



LAUREL
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

Welcomes You to Worship!

Christmas Eve

December 24, 2021 5:30 PM

Where Love is Known

PRELUDE

J. David Clatterbuck

**IMAGO DEI

Engraved with Love, Each One of Us

WELCOME BELOVED ONES

The Rev. Ann D. Cherry

GATHERING AROUND LOVE

CHORAL CALL TO WORSHIP

Come Child of Light

Laurel Choir

ADVENT WREATH LIGHTING

The Christ Candle

Advent Devotion Group

CHORAL RESPONSE

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

Laurel Choir

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Carol Short

Leader: "The people who walked in darkness, have seen a great light."

People: "Those who lived in a land of deep darkness - on them light has shined."

Leader: And he shall be called,

People: "Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."

Leader: For unto us, a child is born!

People: **For unto us, a savior is given!!** (*Adapted from Isaiah 9:2-7*)

*INVOCATION 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; lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

GATHERING HYMN

O Come, All Ye Faithful Verses 1,3 & 4 Hymn No. 133*RECEIVING LOVE*

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Beloved One, you have broken through time and space to meet us where we are, and yet we have left our wonder and stardust at home. You have come to show us your face of love and yet we turn away bored. You have come to remind us that we are loved more than words can express, but we can only utter, "bah humbug." Open our weary hearts this Christmas to the holy wonder of love reborn in us and in this your tired world. Rekindle our joy so we might marvel at your dazzling showings of Love in this newborn One, who is, for us, the sign and symbol of love reborn inside all of us. Fill our hearts with such awe that it hushes our doubts and leads us to fall on our knees with the shepherds, for we pray this in the name of this One who has come, who is and was and always will be, our Christ. Amen.

SILENT PRAYER OF CONFESSION . . . Amen

FORGIVENESS OF SIN

Leader: Beloved, hear the good news: Jesus came to show us both the face and the way of Love. A way of love that cannot be denied.
Friends, Believe this Good News!

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

*CHORAL RESPONSE

Angels We Have Heard on High (Refrain)

Laurel Choir

PROCLAIMING LOVE

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE READING

Isaiah 9: 2-3, 6-9 (NRSV)

CHORAL ANTHEM

Will We Know Him?

Laurel Choir

Laurel Choir

SCRIPTURE READING

Luke 2: 8-15 (NRSV)

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God!

MEDITATION

"Imago Dei: Engraved with Love"

The Rev. Ann D. Cherry

RESPONDING IN LOVE

SOLO

O Holy Night

J. David Clatterbuck

RESPONSIVE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Carol Short

Leader: Come, Loneliness, and we will sing to you of Emanuel, God with us.

People: Come, Death, for Hark, the Herald Angels sing that Chris is risen with healing in his wings.

Leader: Come, Depression, and we will sing "Gloria in Excelsis Deo," and we will hold that long o until you are no more.

People: Come, Power, and we will sing to you that first Noel was to poor shepherds.

Leader: Come, Despair, and we will sing joy to your world.

People: Come, Racism. Come, homophobia. Come sexism. Come pandemic. For tonight is your silent night.

Leader: Come, War, and we will sing you to sleep.

People: Come, all ye faithful, and sing. (Adapted from Quinn G. Caldwell, All I Really Want, 2014)

*ADVENT RESPONSE

Bring We the Frankincense of Our Love

Laurel Choir

INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE

PRAYER OF GREAT THANKSGIVING

Leader: The Lord be with you

People: And also with you

Leader: Lift up your hearts

People: We lift them up to the Lord.

Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God

People: **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Leader: Lord of Lords, you commanded light to shine out of darkness, divided the sea and dry land, created the vast universe and called it good . . . Therefore, we praise you, joining our voices with the heavenly choirs and with all the faithful of every time and place, who forever sing to the glory of your name:

People: **Wonderful Counselor, Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

Leader: Prince of Peace . . . As you raised our Lord from death and call us with him from death to life, we give ourselves to you to live for him in joy and grateful praise. All praise to you, Lord Jesus:

People: **Dying you destroyed our death, Rising you restored our life, Lord Jesus, come in glory.**

Leader: Mighty God, pour out your Holy Spirit upon us . . . Amen.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

CELEBRATION OF COMMUNION

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

BEARING LOVE INTO THE WORLD

SENDING HYMN

Love Has Come

Hymn No. 110

INVITATION TO BEAR THE CHRIST LIGHT

The Rev. Ann D. Cherry

You are invited to turn on your tea light candle.

Leader: Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me shall never walk in darkness but will have the light of life." (John 8:12)

People: **"The light shines inside the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it." (John 1:5)**

Leader: Go Beloved Ones, and take the light of this One born inside of our own darkness, out into our weary world as tiny God Showings of Love.

