

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Christmas Eve Candlelight Service • Tonight

Worship our Lord at this 5:00 p.m. candlelight service with choir and orchestra, singing and prayer, and Pastor Ben’s message, *He Speaks to Us Now by His Son*.

### Children’s Ministry Update

For the next two Sundays, nursery and toddler rooms will be closed. Scripture memory and Children’s church will also be closed. All will resume on January 7.

### Wednesday Schedule Change

All Wednesday night activities are on hiatus until January 10.

### Christmas Offering 2023

During the advent season, the Missions Committee will present two mission organizations for us to support financially above our monthly giving. This year we look to support MNA Metanoia Prison Ministry. Their purpose: Partnering with the church for the Discipleship, Mentoring and Reintegration of prisoners. We will also support the Harding Memorial Bible College in Yirgacheffe, Ethiopia. With their expanding attendance, the school is in need of a new building that would serve as a new dormitory, office, and large gathering space.

To give, you may do so by selecting “Christmas Offering 2023” while giving online, or in one of the designated Christmas Offering envelopes found in the pew racks. Simply drop that envelope with either cash or checks in the offering plate or give to any staff member. Any donation received will be split evenly between both missions. December 31 will be the final date to donate.

### Christmas Decorations Clean Up • January 3

Before we know it, it’ll be time to take down the Christmas decorations and begin a new year. Please join us to pack up the Christmas decorations on Wednesday, Jan 3, at 9am in the narthex. Please email [virginia@proclamation.org](mailto:virginia@proclamation.org) to let her know you are coming and she’ll be sure to have some snacks to keep us going! All ages can help, so if you’ve been looking for a family service project, this is a good one!

### Men’s Retreat 2024 • January 12-13, 2024

Brothers, come and join us for our Men’s Retreat over the weekend of MLK Day in 2024. We’ll be spending 2 days and 1 night together at Black Rock Retreat Center in Quarryville, PA, thinking through the topic “What is Man?” with our guest speaker, Dr. David Garner. It’ll be a great time of fellowship and digging deep into God’s Word. Bring your dad, uncle(s), son(s), or friend(s) along! Flyers are available on the usher’s tables just outside the doors of the sanctuary. Register at <https://bit.ly/PPCMensRetreat2024>. Contact Elden Pan at (215) 403-1445 for more information.

*The diaconal Compassion Committee provides counseling as well as financial and material assistance to those in need, in the spirit of Christ’s compassion to his people and the world. Committee members are Chris Cooper (chair), Jeff Firges, Lauren Leisner, Tina Simon, Susan Wambua, and Virginia Spykerman. Their contact information is in the church directory. If you need help or know someone who does, contact any member of the committee. If you are interested in serving on the committee, contact Chris Cooper. Financial contributions to the Compassion Fund may be made as a designated gift; please designate “Compassion Fund” on your check or with your online donation.*

# ADVENT HYMN DEVOTIONAL

## Week 4: Lo! He Comes eith Clouds Descending

Words by Charles Wesley

Have you ever noticed how films often dramatically peak *close* to the end of the film, but not quite at the end? Even in an intense action movie, the final few minutes often recede in intensity, allowing for the characters to find respite and reflect, or perhaps say goodbye. Many hymn texts are structured the same way, with their penultimate stanzas being the most dramatic and their final stanzas having more devotional and introspective language. However, *Lo! He Comes with Clouds Descending* increases with intensity through its final stanza.

There is no greater cry for a Christian today than “Lord, come quickly” (Rev. 22:20). In some ways, it is an emotional summary of the Lord’s Prayer. As much as we pray that the Lord’s name would be hallowed, that his kingdom would advance and will be done, that we be fed by the Lamb and be delivered from evil, we acknowledge that this will be eternally consummated only at his second coming, and so we sing, “O come quickly!” In Wesley’s hymn, do you sense how the repetition of this supplication intensifies through the end of the hymn? We sing the word “come” five times!

What do we mean when we sing, “O come quickly?” If we look at stanza 3’s “O come quickly” as an isolated petition, we might think of it simply in terms of asking for God’s deliverance. That might be the prayer in other hymns, but not this one. In this hymn, there’s no hint of feeling oppression or desperation. As part of a larger poem, Wesley imparts meaning to this phrase with the text that precedes it; that means we consider stanza 1 and 2 to understand stanza 3. In stanza 1, the vision of Christ’s coming prompts our celebration today of how God will fulfill prophecy and eternally reign. In stanza 2, the vision shows that Christ will sit in judgment, that his opponents will receive grim justice, and that his name and holiness will be vindicated.

When we sing “O come quickly,” we are asking the Lord to reign, to vindicate his name, and to judge his opponents. There’s even a celebratory “Alleluia” interjected to remind you that you that your hymn of praise is about God and his glory, not about your earthly life. And with growing fervor, like the “thousand, thousand saints” that are swelling like a tsunami wave, we sing: “Come. Come. Come. Come. Come!” It is one of my favorite hymns to close the church’s Advent season; I can think of nothing to sing more pregnant with hope and excitement before Christmas Eve.

