

# CHRISTMAS AROUND THE WORLD



**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2025**

MAXWELL STREET PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
180 E. Maxwell St. Lexington, KY  
[www.maxpres.org](http://www.maxpres.org)

Welcome to Maxwell Street! We hope you will consider wearing a nametag so that we might get to know one another better. They can be found in the lobbies outside the sanctuary. You can find more helpful information inside this bulletin.

## **GREETING & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING** - Clara, Eli, Megan, and Troy Cooper

Children of God, what are we waiting for?

**We wait for joy that cannot be stolen,**

**joy that wells up, even in wilderness places.**

**We wait for laughter to ring out in mourning,  
for songs of gladness to rise in broken streets.**

We wait ...

for joy that is more than happiness,  
to rejoice in God's unshakable love.

**HYMN 82** - *Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus* part of vs. 1

**Come, thou long-expected Jesus, born to set thy people free;  
from our fears and sins release us; let us find our rest in thee.**

**PRELUDE** - *O Come, Little Children*, traditional carol, arr. Bish

## **CALL TO WORSHIP**

We gather joyfully

**because the Lord is here**

**among us, and in every heart.**

As we prepare ourselves to make room for the Spirit  
we join with heaven and nature to sing our praises.

**Our joy is repeated throughout creation -  
growing fields, rushing rivers and mighty hills,  
all proclaim God's arrival.**

**+ HYMN 107** - *Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn*

## **+ CALL TO CONFESSION**

### **+ A PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

God our maker, we confess that we are not ready to meet you. You offer us a place in your house, yet we find no room for you in our lives. You invite us into your eternal realm, yet we fail to welcome others. Forgive us, God of grace. Let your word of life be with us so that we may truly believe that nothing is impossible with you; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Hear now our silent prayers of confession...

- ASSURANCE OF PARDON

- RESPONSE TO FORGIVENESS: Hymn 581, (*Gloria Patri*)

## PASSING OF THE PEACE

### PRAYER FOR OPENNESS

Holy God, our hope and strength, by the power of your Spirit prepare the way in our hearts for the coming of your Word, so that we may see the glorious signs of your promise fulfilled; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**ANTHEM** - *I Wonder as I Wander*, John Jacob Niles, Chancel Choir, Lucy Schapman, solo

**CHRISTMAS PAGEANT** - Joy Around The World

**HYMN 134** - *Joy to the World*, verses 1 and 2

### PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & THE LORD'S PRAYER

#### OFFERING

- INVITATION
- OFFERTORY - *Every Valley from Messiah*, Handel, Jay McNamee, tenor
- DOXOLOGY

**Praise God from whom all blessing flow Praise Christ the Word in flesh born low;  
Praise Holy Spirit evermore; One God, Triune, whom we adore. Amen.**

- PRAYER OF DEDICATION

**+ HYMN 87** - *Comfort, Comfort Now My People*

### CHARGE & BENEDICTION

**BENEDICTION RESPONSE** - Hymn 82, *Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus*

**1 Come, thou long-expected Jesus, born to set thy people free;  
from our fears and sins release us; let us find our rest in thee.**

**Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art;  
dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart.**

**POSTLUDE** - *A Christmas Carillon*, Margaret Tucker, Westminster Bells

**+ Indicates that the congregation is invited to stand in body and/or spirit.**

## WELCOME TO WORSHIP



Welcome to Maxwell Street Presbyterian Church. We're so glad you've chosen to be with us today for worship. This bulletin will be a helpful guide to our service, but here is some additional information we hope will help you feel at home.

- A Maxwell Street Presbyterian Church App is available from the Apple and Google App Stores. This App will enable you to register your attendance, make an offering online, and more. You can scan the QR code to the left to access the app. You can also sign in via the app.

- You can also go to [www.maxpres.org/give](http://www.maxpres.org/give) to support our ministry.