People: “For unto us a Savior has been born, and he is Christ our Lord!” (Luke 2:11)

The minister and choir will lead the procession out of the church to sing carols under the stars.

POSTLUDE

J. David Clatterbuck

***Please feel free to stand and move during our worship service.**

****Imago Dei, Engraved with Love:** You are invited forward to receive a heart ornament from the communion table and to inscribe your initials on one side, and your gift of love on the back, and to hang it on our Chrismon Tree.

After tonight’s service and throughout the Christmas season, you are invited to take your ornament home and to give your heart to yourself, as God’s reminder of your tiny God Showing, or to someone you love as deeply.

Know that each one of us is a tiny God Showing of the incarnate love of God. Each one of us has been gifted by our Creator with a trait of our Beloved One. We all are engraved with this sacred blueprint of Love. Let this heart be a visible reminder of this gift inside of you and to our beloved community of Laurel Love.

Lay Reader: Thank you to Carol Short for serving as our liturgist this evening.

Responsive Prayers of the People: This litany is adapted from Quinn G. Caldwell’s work, *All I Really Want*, 2014, 73, Abingdon Press: Nashville.

Sanctuary Flowers: The Poinsettias are given this day to the glory of God for the presence of Love in our midst. Please see the insert for our list of all those honored or remembered by this gift of love. Thank you to the Bergers and to Karen Johnson for coordinating. Please feel free to take home your poinsettia :)

The Christ Candle: We light our last very special candle this evening, the Christ candle. It is white and symbolizes the everlasting light that has come into the world.

Advent Wreath Lighter: A special thank you to Diane Jackson, Michael Henderson, Brenda MacRae, Joyce Ruff and Mary Scarce, members of our Advent Devotion Book Group for serving as our Advent Wreath lighters today.

Friendship Pads: Old and New friends, please take a moment to fill out the Friendship Pads. It is important that we have a way to contact you in the event of a COVID event like we experienced last week. Even if you think we have your info, please provide a cell phone or email contact. Friendship Pads can be found at the end of the pews :)

Join us on Sunday, Lessons and Carols: Join us on Sunday at 10 am for a celebration of the traditional Lessons and Carols worship service.

Weekly Tithes and Our Offerings: We have placed a small church house on the table in the Narthex and invite you to leave your gifts to support God's work as you depart. You can also mail in your pledges and weekly offerings using our post office address: P.O. Box 1280, Glen Allen, VA 23060-1280

Coffee Bar: Thanks to the creative genius of Ann Whitby and the Vision Task Force, we have a new coffee bar in the Narthex outfitted with high test and decaf options. This is love in action. Please enjoy a cup :) You can also take a coffee cup holder to your pew and enjoy during worship.

Masks Highly Recommended: Due to the novel iteration of the Omicron variant of COVID, we are recommending that we all stay masked. This recommendation is made regardless of our vaccination status. Please sit every other pew and make use of the hand sanitizing stations.

Singing: Tonight, we will be recessing outside to sing under the stars. Please sing outside with your mask on.

Worship Production Team (WPT): A special thank you to Michael Whitby, Rudy van't Riet, Ann Whitby, and Steve Scarce for recording and producing our worship services.

LIVE from Laurel Pres! You can virtually connect at our regular service time or any time thereafter. Go to laurelpres.com, choose the "worship" tab, and follow the link to our YouTube page. You can also view our worship services at another time. Should the link not be posted, you can go directly to YouTube and type in Laurel Presbyterian Church and today's date. That should bring you right to our worship service.

Invitation to Move or Not: You are invited to stand, stretch, and move during our worship service or even to remain seated. Your comfort is key, so make yourself at home.

Armchairs in the Back: We have 2 dedicated spots in the back right in front of the sound booth for those who might prefer seats with arms.

Call to Prayer: Let us be in prayer for all those who are suffering, who are marginalized, who are carrying heavy burdens, and who are seekers of inner knowing that they are loved and a beloved one of our Creator God.

Laurel Presbyterian Church

The Rev. Ann D. Cherry, Minister

Rob McBane, Treasurer

J. David Clatterbuck, Director of Music

Wayne Deisher, Bookkeeper

Chris Rhoden, Small Group Leader

Linda Coulson, Session, MCM Team

Diane Jackson, Session, MCM Team

Mary Jane Bowlin, Session MCM Team

Nana Sarfo-Kantanka, Session, MCM Team

Stephen Scarce, Session, SP Team

Michael Henderson, Session, Clerk

Duane Berger, Session, WE Team

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“For unto us a Savior has been born, and he is Christ our Lord!” (Luke 2:11)

Let Love Be Known Here