— Ryan Kelly



DOWNLOAD OUR APP

Check out our daily calendar on our website and app!

## PROCLAMATION PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

278 S. Bryn Mawr Avenue, Bryn Mawr, PA 19010 | (610) 520-9500 | [proclamation.org](http://proclamation.org)



# PROCLAMATION

## PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

*A congregation of the Presbyterian Church in America*

Sunday, December 24<sup>th</sup>, 2023



MORNING WORSHIP  
FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT

December 24<sup>th</sup>, 2023  
10:30 a.m.

Rev. Ken Wendland, *preaching*  
Rev. Ben Falconer, *assisting*

PRELUDE Proclamation Brass

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel  
God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen  
Joy to the World  
arr. Gideon Whitehead

Soli Deo Gloria Ringers

The First Noel  
arr. Ron Mallory

WELCOME Rev. Ben Falconer, *senior pastor*

CHORAL INTROIT Chancel Choir  
Peter Choi, *tambourine*

Sing for Joy, O Heav’ns  
Ryan Kelly

Sing for joy, O heav’ns; exult, o earth: For the Lord has comforted his people. — Isaiah 49:13

RESPONSIVE CALL TO WORSHIP\* Isa. 52:9-10, Ps. 27:13, Rev. 22:20

Leader: Break forth together into singing, you waste places of Jerusalem, for the LORD has comforted his people; he has redeemed Jerusalem. The LORD has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

Congregation: I believe that I shall look upon the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living! Even so: come quickly, Lord Jesus.

INVOCATION\*

HYMN N° 225\* Once in Royal David’s City

\* Please stand.

DECLARATION OF FAITH\* Belgic Confession, c. 18

We confess that God fulfilled the promise which he had made to the early fathers by the mouth of his holy prophets when he sent his only and eternal Son into the world at the time set by him. The Son took the “form of a servant” and was made in the “likeness of man,” truly assuming a real human nature, with all its weaknesses, except for sin; being conceived in the womb of the blessed virgin Mary by the power of the Holy Spirit, without male participation. And he not only assumed human nature as far as the body is concerned but also a real human soul, in order that he might be a real human being. For since the soul had been lost as well as the body he had to assume them both to save them both together.

Therefore we confess, against the heresy of those who deny that Christ assumed human flesh from his mother,  
that he “shared the very flesh and blood of children”;  
that he is “fruit of the loins of David” according to the flesh;  
“born of the seed of David” according to the flesh;  
“fruit of the womb of the virgin Mary”;  
“born of a woman”;  
“the seed of David”;  
“a shoot from the root of Jesse”;  
“the offspring of Judah,” having descended from the Jews according to the flesh;  
“from the seed of Abraham”— for he “assumed Abraham’s seed”  
and was “made like his brothers except for sin.”  
In this way he is truly our Immanuel—that is: “God with us.”

HYMN N° 162\* Of the Father’s Love Begotten

CONFESSION OF SIN Ephesians 5:8-10

ASSURANCE OF PARDON Ephesians 2:13-14

At this time we would encourage you to record your attendance with us in the blue attendance pads.  
Visitors, please consider filling out our connect card on the church app.

OFFERTORY Chancel Choir

The Best of Rooms  
Charles Wood

Christ, he requires still, wheresoe’er he comes to feed or lodge, to have the best of rooms. Give him the choice; grant him the nobler part of all the house: The best of all’s the heart. — Robert Herrick

SCRIPTURE READING\* Pat Tolbert, *elder*

Isaiah 8:11-9:7, pg. 572

No Children’s church. Nursery and Toddler rooms are closed.  
All will resume January 7.

HYMN\* Lo! He Comes with Clouds Descending

PASTORAL PRAYER

SERMON Rev. Ken Wendland, *associate pastor*  
The Word Became Flesh  
John 1:14-18, pg. 886

HYMN N° 224\* Go, Tell It on the Mountain

BENEDICTION\*

POSTLUDE Dr. Ryan Kelly, *organ*



After the service, take a moment to greet those around you; especially those you may not know.  
We want to welcome everyone with the love of Christ and the grace of the Spirit, in the name of the Lord.

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Join us tonight at 5:00 p.m. for our Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

LO! HE COMES WITH CLOUDS DESCENDING

1. Lo! He comes, with clouds de - scend - ing, once for  
2. Ev - 'ry eye shall now be - hold him, robed in  
3. Yea, a - men! Let all a - dore thee, high on

fa - vored sin - ners slain; thou - sand thou - sand  
dread - ful maj - es - ty; those who set at  
thine e - ter - nal throne. Sa - vior, take the

saints at - tend - ing swell the tri - umph of his  
naught and sold him, pierced, and nailed him to the  
pow'r - and glo - ry; claim the king - dom for thine

train. Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!  
tree, deep - ly wail - ing, deep - ly wail - ing,  
own. O come quick - ly, O come quick - ly,

Al - le - lu - ia! God ap - pears on earth to reign.  
deep - ly wail - ing, shall the true Mes - si - ah see.  
O come quick - ly! Al - le - lu - ia! Come, Lord, come!