

# Concord Presbyterian Church

SHOWING UP, WITH GOD'S LOVE



## THE JOY OF BETHLEHEM

Advent/Christmas Worship

## THE JOY OF TRUTH

DECEMBER 8, 2024

## SOME NOTES TO HELP YOU PARTICIPATE FULLY IN WORSHIP:

The \* symbol indicates to Rise in Body or Spirit.

We encourage worshippers of all ages to participate in the sanctuary. There are quiet toys and supplemental activities for young people in our balcony, and a nursery available for those ages 3 or younger.

Hearing assistive devices are available in a bin to the left of the main sanctuary doors.

Notes about the Worship Series: The people of Bethlehem found themselves in the midst of a world at chaos. Yet, throughout the Gospel stories, we find moments of Joy in the midst of the darkness. How can the people of Bethlehem teach us to find God's hope in a weary world?

### **Upcoming Volunteers**

DECEMBER 8 LITURGIST	Jessica Wood
DECEMBER 8 FELLOWSHP	Della Kinney
DECEMBER 15 LITURGIST	Paul Woodard
DECEMBER 15 FELLOWSHP	Covered Dish
DECEMBER ELDER OF THE MONTH	Thomas Setser

# WELCOME

One: As we begin this second week of Advent, focused on peace, may we remember what the angel said,

**All: Be not afraid, Glory to God in the highest!"**

One: Born to bring peace, the Spirit of Christ says, "Peace to this house."

**All: Born to bring peace, the Spirit of Christ says, "Blessed are the peacemakers."**

One: In this season of long nights and expectant hearts, how do we find this peace?

**All: Peace happens when we treat each other, ourselves, and the world kindly.**

One: Peace emerges when the work of justice is done, when all are free to be who God made us to be.

**All: Let us worship in a spirit of peace, proclaiming the coming of the Prince of Peace!**

One: Join me in prayer... Amen.

\*HYMN

*O Little Town of Bethlehem*

#121

TIME WITH CHILDREN

ADVENT WREATH

\*HYMN

From the Manger



1. A qui - et town called House of Bread,  
2. A star - ry sky breaks forth with light,



a new-born ba - by falls a - sleep;  
the an - gel says, "Be not a - fraid."



a bed of hay be - neath his head,  
Glor - i - a to the high - est heights,



Im - man - u - el be - gins to dream.  
hea - ven - ly hosts are sing - ing praise.



For all cre - a - tion to be fed;  
You'll find him as the an - gel said;



hope from the ground\_ to the break-ing of bread.  
 peace from the heav'ns\_ to the break-ing of bread.



From the man - ger\_\_ hope grows; he will  
 From the man - ger\_\_ peace grows; he will



be God with us.\_\_ From the man-ger\_ hope  
 be God-with-us.\_\_ From the man-ger\_ peace



grows: Bread of Life, Je - sus.\_\_  
 grows: Bread of Life, Je - sus.\_\_

## Preparing our Hearts to Listen

### TIME FOR SILENT REFLECTION

One: Let us confess the ways we have opposed peace in ourselves and our communities, either through things we have done or things we have left undone.

### SILENT REFLECTIVE PRAYER

**Holy God, you created us to be at peace with each other and creation, but we confess we have disrupted your good peace.**

**We have not allowed your peace to nourish us when we disconnect ourselves from our own suffering, shunning the healthy disciplines, relationships, and conversations that would bring us internal peace.**

**We have not allowed your peace to nourish us when we choose to hold petty grudges for small grievances, allowing friendships to slip into cold conflict.**

**We have not allowed your peace to nourish us when we cling to relationships and situations we know to bring discord, afraid to leave the familiar for the unknown.**

**We have drowned out the cries of the hungry, imprisoned, war-ravaged, and abandoned with the mundane noise of our everyday lives, and instead, create false peace in the silence of intentional ignorance.**

**In your mercy, help us let go of these sins and move forward in faith, trusting peace will be our reward.**

**May the world be fed with peace. Amen.**

# ASSURANCE OF GOD'S GRACE

\*GLORIA *On Christmas Night All Christians* #112,  
*Sing* vs. 2 and 4

## **The Word of God**

### PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

#### JEREMIAH 33: 1-16

While he was still confined to the prison quarters, the Lord's word came to Jeremiah a second time: The Lord proclaims, the Lord who made the earth, who formed and established it, whose name is the Lord: Call to me and I will answer and reveal to you wondrous secrets that you haven't known.