- Please be aware that today's service is being live-streamed and recorded. Portions of the service, including video and audio, may be shared online. By attending, you acknowledge that your image and/or voice may appear in these recordings.

- LARGE PRINT BIBLES are available from the ushers.

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- Hearing help is available with a personal amplification device from the ushers.

- For your convenience, an elevator is located in the Lobby off the parking lot/playground.

- WIFI - Router Name: Maxwell - ORBI38 Password: maxpres180

- Accessible restrooms are on the main level and basement level. Baby changing stations are available in the basement restrooms or nursery.

Infants & Toddlers are welcome in the Nursery following Children's Moment or anytime during the morning. Come to the Young Children's Area in the basement. Professional caregivers and church volunteers will greet you there.

### Pre-K Sunday School Class (for ages 3,4 and 5)

This class is specifically designed (using the Grow, Proclaim, Serve! curriculum) for younger children, keeping them engaged in fun bible-centered lessons. Please join us after the Children's Moment during worship.

### Grades K-5 Sunday School

We also offer a class for older students that are in Grades K-5. Children gather in large groups for the Bible story, music, and movement, then break into age-level small groups to dig deeper and apply the story to their daily lives. Please join us after the Children's Moment during worship.

Maxwell Street Presbyterian is a More Light Congregation. More Light Presbyterians are dedicated to allowing the full participation of LGBTQIA+ people in the life, ministry, and witness of the Presbyterian Church (USA) and in society. You are welcome here, and you are loved.

## WAYS TO LEARN MORE

Please visit [www.maxpres.org](http://www.maxpres.org) for details about our ministries for all ages and interests. We also have an active Facebook page - [www.facebook.com/maxpres](https://www.facebook.com/maxpres). If you would like to be added to our Friday email, which has information about what is going on in the church's life, you may do so at: [www.maxpres.org](http://www.maxpres.org). If you have additional questions, Matt will be happy to talk with you at your convenience; call the church office at (859) 255-1074, 9am-4:30pm Monday-Thursday.

## JOYS & CONCERNS

Joyce Croft, Kenny Leatherman, Greg Harper, Dan Goulson, Hugh Huffman, John Cantrell, Carolyn Hale, Martin Hendrix's mother, Margaret; Elizabeth Leatherman's father, Cindy and Allen Gayheart

We extend our condolences to Kari Boldt and family on the death of her father Phillip Greasley.

Punch is served in the Punch Parlor by Cynthia Bruno. All are welcome.

## PARTICIPANTS

WORSHIP LEADERS: The Children's Sunday School Program of MSPC, Michelle Jones, Michelle Gardner, Rev Matt Falco, Ted Gentry, Chancel Choir

USHERS: Tracy Bruno, Cynthia Bruno, Alicia Hart, and Zane Kerksmar

VIDEO AND SOUND CREW: Rich Copley, Jim Lump, Bill Smith, Jay Vessels, Jonah Falco

## Revised Common Lectionary Readings for Sunday, December 14, 2025

First reading: Isaiah 35.1-10

Psalm: 146.5-10

Second reading: James 5.7-10

Gospel: Matthew 11.2-11

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## WEEKLY CALENDAR

### Tuesday, December 16

12:30pm – Centering Prayer

### Wednesday, December 17

10:30am – Kerygma

6:30pm – Chancel Choir Rehearsal

7:00pm – Social Justice Committee

### Sunday, December 21

9:30am – Third Space Sunday Fellowship

9:30am – Adult Sunday School

10:30am – Worship

11:30am – Youth Group

11:30am – Children's Choir

3:00pm – Firebird Flute Concert

5:00pm – Church Christmas Caroling

### CHRISTMAS CAROLING

#### Sunday, December 21 at 5pm

We'll share a meal and hot cocoa, then travel in small groups to sing carols to members of our church family who are unable to worship with us. To suggest someone we should visit, please reach out to Kate in the church office.

