



Havenwood Church

Presbyterian Church (USA)

December 15, 2024

Third Sunday of Advent



Artist: Lisle Gwynn Garrity

Lisle

The Service of the Lord's Day Order of Worship

**Please stand if you are able.
Congregation to recite bolded passages.*

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Jenn DiFrancesco

PRELUDE

“Christmas Overture”

Valerie Adelung

CALL TO WORSHIP

“This is Christmas Love”

Chancel Choir

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

John Snead

In a weary and worn world, how do we begin again? Where do we start?

Let us start small. Let us begin with what is right in front of us. Let us do the good that is ours to do, and let us do it with joy!

Yes, let us begin with joy. Today we light the candles of hope, peace, and joy.

May these lights remind us of what could be. May these lights inspire action.

May the warmth of these lights fill us with joy.

May it be so! Amen.

*HYMN # 93

“Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates”

NARRATION ONE

Grace McDowell and Jenn DiFrancesco

Narrator 1: The story of Christmas, the celebration of God's ancient prophecies, the coming of a King through the birth of one Child- His name? Jesus!

Narrator 2: Hundreds of years had passed while darkness covered the land. Yet, God's people were waiting for the promised Messiah. Where was this One who would set the captive free? Where was this One who would bring the song of redemption?

Narrator 1: Soon, their questions would be answered. "For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulders; and His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, the Mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace."

Narrator 2: Hope was not lost. Hope was about to be born.

All: Emmanuel!

"Rejoice! Emmanuel"

Chancel Choir

NARRATION TWO

Grace McDowell and Jenn DiFrancesco

Narrator 1: The events leading up Jesus' birth were nothing short of miraculous. God sent an angel to a young girl named Mary, who was pledged to be married to a man, Joseph, a descendant of David. The angel said to her, "Be not afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. You will bear a child- a Son- and will call him Jesus."

Narrator 2: Mary responded, "How can this be?" And Gabriel replied, "The power of the Most High will overshadow you, and the holy One to be born will be called the Son of God."

Narrator 1: Filled with questions, Mary responded with these humble words of faith, "Be it unto me according to Your Word."

“He Shall be Called”
Chancel Choir

NARRATION THREE

Grace McDowell and Jenn DiFrancesco

Narrator 2: In that region, there were shepherds tending their flock in the night, when an angel of the Lord stood before them, and they were terrified.

Narrator 1: “Be not afraid, I bring you good news of great joy! For today, in the city of David, a Savior- the Messiah- is born!”

Narrator 2: Having been told where to find the Child, the shepherds made their way to Bethlehem.

“Glory Shone Around”
Chancel Choir

PASTORAL PRAYER AND LORD’S PRAYER

Jenn DiFrancesco

**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.**

NARRATION FOUR

Grace McDowell

Narrator 1: The shepherds returned glorifying and praising God for all they had seen and heard, and the news of Jesus' birth spread throughout the land. Joy to the world, the Lord has come!

All: Christ, our Savior, is born!

“He is Born, the Holy Child”

Chancel Choir

INVITATION TO OFFERING

Jenn DiFrancesco

Just as the shepherds brought their humble praise and the wise men their treasured gifts, we too are invited to share what we have in celebration of divine love. Our gifts, whatever their size, become part of something greater - bringing hope, peace, joy, and love to our community and world. Let us give with grateful hearts.

Besides donating by placing your donation in the offering plate, you may also donate online or mail a check to the church. More information can be found at the back of the bulletin.

OFFERTORY

“Sleep in Peace Tonight”

Chancel Choir

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Jenn DiFrancesco

God, we offer these tokens of our gratitude with joy. Like the first Christmas gifts presented in Bethlehem, may our offerings bring light to dark places, hope to weary hearts, and love to those who feel forgotten. Transform these gifts and our lives into instruments of your peace and purpose. Let them echo the song of that holy night - a song of hope and promise for all people. Amen.

NARRATION FIVE

Grace McDowell

Narrator 1: In fulfilment of ancient promises, a child was born who would change the world.

Narrator 2: This Child, this King, brings us hope, peace, joy and love.

All: He is our Savior, Jesus!

“This is the Child, This is the King”
Chancel Choir

NARRATION SIX

Grace McDowell and Jenn DiFrancesco

Narrator 1: Let us go now and share the good news of Christ’s birth! When our need for a Savior was great, God sent His Son to save the world-

Narrator 2: a Savior who lives and reigns forever and ever with us.

Narrator 1: THIS is great news!

Narrator 2: THIS is why we celebrate!

All: THIS is Christmas!

“Repeat the Sounding Joy”
Chancel Choir

*BENEDICTION

Jenn DiFrancesco

CHORAL BENEDICTION

“This is Christmas Love” (Reprise)

Chancel Choir

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to our liturgist: Grace McDowell

Thank you to our ushers: Judi Forrester, Judy Yeager

HAVENWOOD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH STAFF

The Rev. Jenn DiFrancesco, Supply Pastor

The Rev. Cathy Bashore, Parish Associate

Susan Riegger, Preschool Director

Valerie Adelung, Music Director

Jake Miller, Worship Technology Coordinator

Julia Wells, Administrator

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Judi Forrester – Personnel Committee

Judy Binkley – Worship Committee

Wende Smith – Preschool Committee

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Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates 93

1 Lift up your heads, ye might - y gates; be - hold the
 2 Fling wide the por - tals of your heart; make it a
 3 Re - deem - er, come! I o - pen wide my heart to

King of glo - ry waits; the King of kings is
 tem - ple, set a - part from earth - ly use for
 thee; here, Lord, a - bid. Let me thy in - ner

draw - ing near; the Sav - ior of the world is here.
 heaven's em - ploy, a - dorned with prayer and love and joy.
 pres - ence feel; thy grace and love in me re - veal.

Beginning as a paraphrase of Psalm 24:7–10, this text then applies the door imagery to the singer's heart, and concludes with the individual's welcome of the approaching Savior. It is set to a very effective anonymous 18th-century English tune that has served many texts.