This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, proclaims about the houses of this city and the palaces of the kings of Judah that were torn down to defend against the siege ramps and weapons of the invading Babylonians. They will be filled with the corpses of those slain in my fierce anger. I hid my face from the people of this city because of all their evil deeds, but now I will heal and mend them. I will make them whole and bless them with an abundance of peace and security. I will bring back the captives of Judah and Israel, and I will rebuild them as they were at first.

I will cleanse them of all the wrongdoing they committed against me, and I will forgive them for all of their guilt and rebellion. Then this city will bring me great joy, praise, and renown before all nations on earth, when they hear of all the good I provide for them. They will be in total awe at all the good and prosperity I provide for them.

The Lord proclaims: You have said about this place, “It is a wasteland, without humans or animals.” Yet in the ravaged and uninhabited towns of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem, the sounds of joy and laughter and the voices of the bride and the bridegroom will again be heard. So will the voices of those who say, as thank offerings are brought to the Lord’s temple, “Give thanks to the Lord of heavenly forces, for the Lord is good and his kindness lasts forever.” I will bring back the captives of this land as they were before, says the Lord.

The Lord of heavenly forces proclaims: This wasteland, without humans or animals—and all its towns—will again become pastures for shepherds to care for their flocks. Shepherds will again count their flocks in the towns of the highlands, the western foothills and the arid southern plain, in the land of Benjamin, as well as in the outlying areas of Jerusalem and the towns of Judah, says the Lord.

The time is coming, declares the Lord, when I will fulfill my gracious promise with the people of Israel and Judah.



In those days and at that time, I will raise up a righteous branch from David's line, who will do what is just and right in the land. In those days, Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. And this is what he will be called: The Lord Is Our Righteousness.

## REFLECTION ON THE WORD OF GOD

RESPONSE TO THE WORD    Francesca Battistelli

*Messiah*

Liz Setser and Melissa Donnelly

## **Prayer of the People**

\*HYMN                      *While We are Waiting, Come*                      #92, vs. 1

THE PEOPLE'S PRAYER

THE LORD'S PRAYER

\*HYMN                      *While We are Waiting, Come*                      #92, vs. 3

# OFFERING OUR TIME, TALENT, AND TREASURE TO GOD

*Ways to Donate your Time and Talent are  
found in the back of this bulletin*



## MAKE A FINANCIAL GIFT:

- in the offering plates in the back
- Online at [concordpreschurch.com](http://concordpreschurch.com)  
or the QR code to the left

## TWO CENTS A MEAL OFFERING

## AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

**One:** Let us affirm our commitment to and belief in the Christian discipline of peace.

**All:** **Jesus taught his disciples, “When you enter a house, first say, ‘Peace to this house.’”**

**One:** Jesus taught his disciples, “If someone who promotes peace is there, your peace will rest on them; if not, it will return to you.”

**All:** **We believe peace is expensive. Peace is costly. What will we sacrifice for the sake of peace?**

One: We believe peace is humble. Peace is willing to apologize. What ground will we concede for the sake of peace?

**All: We believe peace is intentional. Peace is slow. What ease and comfort will we lose for the sake of peace?**

One: We believe peace is brave. Peace has boundaries. What changes will we make for the sake of peace?

**All: We believe those who make sacrifices for the sake of peace will be made whole again, for Jesus makes all things new.**

One: Blessed are the peacemakers for they will be called children of God.

