

REJOICE!

THE WORD BECAME FLESH
AND MADE HIS HOME AMONG US.
—JOHN 1:14

Northwood Presbyterian Church

Presbyterian Church (USA)

2875 State Road 580, Clearwater, Florida 33761

*Welcome to Our
Church Family!*

Sunday, December 24, 2017
10:00 AM



The Reverend Dr. E. Chris Curvin, Pastor
The Reverend Dr. Paul D. Means, Associate Pastor
Vanessa Celotto, Director of Youth & Family Ministries
Justine Ruisz, Director of Children's Ministries
Stephanie Carson, Director of Music
Thomas D. Huffman, Organist & Associate Music Director
Tracy Donovan, Director of Communications & Membership Coordinator
Chris Hurst, Business Administrator
Linda O'Leary, Bookkeeper
Angie Surowiec, Acting Director of Schools
Jessica Jones, Director of Nursery

ORDER OF WORSHIP

(Infant Care is available in our nursery for this service.)

PRAYER

Chris Curvin, Pastor

OPENING VOLUNTARY

“Gloria, Hodie!”
Hallelujah Ringers

Julie Turner/Kevin McChesney

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

*PASSING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

(Please complete the bulletin insert, “FRIENDSHIP SHEET,” and pass it toward the center aisle.)

*CAROL MEDLEY #132

“Good Christian Friends, Rejoice”

IN DULCI JUBILO

Stanzas 1,2,3

#117 “While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks”

WINCHESTER OLD

Stanza 1—all

Stanza 2—all

Stanza 4—choir only

Stanza 6—all

#113 “Angels We Have Heard on High”

GLORIA

Stanzas 1 and 2

THE ADVENT CANDLE OF LOVE

Lighting the Candle

Melanie Brown; Heidi, Zach & Paige Hawkins; Holly, Brent, Siena, Layla & Cade Palmisano

The reader offers words about the candle of love and reads from Isaiah 7:10-14.

One: And so, Emmanuel, God with us, hear our prayer.

All: **Lord Jesus, into our darkness, quickly come.**

All Singing: **Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.**

WE CONFESS

CHORAL CALL TO CONFESSION

*O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin and enter in; be born in us today.*

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (together)

Paul Means, Associate Pastor

God of Joy, we come to celebrate again the arrival of Love Incarnate here in our very midst. Your glorious arrival is enough to cause the forests to sing for joy, yet we still find reasons to complain and sigh. Your light of salvation is enough to illuminate our lives, yet we still find ourselves shrouded in worry and doubt. On this Christmas Eve remind us of the gift of Your love for us and enable us to celebrate the miracle of Your forgiveness and love and join you at the manger rejoicing with heart and soul and voice. In Jesus' name. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

*CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE #108 (stanza 1)

DIVINUM MYSTERIUM

Of the Father's love begotten, ere the worlds began to be,
He is Alpha and Omega; he the source, the ending he,
Of the things that are, that have been, and that future years shall see,
Evermore and evermore! Amen.

ANTHEM

“Angels We Have Heard on High”

arr. Peter Anglea

*Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply echo back their joyous strains.
Gloria in excelsis Deo!*

*See Him in a manger laid; Jesus, Lord of heav'n and earth!
Mary, Joseph, lend your aid, with us sing our Savior's birth.
Gloria in excelsis Deo!*

*Come to Bethlehem, and see Him whose birth the angels sing;
Come adore on bended knee Christ the Lord, the newborn King.
Gloria in excelsis Deo!*

CALL TO OFFERING

MUSICAL OFFERING

“Tidings of Joy!”
Heather Wood, Clarinet

arr. Lloyd Larson

*DOXOLOGY & PRAYER OF DEDICATION

THE FIRST NOEL

Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
Praise Him all creatures here below.
Praise Him above ye heavenly host:
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel,
Born is the King of Israel.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Isaiah 55: 1-2; 10-12; Luke 2:4-7 (pages 598; 832-833)

COMMUNION MEDITATION The Promises of His Coming #3 “Joy”

Chris Curvin, Pastor

*CAROL #110

“Love Has Come”

BRING A TORCH

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.
We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing,
always and everywhere to give thanks to you...

*the pastor gives thanks appropriate for Christmas Eve,
remembering God's acts of salvation, and concludes:*

...And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

(all singing)

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly, reign - ing God of
pow'r and might, heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry,
all cre - a - tion seeks your light! Bles-sed is the one who
comes in your name. Bles-sed be the Lord most high!

The pastor continues the thanksgiving, recalling the institution of the Lord's Supper.

The pastor concludes:

And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ,
We offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving
as a holy and living sacrifice,
in union with Christ's offering for us,
as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.

The pastor continues recalling the work of the Holy Spirit and Christ's coming again.

THE LORD'S PRAYER *(unison)*

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.

THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD & SHARING OF THE CUP

(Serving is by intinction. Come in two lines down the center aisle to the front, take a piece of bread and dip it lightly in the cup. Return to your seat by the side aisles.)

