

Tuesday, December 24, 2024

3:00 P.M.

Christmas Eve Worship and Candlelight Service

ORGAN PRELUDE (If you must speak, speak to God)

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS Delia Zelazny

THE INTROIT Musical Selection Gracie and Madelein Grabiell

GATHERING AROUND THE WORD

CALL TO WORSHIP

With eyes wide open and our ears on edge,

we look for shepherds and listen for the songs of angels.

In the light of winter's moon, with the North Star lighting the way,

we gather outside the door of a mystery, wondering if we dare go enter.

With folks and friends, we love, with strangers we have just met,

we gather, becoming the holy family for this time and in this place.

PRAYER OF INVOCATION Rev. Alice Batchner

*OPENING HYMN Musical Selection Rich Culton

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

This was going to be the year, God of silent nights, when we were going to give away more than we spent, but we didn't. This was going to be the season when we spent more time with others, but we filled our calendars with meetings. This was going to be Christmas when we wrote personal letters to friends and family but spent too much energy filling out our to-do lists. This was going to be a truly holy season, but it just got too hard and hurried. Forgive us, Love Gifter, and draw us closer to the Baby born not into wealth and power, but into poverty and weakness; to the One who loves unconditionally and welcomes all; to the Child who gathers other children to him, to bless them and serve them; to the One who drew near to us, so we might be drawn to

your heart – Jesus Christ, our Brother, our Lord.....(silence for personal confession)

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS Rev. Alice Batchner

Into the valleys of our death, Jesus comes with life; into the shadows of our world, Jesus brings light; into the brokenness of our lives, Jesus brings forgiveness and peace.

Thanks be to God for the gift of the Baby of Bethlehem, who brings joy and peace to us in these moments of forgiveness and in all the days to come. Amen

THE STORY OF THE NATIVITY Mrs. Carolyn Gilligan

*HYMN #25 "Away in a Manger"

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (Apostles' Creed)

Let us confess the faith of the Church as one, using the words of the Apostles' Creed. Church, what do you believe?

I believe in God the Father Almighty, the Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord; who was conceived of the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from whence He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit; the holy catholic* church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

(*universal)

THE STORY & SYMBOLS OF THE NATIVITY Mrs. Carolyn Stevenson

HEARING THE WORD

SCRIPTURE Luke 2:1-20 (N.T. pg. 58)

Anthem "The Star" sung by Amanda Seik Mariah Carey

PROCLAIMING THE WORD

SERMON: "Mary Pondered These Things in Her Heart"

Rev. Alice Batchner

SEALING AND RESPONDING TO THE WORD

*RESPONSE HYMN #29 "Go, Tell It on the Mountain"

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND 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

INVITATION TO TITHES AND OFFERINGS & PRAYER OF DEDICATION

CARRYING THE WORD TO THE WORLD

*HYMN #60 "Silent Night, Holy Night" (Candle Lighting)

*CLOSING HYMN #40 "Joy to the World!"

*BENEDICTION

MUSICAL POSTLUDE (A QUIET TIME OF REFLECTION)

PLEASE REMAIN SEATED

*Please stand if able



First Presbyterian Church of Avenel

621 East Woodbridge Avenue

Avenel, NJ 07001

Rev. Alice Batcher

December 24, 2024



"Mary Pondered These Things in Her Heart"

*Our sanctuary is filled with the gifts
of our members and friends as they
remember and honor their loved
ones.*

These gifts were given by: IN MEMORY OF:

Ed & Shirley Benkert	Edward Benkert Sr. William & Ruth Freist Nancy Leclair Reinhart and Lillian Thorsen
Nancie Bullen, Barbara Klc, & Family	Steve & Jean Klc our loving parents & grandparents
Holly Ely-Calantoni	Howard & Edna Ely Christopher & Leslie Yuhasz
The Cultons	Esther Nielsen Kay Price
The Gillian Family	Don Gilligan Mary Sandor Alfred A. Seddon
Danetta Juarez	Frank Juarez Shirley Renehan
Millie Knotts	Al Knotts
The Pallitto Family	James Pallitto Kay Price

Gay Patrouch Walter & Eliose Emery

These gifts were given by: IN MEMORY OF:

Cathy Shaffer	George Shaffer Lillian Thorsen
Gary & Carolyn Stevenson	Ernest & Arleen Schreiber George & Stella Stevenson
Carolyn Stockl	Jake Stockl Maria Ferrara
Joan Takach	The loving memory of my departed Loved Ones
The Zelanzy Family	Jake Stockl

These gifts were given by: IN HONOR OF:

Ed & Shirley Benkert	Joan Benkert
Sandra Kosakowski	My Grandchildren
The Pallitto Family	Gaga & Pa Culton
The Sammartinos	Merry Christmas to our Church Family
Cathy Shaffer	Robbie Olah on her 100 th Birthday
Delia Zelazny	Rich & Cindy Culton Given by their grandchildren, Colette & Oliver



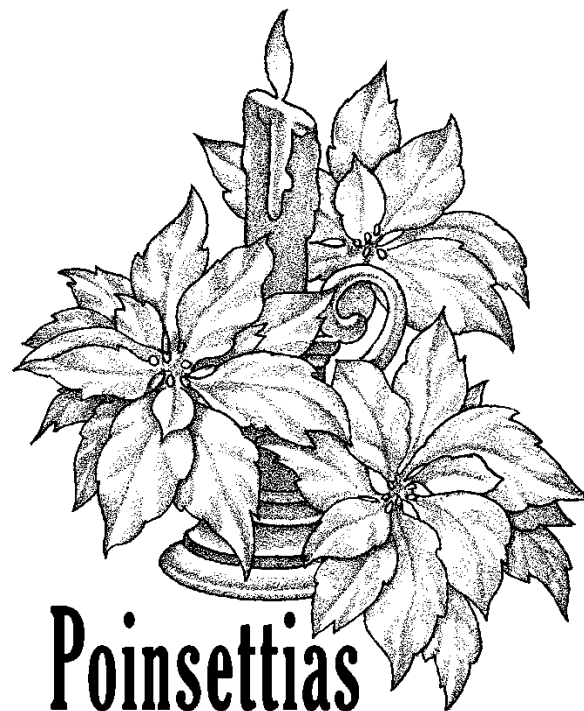
GREETINGS TO THE CONGREGATION

Danetta Juarez
Gail Sheets



THANK YOU TO THE MUSIC PROGRAM

Carolyn Stockl



***GREETINGS
&
GIFTS***

*First Presbyterian Church
of Avenel
Christmas 2024*