

PARK CENTRAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



Joseph's

Dream by

Lauren Wright Pittman | A Sanctified Art

Fourth Sunday of Advent

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT
DECEMBER 22, 2024 10:30 AM

Chiming of the Hour

The ringing of the bell invites us to quiet our hearts & minds as we gather for worship.

Words of Welcome & Announcements

*Welcome to worship at Park Central Presbyterian Church!
May you experience God's grace and love within the worship service.*

WE GATHER IN GOD'S NAME

PRELUDE

“Still, Still, Still”

arr. Evelyn R. Larter

Dan Blumenthal, *violin* and Sandra Murphy, *piano*

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

In this weary world,

we sing of joy.

In this vulnerable world,

we lift each other up.

In this beautiful world,

we look for God.

In this tender world,

we hold onto hope.

Let us come to worship the God who is with us.

With hope in our hearts, amen!

***HYMN 15** Rejoice! Rejoice, Believers

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CALL TO CONFESSION

**Please rise in body or spirit*

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PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**Mighty and merciful God,
we know what you ask of us.
We hear your call for a more just world.
We know your plan to overturn our expectations,
and we know you beckon us to work with you.
Forgive us when we close our ears
and listen instead to our proud hearts.
Have mercy on us when we let our fear overwhelm us.
Look with favor on us, we pray. Amen.**

SILENT PRAYER

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

***GLORIA**

TAIZÉ

*Gloria, gloria,
In excelsis Deo!
Gloria, gloria,
Alleluia, alleluia!* (Sung twice)

PASSING OF THE PEACE

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & 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. And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the Kingdom, the power, and the glory
forever. Amen.**

WE LISTEN FOR GOD'S WORD

THE FIRST LESSON

Matthew 1:18-25

¹⁸ Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be pregnant from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose Mary to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. ²⁰ But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of God appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will bear a child whom you will name Jesus, for he will save the people from their sins." ²² All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by God through the prophet:

²³ "A virgin shall conceive and bear a son,
and they shall name him Emmanuel,"

which means, "God is with us." ²⁴ When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of God commanded, and married her, ²⁵ but he had no marital relations with Mary until she had borne a child; and Joseph named the child Jesus.

Leader: This is the word of God.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

MUSICAL MEDITATION

The Park Central Ensemble

The Greatest Gift

Andrea and Matteo Bocelli

Come and lay your head upon my shoulder

Look outside the stars are shining bright.

Even though it's turned a little colder we can light a fire, stay inside.

Hear the angels sing, hear the angels sing Hallelujah from above,

Singing peace on earth, there'll be peace on earth if we open up our hearts

And give a little love. The greatest gift is love.

Gather friends and family round the table

Remember those we love no longer here.

Together take a moment and be grateful for the joy, for the tears.

THE SECOND LESSON

Luke 1:46-55

⁴⁶ Mary said,

“My soul magnifies the Most High,

⁴⁷ and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

⁴⁸ who has looked with favor on the lowliness of God’s servant.

Surely from now on all generations will call me blessed,

⁴⁹ for the Mighty One has done great things for me,
and holy is God’s name.

⁵⁰ God’s mercy is for those who revere God
from generation to generation.

⁵¹ God has shown strength with God’s arm,
and has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.

⁵² God has brought down the powerful from their thrones
and lifted up the lowly;

⁵³ God has filled the hungry with good things
and sent the rich away empty.

⁵⁴ God has helped God’s servant Israel,
in remembrance of God’s mercy,

⁵⁵ according to the promise God made to our ancestors,
to Abraham and Sarah and to their descendants forever.”

Leader: This is the word of God.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

Briana Vaught, ministry intern

SILENT MOMENT OF REFLECTION

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

INVITATION TO ENGAGEMENT

You may place donations to the church in the offering plate as you exit. You may also send in a check or click Donate on the church website.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

THE CELEBRATION OF COMMUNION

The Invitation

The Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

May God be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to God.

Let us give thanks to our God

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Good and gracious God ...

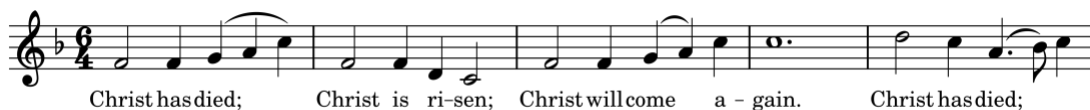
... Holy is your name!



We give you thanks for Jesus ...

... we proclaim again the mystery of our faith:

**Please rise in body or spirit*



Christ has died; Christ is ri-sen; Christ will come a - gain. Christ has died;



In the silence of these holy moments...
... joining the angels in singing carols to you forever.
Amen.

Sharing of the Bread and Cup

Prayer after Communion

**Holy God,
may we go out
to join the angels in singing
of your glory and grace.
May we go out to share the good news,
that Jesus, the one who lifts up
the vulnerable and forgotten,
is in our midst still.
May we go out offering
peace and good will to everyone,
joining the Spirit in telling
all that we have seen and heard. Amen.**

***HYMN 8** Life Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates

TRURO

***BENEDICTION**

POSTLUDE

“Puer Nobis”

arr. Robert Edward Smith

**Please rise in body or spirit*

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ASSISTING IN WORSHIP

Liturgist..... Marissa Saunders
Fellowship Hour Ben Merchant

I want to reclaim the imagery of stars and lilies to represent how Mary is a brilliant, shining example of radical faithfulness in the face of every possible earthly fear. Lilies are resourceful, hearty plants which represent rebirth across cultures. I would argue that Mary is resilient in the face of an impossible task, and in many ways, the entire story of the people of God is reborn through Mary's bravery.

~from the artist's statement for "Joseph's Dream" by Lauren Wright Pittman

Portions of today's liturgy were adapted from
Words for the Beginning by A Sanctified Art.

Park Central has accepted the invitation
from the Presbyterian Church (USA) to become a Matthew 25 congregation.
We are answering Christ's call to become even more a church of action,
where God's love, justice, and mercy shine forth and are contagious.

To learn more about Matthew 25, please visit pcusa.org/matthew25

Robert Allen.....Director of Arts and Technology
Brigid Boyle..... Parish Associate
Lenora Joyner-Hayes Finance Administrator/Bookkeeper
Sarah McTyre.....Pastor
Sandra Murphy.....Keyboard Musician
Kenneth Pfeffer.....Building Manager
Briana Vaught.....Office and Communications Manager

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Website: www.parkcentralchurch.org • Facebook: Park Central Presbyterian Church

Instagram: [parkcentralsyr](https://www.instagram.com/parkcentralsyr) • TikTok: [parkcentralchurch](https://www.tiktok.com/@parkcentralchurch) • Bluesky: [parkcentralchurch.org](https://bsky.app/profile/parkcentralchurch.org)