ANTHEM

"O Lamb of God"

St. James Christmas Service

*O Lamb of God, O Holy Child, who takes the sin of the world away;
Have mercy on us, lamb so mild, the babe, the son of Mary.
This, this is your body giv'n, Your precious blood, the gift of heav'n.
Take, eat, for we are one in the babe, the son of Mary.*

CAROLS DURING COMMUNION *(first stanzas)*

(please join in singing as you are able)

Hymn #121
Hymn #115
Hymn #145
Hymn #147

"O Little Town of Bethlehem"
"Away in a Manger"
"What Child Is This"
"The First Nowell"

ST. LOUIS
MUELLER
GREENSLEEVES
THE FIRST NOWELL

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

***CLOSING CAROL #123 "It Came upon the Midnight Clear"**

CAROL

(stanzas 1,4,5)

***BENEDICTION**

SUNG BLESSING

MUELLER

(please be seated)
Kathryn Birch, Solo

*Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask thee to stay close by me forever and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in thy tender care, and fit us for heaven to live with thee there.*

***CLOSING VOLUNTARY**

"In dulci jubilo"
(see the carol at #132)

J.S. Bach
(1685-1750)

**Congregation will stand. If standing is difficult for you, feel free to remain seated.*

The flowers in the sanctuary today are given to the glory of God by

Bill Martin

In Honor of

Patty Martin's Birthday

Elaine Cornillaud

In Loving Memory of

Larry, my Beloved

Flower orders & donation costs for flowers ordered for worship are made using the "2017 Flower Reservation Chart" on the bulletin board across from the kitchen. Thank you to those providing flowers each week In Honor/In Memory of someone or an anniversary/birthday!

FAITHFULLY SERVING NORTHWOOD TODAY

ACOLYTE: Claire Cantin

GREETERS: Mary Duffy & Jay Basinger

USHERS: Kim & Sydney Blackmore, Jim & Jenny Carlstedt

BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS TO...

Sunday, Dec. 24: Keith Kelly

Monday, Dec. 25: Jane Urban, Bill Bitner, Bobbi Hunt, Patty Martin

Tuesday, Dec. 26: Jim Warren

Wednesday, Dec. 27: Barbara Stone, Sally Uhler

Thursday, Dec. 28: Charlotte McQuown, Emma Heycock

Friday, Dec. 29: Joyce Worley, Sarah Worley, Georgia Gordon

Saturday, Dec. 30: Doug Winder, Kaleb Adkisson

If you see someone whose birthday is listed and you haven't seen them in church recently, give them a call!

MUSIC NOTES: Today is a day for singing. For singing those Christmas hymns and carols we cherish and which evoke and create memories that stay with us from year to year. By my count we'll hear/sing 19 of them this morning alone. Christians have been singing Christmas songs for twenty centuries all the way back to Pope Telesphorus (125-136) who instructed all church members sing "Gloria in excelsis Deo" at celebrations of Christ's birth. By the year 320 when Christmas was established as December 25, mostly priests sang the Latin hymns to the people. Christmas Eve, 1223, in Italy St. Francis of Assisi created a tableau of the Holy Family with real people and animals and the townsfolk sang Christmas hymns. The great hymn writing explosion of the 18th century saw the music of Isaac Watts (Joy to the World) and Charles Wesley (Hark! The Herald..) and many others become a part of the tradition. As we sing these great melodies and words today, remember our debt to those hymnwriters, translators and composers that have so richly filled and thrilled our lives with a storehouse of joyful music.

Nursery & Sunday School

There will be nursery for ages birth-3 and Sunday School for ages 4-2nd grade. Ages 4-2nd grade will meet in room 3 and will be led by Justine Ruisz and Chrissy Raborn.

Worship with us Sunday, December 31st

We will resume our three services of 8:15, 9:30 & 11:00 A.M. Pastor Paul will provide a sermon entitled "When the Celebration of Christmas Fades in the Face of Life's Challenges" based on the passage from Matthew 2:13-23.

Children & Youth Programs

Children & Youth will start a new season of activities in just a few weeks. Watch the bulletin and newsletter for programs with activities and choirs for all ages. For more information on youth activities, contact the church office or check out our website.

Church Office Holiday Closings

- The office will be closed Monday, December 25th and Tuesday, December 26th.
- The office will close on Friday, December 29th, and will remain closed Monday, January 1st for New Year's Day. We will re-open Tuesday, January 2 at 9:00 a.m.

2017 Giving

2017 Contributions—Giving intended for 2017 must be received in the church office **by noon on December 31st** or postmarked **no later than December 31, 2017**. Contributions which are processed electronically through your bank's online bill pay or via our website must be initiated much earlier (probably no later than December 26) so that the transaction will fully process and qualify for deduction in 2017.

2018 Pledge Prepayment

If you wish to prepay your 2018 pledge in anticipation of tax law changes, you may do so. Simply make your gift no later than December 31st and clearly note that it is a 2018 prepayment.

News from the Stewardship & Finance Team

2018 Giving/Pledge Envelopes will be available Sunday, December 31st in the hall by the kitchen. Boxes are not numbered or labeled; you may take any one. Please remember that when making "cash" contributions, include your first and last name on the envelope to be sure it is accurately recorded. In our continuing efforts to reduce the number of envelope sets that are wasted each year as more people choose online giving, we are again using perpetual envelopes. Thank you for your faithful support.

Memorial Service for Ruth Greene

A memorial service for Ruth Greene will be held in the church sanctuary on Wednesday, December 27 at 11:00 a.m. We give thanks to God for Ruth and for the love and faith which she graciously shared with others.