

**McKEESPORT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
WORSHIP SERVICE**

**3rd Sunday of Advent**

**December 17, 2023**

**THE GATHERING**  
**WE ENTER INTO THE PRESENCE OF GOD**

**PRELUDE**

"Infant Holy, Infant Lowly/ Still, Still, Still"

**Millie Kistler, Organist**  
**Arr. Manz**

**WELCOME AND NEWS OF THE CHURCH**

**OPENING PRAYER**

**CALL TO WORSHIP -Lighting of the Advent Candle**

(L) This morning we light the JOY candle remembering that our lives are NOT meant to be marked by heaviness, obligation, anxiety, despair. We remember, instead, that you created us for joy-filled hearts and lives.

**(C) You, our God, have given us Your Holy Spirit, and You, O Lord, have given us Your Joy. (Galatians 5)**

(L) We light the JOY candle remembering that Joy is different than happiness. Even in hardship, our joy remains, because God is faithful and God's promises are sure.

**(C) We will have pain now but Christ will come again, and our hearts will rejoice. No one can take our joy from us. (John 16)**

(L) We light the Joy candle remembering that JOY is not fleeting but instead is a gift endlessly ready to be unwrapped and newly discovered - in grief and in happiness, in pain and in prosperity.

**(C) God's anger is but for a moment; God's favor is for a lifetime. Weeping may linger for the night, but joy comes with the morning. (Psalm 30)**

(L) We light the 3rd candle - the candle of JOY – to declare that you created us for joy-filled hearts and lives. Fill our hearts with the joy that cannot be quenched, cannot be contained, and must be shared.

**(ALL) Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. (Philippians 4)**

**CHILDREN'S MESSAGE:**

**\*HYMN**

"Gentle Mary Laid Her Child"

**No 27, blue**

**\*PRAYER OF CONFESSION: [Psalm 25]**

**God of mercy and steadfast love,**

**We turn to You, be gracious to us.**

**We are lonely and afflicted, our hearts are troubled.**

**Consider our affliction and trouble**

**and forgive all of our sins, for they are great.**

### **[Personal Confession]**

With your eyes cast down, stand before the HOLY, SACRED, MAJESTIC, AWESOME ...  
God – and confess what you are AFRAID to confess to our HOLY God ...

*{Private Confession}*

And now look up into the eyes of that God – and see your BELOVEDNESS !

### **\* WORDS OF ASSURANCE**

Hear [and see] the Good News. According to God's steadfast LOVE and Mercy, in Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven, once and for all - they are remembered no more!

### **\*GLORIA PATRI**

**No. 813, brown**

**Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,  
and to the Holy Ghost,  
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be,  
world without end. Amen. Amen.**

### **PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

#### **JOYS**

Leader: "For \_(joy)\_, Gracious God ..."

**All "we give you thanks."**

#### **CONCERNS**

Leader: "For \_(concern)\_, Merciful Lord ..."

**All: "hear our prayer."**

*Let's pray together 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 sins, as we forgive those who sin against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the Kingdom and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

*Please contact the church by email or phone with your prayer requests during the week.*

### **A CANTATA FOR CHRISTMAS**

TAPESTRY OF LIGHT:  
A Celtic Christmas Celebration

By Joseph M. Martin

The Chancel Choir  
Edward Moore, Director

### **THE RESPONSE WE COMMIT TO THE WORK OF GOD**

### **OFFERTORY**

"Carol of the Manger"

**Millie Kistler , Organist  
Arr. Wood**

**\*DOXOLOGY**

**\*HYMN**

"On this Day Earth Shall Ring" (Vv. 1,3 & 4)

**No. 46, blue**

**THE EXIT**

**WE ENGAGE THE WORLD OF GOD**

**\*CHARGE AND BENEDICTION**

**POSTLUDE**

"Go Tell It on the Mountain"

**Millie Kistler, Organist**  
**Arr. Linker**

*\*All those who are able, please stand\**



**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**December 17, 2023**

**SPECIAL MEETING:**

There will be a short Special Congregational Meeting after the service to elect Elders, Deacons and other positions for the Class of 2026.

Please stick around after church for this important meeting!

**FELLOWSHIP II:**

Come join us for a gathering and fellowship, following the worship service this Sunday.

**IF YOU ARE IN NEED OF PASTORAL CARE,** please contact the church office.

**TAKE CARE, THE FLU AND COLD SEASON HAS STARTED:**

Please help keep everyone healthy. If you have a cold or flu, please utilize the masks available at the entrances. We all thank you.

**DEACONS:**

The Deacons would like to thank the entire congregation, once more, for your help with the Giving Tree, the Baskets of Kindness, the Lap Blankets and the Salvation Army ringing of the bells. With your loving kindness and over whelming generosity we have made our community a warmer, healthier and happier place to live. Thank you all again and again.

**PER CAPITA:**

The 2023 per capita amount is \$35.70 per church member. These funds are sent to the Presbytery and are used by the Presbytery to provide services to local churches. Please make your checks payable to the church and note "per capita" in the memo line.

**CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS:**

Christmas poinsettias can be ordered in the Chapel after the service or by calling the church office. The deadline is Today. The Order forms are in the Chapel and at the entrance of the church. You can also get one at the church office. The cost is \$12.00 each.

**HATS, SCARVES, GLOVES AND SOCKS:**

We have been collecting hats, scarves, gloves and socks in all sizes, for our community for the winter. If you have any extras of these items please drop them off at the church office. Thank you.

**CHRISTMAS EVE SCHEDULE:**

Sunday Morning Service at 11:00 am.

Christmas Eve Service at 7:00 pm.

**MCKEESPORT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

**Pastor-Rev. Michael Stanton**

**Director of Music-Edward R. Moore**

**Organists-Candice Holsinger & Millie Kistler**

**Office/Financial Assistant- Robin Enright**

**Maintenance Manager -Brock Cochran**

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