**All: Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom God favors!**

## PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

\*HYMN

*The First Nowell*

# 147

*verses 1, 2, and 4*

## CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

## POSTLUDE

# THE GRAPEVINE

*Week of December 8 2024*

DECEMBER 8	10:00 AM	WORSHIP TWO CENTS A MEAL
	11:00 AM	CONGREGATIONAL MEETING
	11:15 AM	FELLOWSHIP TIME
	4:30 PM	YOUTH GROUP
<hr/>		
DECEMBER 11	7:15 PM	CHOIR PRACTICE
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DECEMBER 14	9:00 AM	PROJECT CHRISTMAS WORKDAY
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## Project Christmas

DECEMBER 14  
WORKDAY; 9AM

DECEMBER 20-21  
7PM - 8:30PM





FOOD PANTRY

# wish list

next collection: 12/15

POPTARTS

KNORR SIDES

CLEANING SUPPLIES

PEANUT BUTTER

CANNED FRUIT

SNACK ITEMS

CRACKERS

SMALL BOTTLES OF OIL

BEEF STEW

JELLY

SMALL BAGS OF SUGAR OR FLOUR

KLEENEX

TOILET PAPER

CAKE MIX AND ICING

MAYONNAISE

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It's that time of year! We need help filling Christmas bags for our homebound Church Family with holiday breads (pumpkin, banana, zucchini, etc) and treats.

Please bring the holiday breads and treats to the fellowship hall by December 15th. If you get your baking done early, you can put the baked goods in the freezer.

Also, if you bring your Christmas cards for our homebound and facility residents by December 15th, we will deliver the cards with the Christmas bags.

We plan to begin deliveries on Monday, December 15th. If you are available to help with deliveries, please contact Joyce Ervin.

# Youth and Children Ministry Updates!



Sunday Fellowship is open to anyone Kindergarten through Senior in High School.

**DECEMBER 8 - CHRISTMAS CAROLING**

**DECEMBER 15 - THE GIFT THAT KEEPS ON GIVING**

**DECEMBER 21 - CHRISTMAS LOCK-IN**

**We need help with dinner next semester.**  
Please look at your calendar and see when  
you might be able to help!

**Go to: [cpcstatesville.org/youth](http://cpcstatesville.org/youth) to sign-up**

**Subscribe to the  
Youth Calendar  
and Messaging:**



or stay up-to-date  
at  
[cpcstatesville.org/  
youth](http://cpcstatesville.org/youth)

# Midweek Devotion

**Read:** John 18:37 - Pilate asked him "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice.

Do you sometimes feel like you're swimming in the seas of ambiguity and contradiction? One minute the world makes sense and I know who I am and what I'm good at, and the next I'm questioning myself, my worth, my gifts. *Is my problem or pain too much? Am I a good enough parent, friend, coworker? Should I have this figured out by now?* Perhaps you have similar questions spinning around your mind.

I am beginning to think this is part of what it means to be human. One minute we are messy and stingy and irritable, but the next we can be absolutely radiant with beauty and wonder and generosity. We're all of these things, yet sometimes it's in the mirror of another's perception we can see the truth.