### 3RD SPACE SUNDAY

#### Sunday, December 21

3rd Space Sunday (aka Donut Sunday) happens on the 3rd Sunday of each month at 9:30 in the Fellowship Hall. I hope you'll join us for 3rd Space Sunday!

### CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

#### Wednesday, December 24

We gather on Christmas Eve at 7:30pm and 11:00pm to celebrate the good news that "The Word became flesh and lived among us, ... full of grace and truth." (John 1.14) More than just a birthday party, we celebrate that God enters into this world to dwell with us, to seek the lost and to save the poor, the oppressed, all of us, from the powers of evil. The Christ child is born for the saving of the world. Joy to the world!

### YEAR END CONTRIBUTIONS

To ensure the deductibility of your church contributions, please do not file your 2025 income tax return until you receive the written contribution statement from the church office. Those should be mailed mid January.

### WORDS & WINE

#### Friday, January 2, at 6:30pm

Words & Wine Book Group will meet Friday, January 2, the book is Playground by Richard Powers. Questions, contact Lauren Falco (laurenefalco@yahoo.com).

## CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

### SUNDAY SCHOOL DURING DECEMBER

Please note there will be no Sunday School through the Advent Season until January, when school begins. Children are welcome in Worship and nursery care will remain open. Children infant - age 7 will be welcome in the nursery during that time.

### GENEXT (4TH AND 5TH GRADERS)

GeNext will be meeting today December 14 after worship.

## YOUTH

Dec. 14 - Christmas Party & Westminster Village

Dec. 21 - No Youth Group - Christmas Caroling at 5pm

Dec. 28 - No Youth Group

Jan. 31 - Ski Trip

### CONFIRMATION BEGINS JANUARY 18

In the PC(USA), confirmation is a time for young people to study the Christian faith and publicly affirm the vows made at their baptism. Our 8th and 9th graders will begin their Maxwell Street Confirmation Adventure on January 18 at 9:30 in the Johnston Parlor. Please let Matt know if you plan to participate by December 23 (matt@maxpres.org).



### YOUTH PARKING VOLUNTEERS

Would you like to help the youth group raise funds for their mission trips? Volunteering to accept donations during UK events at Memorial Coliseum only takes an hour and is a great opportunity to support the youth group. To sign up, visit the QR Code. Thanks!

## MISSION

### E7 CHRISTMAS SHOP - TODAY

Today - December 14 from 1-3pm

Our kiddos are already buzzing with excitement, and we can't wait to make this year's event extra special. Donations are accepted now through December 14, and we'd love your help.

### KROGER REWARDS HELP FEED OUR COMMUNITY!

When you shop at Kroger, a portion of your purchase can support MSPC's hunger ministries at no extra cost. Sign in to your Kroger account, select Community Rewards and choose Maxwell Street (VK950)

### WARM TREE

During the Season of Advent you'll find a Christmas tree located in the Lobby. It's ready to be filled with hats, gloves, mittens, and socks to keep our community warm and healthy this winter season. New and gently used items are welcome.

### CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING



By giving to the Christmas Joy Offering, you honor God's gift of Jesus Christ by providing assistance to current and retired church workers in their time of need and developing our future leaders at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. Learn more about this offering with the qr code.

### HELP SUPPORT OUR SOCIAL WORK OFFICE!

Our social work office is in need of a few essential items to better serve our community. We've created an Amazon Wish List to make giving simple. Items you purchase will be sent directly to our office. Every contribution, big or small, helps us continue providing care, comfort, and support to those who need it most. Thank you for your generosity.



