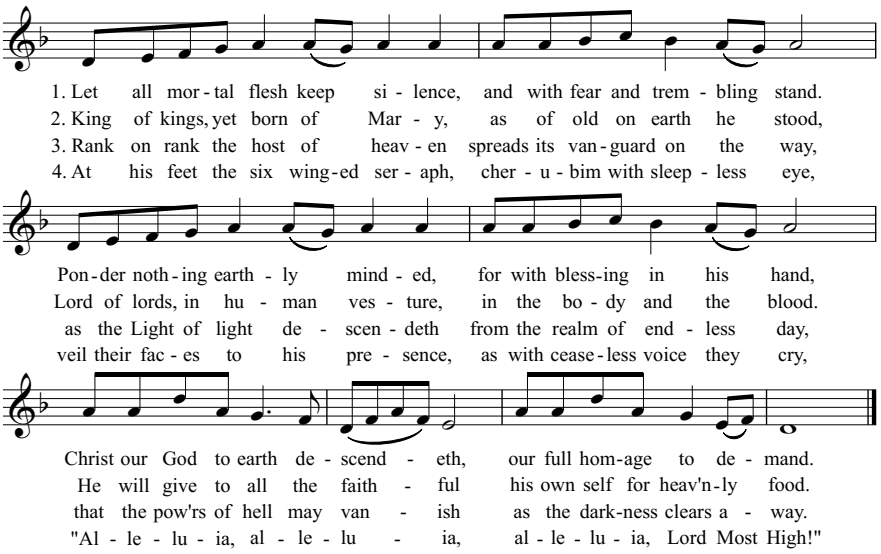
Lift up your hearts!
We lift them up to the Lord!
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give him thanks and praise!
Therefore, with the whole company of heaven and the whole church on earth, we give you thanks for your great glory, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

(prayer of thanks & words of institution)

Now let us celebrate the feast of the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.
Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again. Come quickly, Lord Jesus!

We Praise God

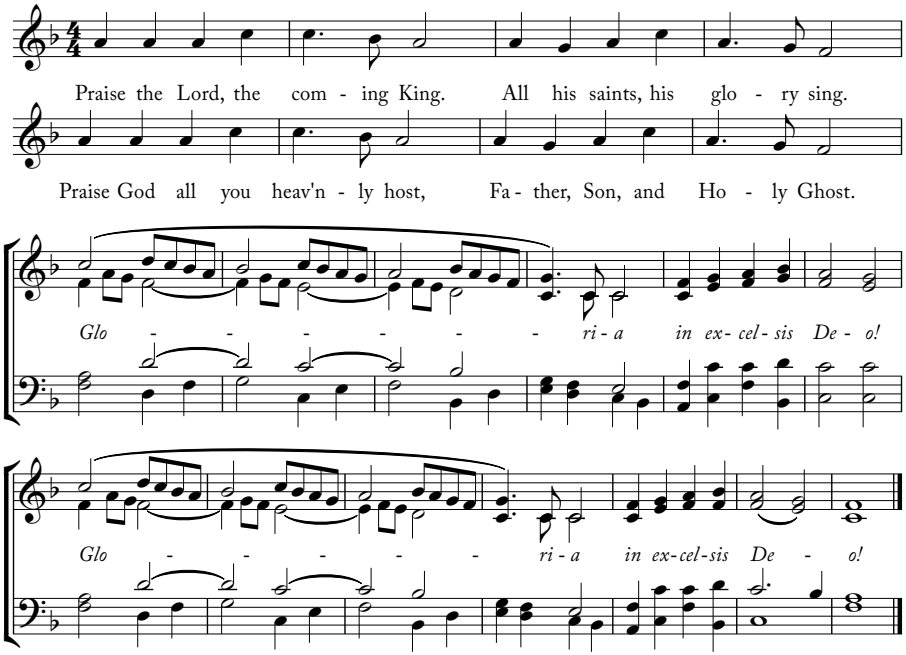
Let All Mortal Flesh



Text: *Liturgy of St. James*; para. Gerard Moultrie, 1864
Tune: PICARDY; French carol, 17th C.

And all God's people said...
Hallelujah! Amen.

Advent Doxology



Text: Anonymous
Tune: GLORIA; Traditional French carol;
arr. E. Barnes, 1937

Un Flambeau, Jeannette Isabella

D. Bedard

Liturgist: Rev. Dr. Mike Farley

Musicians: Matthew Mazzoni (director), *piano* and *organ*.

God Blesses Us And Sends Us Out

God sends us out into the world with his blessing to live with him and serve the mission of his kingdom.

Postlude

Connect, Grow, Serve

At Central, we seek the transformation of our lives, communities, and the world through the renewing work of Jesus Christ, for the glory of God. This vision becomes more and more a reality when we **connect**, **grow**, and **serve**. Below are a few opportunities coming up for you to belong to God's mission and his work at and through Central.

CONNECT

Three Christmas Eve Services

We look forward to worshiping with you on Christmas Eve this year! We will have three services this year on Christmas Eve, Wednesday December 24:

4:30pm: Family Worship and Children's Pageant

7:00pm: Traditional Candlelight Worship

9:00pm: Traditional Candlelight Worship

GROW

Find Weekly Encouragement With Us on Social Media

We are increasingly active on various social media platforms: Facebook, X, and Instagram. Each week we post a range of Biblical encouragement, sermon videos, information about upcoming events, and more. It's a great way to find some mid-week nourishment and to stay connected with us. You can follow us at the following handles:

Facebook: @Central Presbyterian Church

X: @CPCStL

Instagram: @CPCSTL

SERVE

Year-End Generosity

December is a vitally important month for us financially. As you may have heard, we have a December goal this year of $1.35 million. Reaching this goal will allow us to finish the year on budget and will put us in great position to start 2026 off strong. It is a big goal, and we will need all of us to get there. We invite you to prayerfully consider how you might partner with us in a special way this month. Visit *www.centralpres.com/giving* to learn more or to make a gift. Thank you!

If you would like more information about these or other upcoming opportunities, please scan the QR code to the right, email us at *communications@centralpres.com*, or call the church office at 314-727-2777.