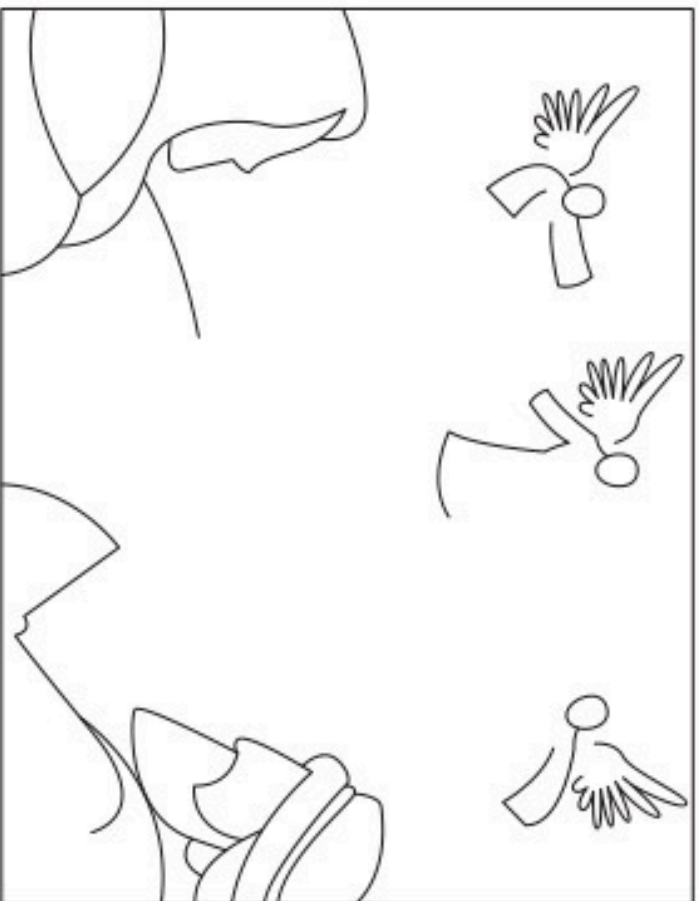
When we are overwhelmed with brokenness or sorrow, we need people to remind us we are still good, and there is goodness in the world. That we can be forgiven. That it isn't too late. We are loved - not for what we do but for who we are. This act of mirroring reflects back to us the truth we are *becoming*. We are still being made.

## **Reflect:**

- Who in your life acts as a mirror, reflecting the truth of your beauty and wonder back to you? How does being in their presence make you feel?
- Practice seeing other people with awe and wonder today. For whom can you be a mirror?

# CAPTION THAT!

Imagine you were with those shepherds on the hillside as the angels sang! Finish the drawing, then pass your bulletin around to have others create captions for what the shepherds were thinking and saying (or the angels too!). Use your creativity for thought and speech bubbles!