134

## Joy to the World

1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re - ceive  
 2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their songs  
 3 No more let sins and sor - rows grow, nor thorns in - fest  
 4 He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the na -

her king; let ev - ery heart pre - pare him room,  
 em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains  
 the ground; he comes to make his bless - ings flow  
 tions prove the glo - ries of his righ - teous - ness

and heaven and na - ture sing, and heaven and na - ture  
 re - peat the sound-ing joy, re - peat the sound-ing  
 far as the curse is found, far as the curse is  
 and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his  
 and heaven and na - ture sing,

and

sing, and heaven, and heaven and na - ture sing.  
 joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound-ing joy.  
 found, far as, far as the curse is found.  
 love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.

heaven and na - ture sing,

While Isaac Watts did not write this text strictly for Christmas use, he did purposely cast his paraphrase of Psalm 98:4-9 in Christian terms, titling it "The Messiah's coming and kingdom." So "the Lord" here is Jesus Christ, rather than the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

# 107 Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn



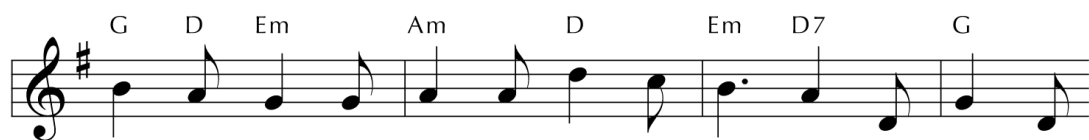
1 A - wake! A - wake, and greet the new morn, for an - gels  
2 To us, to all in sor - row and fear, Em - man - u -  
3 In dark - est night his com - ing shall be, when all the  
4 Re - joice, re - joice, take heart in the night. Though dark the



her - ald its dawn-ing. Sing out your joy, for soon he is  
el comes a - sing - ing; his hum - ble song is qui - et and  
world is de - spair - ing, as morn - ing light so qui - et and  
win - ter and cheer - less, the ris - ing sun shall crown you with



born, be - hold! the Child of our long - ing. Come as a ba - by  
near, yet fills the earth with its ring - ing; mu - sic to heal the  
free, so warm and gen - tle and car - ing. Then shall the mute break  
light; be strong and lov - ing and fear - less. Love be our song and



weak and poor, to bring all hearts to - geth - er, he o - pens  
bro - ken soul and hymns of lov - ing - kind - ness. The thun - der  
forth in song, the lame shall leap in won - der, the weak be  
love our prayer and love our end - less sto - ry; may God fill



wide the heaven - ly door and lives now in - side us for - ev - er.  
of his an - thems rolls to shat - ter all ha - tred and vio - lence.  
raised a - bove the strong, and weap - ons be bro - ken a - sun - der.  
ev - ery day we share and bring us at last in - to glo - ry.

After attending a carol concert, the author and composer of this hymn was moved to create a contemporary, accessible carol that drew on the familiar images in a new way. There are echoes here of passages such as Isaiah 9:6, Isaiah 7:14/Matthew 1:23, Isaiah 35:5-6, Isaiah 2:4.

# Comfort, Comfort Now My People 87

1 "Com - fort, com - fort now my peo - ple; tell of peace!" So says our God.  
 2 For the her - ald's voice is cry - ing in the des - ert far and near,  
 3 Straight shall be what long was crook - ed, and the rough - er plac - es plain.

"Com - fort those who sit in dark - ness mourn - ing un - der sor - row's load.  
 call - ing us to true re - pen - tance, since the reign of God is here.  
 Let your hearts be true and hum - ble, as be - fits God's ho - ly reign.

To my peo - ple now pro - claim that my par - don waits for them!  
 O, that warn - ing cry o - bey! Now pre - pare for God a way.  
 For the glo - ry of the Lord now on earth is shed a - broad,

Tell them that their sins I cov - er, and their war - fare now is o - ver."  
 Let the val - leys rise in meet - ing and the hills bow down in greet - ing,  
 and all flesh shall see the to - ken that God's word is nev - er bro - ken.

This 17th-century German paraphrase of Isaiah 40:1–5 was one of the texts translated as part of the 19th-century British interest in German religious poetry. It is set here to one of the most popular Genevan Psalter tunes, probably derived from an earlier French folksong.