

the Fourth Sunday of
Advent



26 In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷ to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." ²⁹ But she was much perplexed by his words, and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰ The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹ And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³² He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. ³³ He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."



³⁴ Mary said to the angel, "How can this be since I am a virgin?" ³⁵ The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called the Son of God."

Luke 1:26-35

Abington Presbyterian Church

December 20, 2020
10:00 a.m. Celebration Worship

ORDER OF WORSHIP

Fourth Sunday in Advent December 20, 2020

GATHERING

The people gather wherever they may in response to God's call, offering praise in words of scripture, prayer, and song. The people acknowledge their sinfulness and receive the good news of God's forgiveness.

PRAYER BEFORE WORSHIP

A time for quiet preparation before worship

O God, establish your reign within us and among us, for no other ruler can bring out our best or help us to deal effectively with present realities in our world. May our worship and our lives proclaim your steadfast love and faithfulness. Amen.

PRELUDE

"Ave Maria" (from L'Orgue Mystique) Charles Tournemire

"Hail Mary full of grace. Blessed art thou and blessed is the fruit of thy womb." (-Luke 1:28, 42)

LIFE AND WORK OF THE CHURCH

* CALL TO WORSHIP & LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES *Lee & Sally Bowie*

These are perplexing days, so we attune ourselves to God's presence and purposes.

We give thanks for stories of God's initiatives from the past that bolster our faith and hope.

Our challenges are not greater than what Mary faced when visited by an angel.

We give thanks that God is authoring new stories of faith and hope in our current day.

Fire is a symbol of God's presence. We light candles on this fourth Sunday of Advent.

We give thanks that both God and God's favor are with us. We look forward to what comes next!

SUNG PRAYER

Christ, Be Our Light

Hymn 314, Refrain

Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the darkness.

Christ, be our light! Shine in your church gathered today.

* HYMN 129

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

EST IST EIN ROS' ENTSPRUNGEN

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Lord God, we lift up our voices in praise for your love endures forever. Mary bore the ultimate revelation of your divine love, the baby Jesus. We thank you for the privilege of bearing your love in the world. However, we confess that we have failed you in this commission. We have questioned our calling, saying "How can this be?" Other times, we have failed to offer love out of fear of rejection or self-involvement. Send your Holy Spirit upon us. Strengthen us and show us where revealing your love can bring new life.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Nothing is impossible for the God who partners with humanity to bring about amazing things.
In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE 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; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory, forever. Amen

THANKSGIVING & SENDING

After the proclamation of God's Word, we respond with gratitude prepared to go into the world where we are called to live according to God's will.

OFFERTORY SENTENCE

OFFERTORY Sonata for Two Violins and Piano: *III. Allegro* Giuseppe Tartini

* HYMN 140 Once in Royal David's City IRBY

* BENEDICTION

* THE PEACE OF CHRIST

The peace of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

* POSTLUDE "Magnificat anima mea Dominum" Marcel Dupré
(from "Vêpres du commun des fêtes de la Sainte Vierge")

"My soul doth magnify the Lord – my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. For he hath regarded the lowliness of his handmaiden. From henceforth, shall all generations call me blessed." (-Luke 1:46-48)

[service hymns follow permissions]

Worship Leaders:

Preacher: The Rev. Kirby Lawrence Hill

Liturgist: The Rev. Aaron Twitchell and Rev. Dr. Jade King Bass

Children's Message: Ruth Sall

Soloist / Choir: John Dean

Violin: Joan Paltenstein & Bill Philips

Organ: Rich Spotts

In Loving Memory
of
Herbert Ewald
7/27/1952 – 12/14/2020

Sympathy and prayers to Lynda and Meg Ewald and to the extended family of Herb Ewald, as they mourn his recent death.

In need of special prayers this week: Len Browna, Michael Kemp, Laura Lockhart, Sylvia Weed (mother of Kathryn Jablokow), Barbara LaNore (sister of Lynda Smyth), Bruce D. Meissner (son of Judy and Bud Meissner), Sylvia Jolly, MM Harris, Herb Harris, Gary Lynch (son of Doug Lynch), Chris Popescu (aunt of Joanne Bates), Marty Bell (cousin of Alice Price), Elizabeth Cole (granddaughter of Nancy Webb Cole), Doris Boerner, Helen Porter (mother of Joe Porter), Janet Wells (mother of Gwen Bihn), Suzy Paravla (daughter of Susan Davis), Linda Maisenhelder, Christine Kim (wife of Stephen Kim), Will Pompilli (son of Teresa Pompilli), Phyllis Frazier, Nick Cupo, Sr., Joanne Hawkins (mother of Nick Cupo), Wayne Gibbons, Jr., John & Carolyn Burrell (parents of Janet Gildner), Susan Arnhold (friend of Joanne and Jeff Bates), Kris and Erik Reidenbach (friends of Sally Adams), Linda Doyle, the Carpenter & Trammell families.

For Pastoral Care: To notify the church of an illness, hospitalization, death, or to request prayer, contact a minister or call your Deacon or the Church Office at (215) 887-4530.

Thanks to Sandra and Jim Holt for the special flower arrangement for this season.

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Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming 129

1 Lo, how a rose e'er bloom-ing from ten - der stem hath sprung,
 2 I - sa - iah 'twas fore - told it, the rose I have in mind;
 3 This flower, whose fra-grance ten - der with sweet-ness fills the air,

of Jes - se's lin - eage com - ing, by faith - ful proph - ets sung.
 with Mar - y we be - hold it, the vir - gin moth - er kind.
 dis - pels with glo - rious splen - dor the dark-ness ev - ery-where.

It came, a flower - et bright, a - mid the cold of
 To show God's love a - right she bore for us a
 En - fleshed, yet ver - y God, from sin and death he

wi - ter, when half spent was the night.
 Sav - ior, when half spent was the night.
 saves us and light - ens ev - ery load.

Although the early copies of this 15th-century German text include many more stanzas than are printed here, this simpler, shorter form has much to commend it. This early 17th-century harmonization of the traditional chorale melody invites and rewards singing in parts.

Once in Royal David's City 140

1 Once in roy - al Da - vid's cit - y stood a low - ly
 2 He came down to earth from heav - en who is God and
 3 Je - sus is our child - hood's pat - tern; day by day like
 4 And our eyes at last shall see him, through his own re -

cat - tle shed, where a moth - er laid her ba - by in a
 Lord of all, and his shel - ter was a sta - ble, and his
 us he grew; he was lit - tle, weak and help - less; tears and
 deem - ing love; for that child so dear and gen - tle is our

man - ger for his bed: Mar - y was that moth - er
 cra - dle was a stall; with the poor and meek and
 smiles like us he knew; and he feels for all our
 Lord in heaven a - bove; and he leads his chil - dren

mild; Je - sus Christ, her lit - tle child.
 low - ly, lived on earth our Sav - ior ho - ly.
 sad - ness, and he shares in all our glad - ness.
 on to the place where he is gone.

Like "All Things Bright and Beautiful" (see no. 20), this popular Christmas hymn was written by an Irish poet to illustrate for children the various articles of the Apostles' Creed. It is not known which of several English villages the composer had in mind when naming this tune.