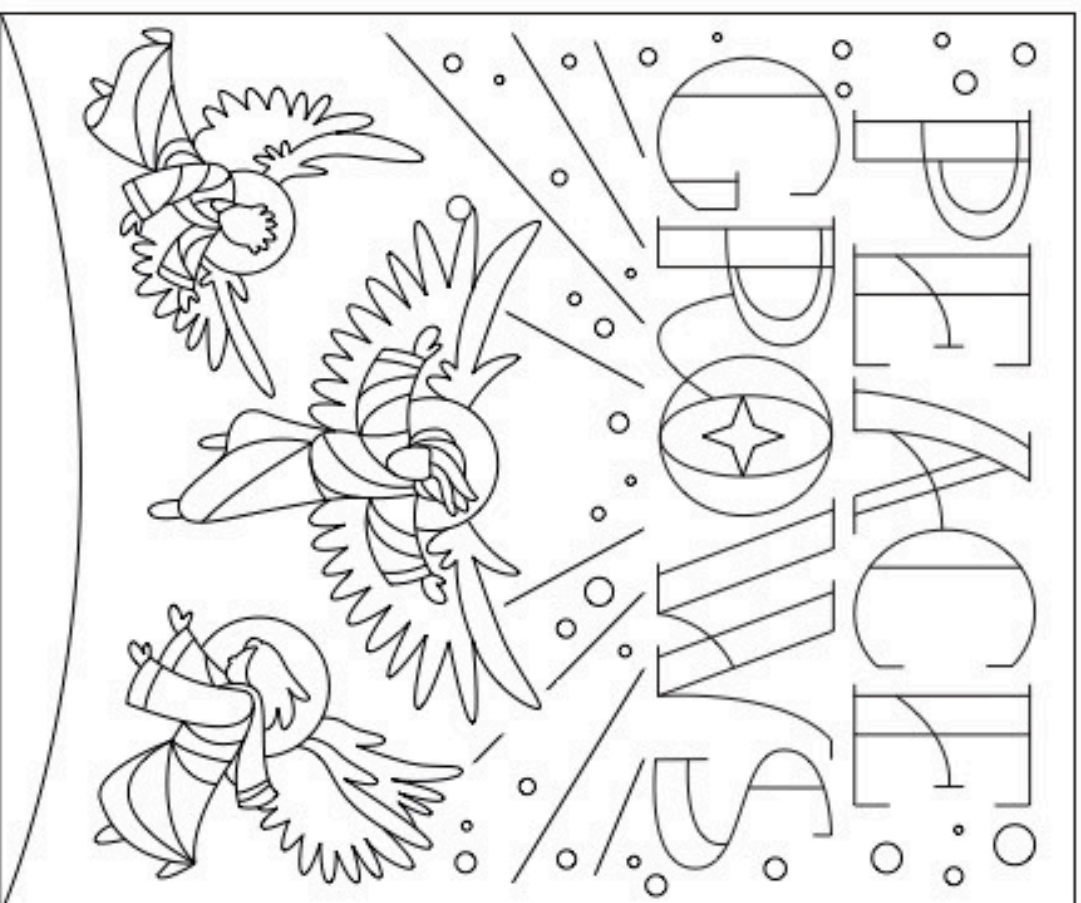


## WORDS TO CARRY

Write down three words from today's service on **peace** that you will carry with you this week


# ADVENT TWO

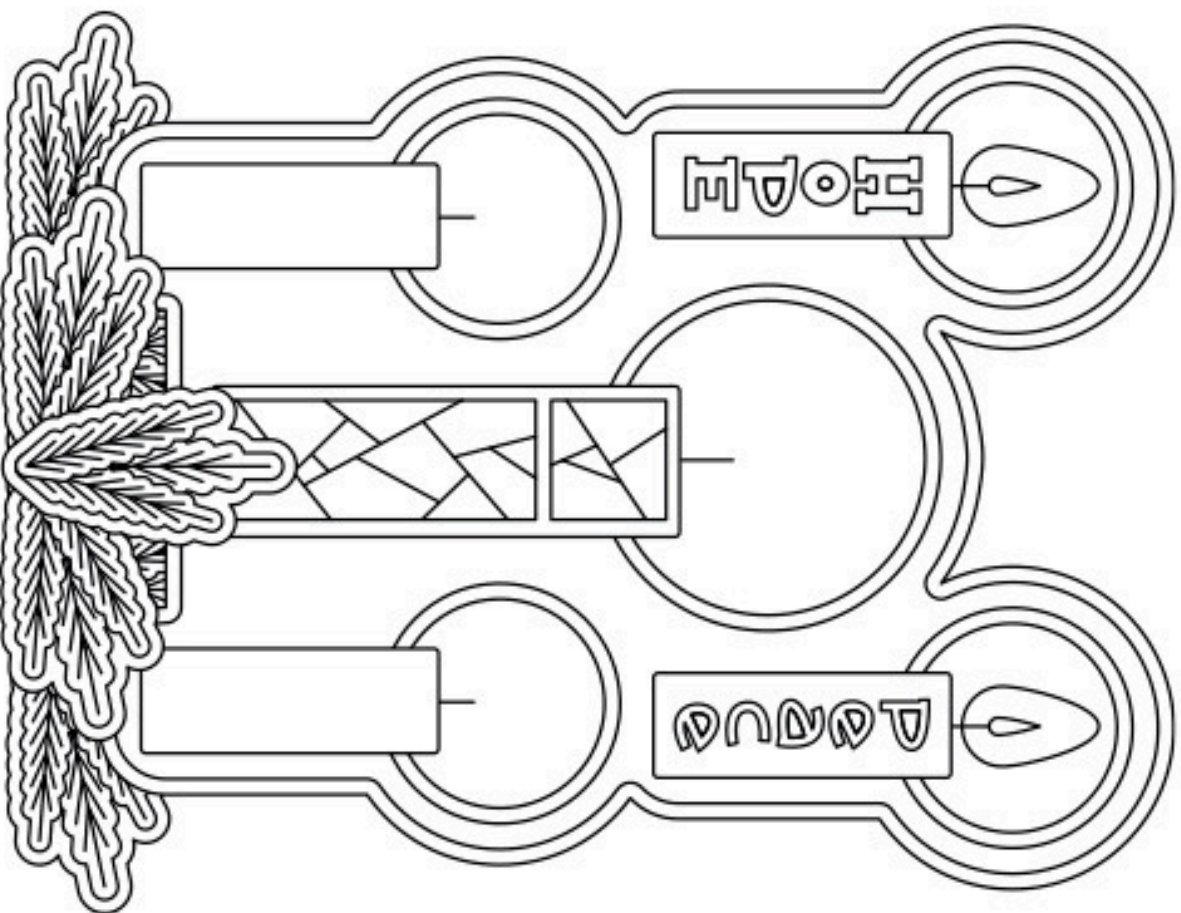
INTERACTIVE WORSHIP BULLETIN FOR ALL AGES





