



FIRST WORSHIP – RELEVANT FAITH FOR EVERYDAY LIFE

FIRST UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

695 Calvin St, Fayetteville, AR ● 479-442-4411 ● www.fupcfay.org

December 22, 2024

9:00 a.m

WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP:

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.

Those who lived in a land of deep darkness – on them light has shined.

For a child has been born for us, a son given to us.

Authority rests upon his shoulders.

And he is named Wonderful Counselor.

Mighty God.

Everlasting Father.

Prince of Peace.

MUSIC:

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Words by Charles Wesley; Music by Felix Mendelssohn, 1840

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 angelic host proclaim, “Christ is born in Bethlehem!” 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. 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.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

Leader: Today is the fourth Sunday in the season of Advent.

People: We are very close to the anticipated arrival of the Christ Child.

Leader: We light the fourth candle on the Advent wreath as we rejoice in Jesus our Savior, the Light of the World. To a world lost in the darkness of sin, Jesus brought the light of love and salvation, a light that we see shining out of the manger in Bethlehem.

People: Shine in our hearts, Lord Jesus, with the light of Your love.

Leader: Jesus tells us, “You are the light of the world.....let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in Heaven.”

People: Lord Jesus, help us to reflect the light of Your love to everyone we meet.

Leader: Let us pray,

Unison: Lord Jesus, on the first Christmas, light filled the night sky as the angels announced Your birth to shepherds and sang songs of praise to God. You are the light of the world and those who follow You will not walk in darkness. Help us in the power of the Holy Spirit to reflect Your light in a world that desperately needs to see it. Hear our prayer and accept our praise, Amen.

MUSIC

Light a Candle Bright and Tall

Words by David Wood; Music by Conrad Kocher

**Light a candle bright and tall, for a love which knows no end.
Love that comes to one and all. Fear and hatred to upend.
Shine within our hearts today; come, O Love, to us we pray.**

Shine, Jesus, Shine (refrain)

Words and Music by Graham Kendrick

**Shine, Jesus, shine; fill this land with the Father's glory.
Blaze, Spirit, blaze; set our hearts on fire.
Flow, river flow; flood the nations with grace and mercy.
Send forth Your Word, Lord, and let there be light.**

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Almighty God, even though we should shine with Jesus' light, we often become lost in the shadows of sin. We turn away from Your Word and Your will to listen to the temptations of the world around us. Instead of seeking to help and serve others, we pay more attention to our own selfish wants and needs. Have mercy on us and forgive our sins, we pray ... (*silent confession*)...
Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

SCRIPTURE Matthew 4:12-17, 5:14-16

4 ¹² Now when Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew to Galilee. ¹³ He left Nazareth and made his home in Capernaum by the lake, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, ¹⁴ so that what had been spoken through the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: ¹⁵ 'Land of Zebulun, land of Naphtali, on the road by the sea, across the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles— ¹⁶ 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.' ¹⁷ From that time Jesus began to proclaim, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.'

5 ¹⁴ 'You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. ¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

MESSAGE *The Light In The Darkness* – Rev. Stewart Smith

SONG

The First Nowell

Words and Music: English Carol

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

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE *(Sung Responsively)*

Longing for Light, We Wait in Darkness

Words and Music by Bernadette Farrell

Congregation joins on the refrain:

**Christ be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine in the darkness.
Christ be our light! Shine in Your church gathered today.**

SONG

Love Has Come

Words by Ken Bible; French Melody

**Love has come: a light in the darkness!
Love shines forth in the Bethlehem skies.
See, all heaven has come to proclaim it; hear how their song of joy arises:
Love! Love! Born unto you, a Savior! Love! Love! Glory to God on high.**

**Love is born! Come, share in the wonder. Love is God now asleep in the hay.
See the glow in the eyes of his mother; what is the name her heart is saying?
Love! Love! Love is the name she whispers. Love! Love! Jesus, Emmanuel!**

**Love has come and never will leave us! Love is life everlasting and free.
Love is Jesus within and among us. Love is the peace our hearts are seeking.
Love! Love! Love is the gift of Christmas. Love! Love! Praise to you, God on high!**

LIFE OF THE CHURCH

CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

SONG

Today is the PC(USA) Christmas Joy Offering. The offering can be designated online or placed in the basket at the back of the sanctuary.

Jesus, Jesus, O What a Wonderful Child

African-American Spiritual

**Jesus, Jesus, O what a wonderful child.
Jesus, Jesus, so lowly, meek and mild:
New life, new hope, new joy he brings.
Listen to the angels sing: "Glory, glory, glory to the new-born king!"**

PARTICIPANTS

Interim Senior Pastor
Rev. Stewart Smith

Minister of Music/Commissioned Ruling Elder
Isaac Thomas

Director of Christian Education
Kristi Button

Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministries
Amanda McDonald

Membership Coordinator
Amy McCann

Childcare Coordinator
Lee Pendley

Choral Interns

Cole Jackson
Jeffrey Kerst
Isabelle Pennick
Verna Labitad
Will Trotter-Wright

First Worship Band

Rob Button, guitar/vocals
Jeffrey Kerst, acoustic guitar
Isabelle Pennick, percussion
Don Steinkraus, bass guitar
Will Sulliban, percussion
Isaac Thomas, piano/keyboard

Audio/Visual Team

Christopher Verdery, coordinator
Connor Button, audio
Drew Parker, video
Greg Merrell, video