# COLOR the CANDLES

We mark each week of Advent by lighting a candle. Color the number of Advent candles that were lit today.



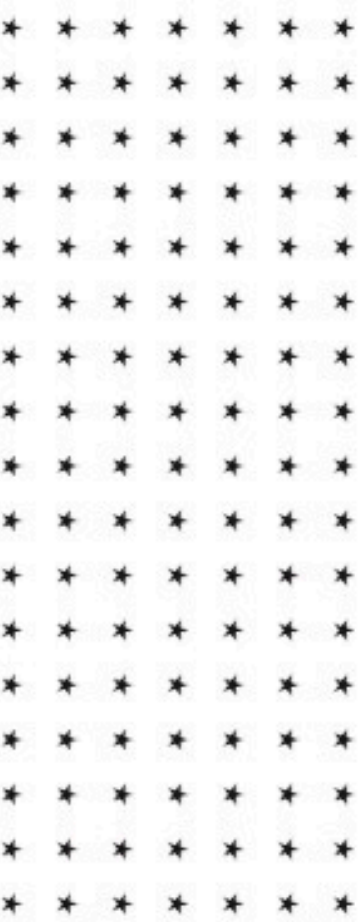
# WORD CHAIN

We remember how our theme today of "peace" affects so many areas of our lives, from our bodies to our relationships to how we eat. Help peace *grow* with a word chain. Starting with the word "PEACE," take turns with a partner by writing a word that *starts* with the *last* letter of the word your partner just wrote. Have fun seeing what can grow from peace!

**PEACE**

# STAR BY STAR

Join the chorus of angels singing among the stars by connecting some stars yourself! This activity requires two players. Player One will connect two of the stars by drawing a line. *Note: The stars you connect must be right next to each other, vertically or horizontally.* Player Two then has an opportunity to draw a line connecting two stars. Continue alternating this play until a box is made by connecting four stars. Whoever finishes a box gets to write their initials inside the box. The game ends when all boxes have been made and the game is complete.



# Poinsettias



## TO OFFER A POINSETTA:

- Using the form in the bulletin, place the information in the offering plate

**or**

- Email the church office at [info@concordpreschurch.com](mailto:info@concordpreschurch.com)

## THEN:

Bring the Poinsetta on December 22

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## I am Offering a Poinsetta:

(circle one)

In Honor/ In Memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

In Honor/ In Memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

In Honor/ In Memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

In Honor/ In Memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

My Name: \_\_\_\_\_



# OUR LEADERSHIP

## CLASS OF 2024

JOHN ERVIN  
ERIC MILLSAPS  
SALLY WARREN

## CLASS OF 2025

TIM DONNELLY  
JOYCE ERVIN  
DELLA KINNEY  
THOMAS SETSER

## CLASS OF 2026

CHRIS HARRIS  
PAUL WOODARD

# HARVEST SEASON TEAM

TIM DONNELLY

JOHN & JOYCE  
ERVIN

DELLA KINNEY

## OUR TEAM

Rev. Elizabeth Troyer | Pastor  
pastorliz@concordpreschurch.com

Cyndy Sowder | bookkeeper  
info@concordpreschurch.com

Elizabeth Dobson | Music Director

Melissa Donnelly | Pianist

Samantha Dudley | Caretaker

## OUR VALUES

- Welcome and include all people, no matter their life circumstances.
- Empower all people to find and use their God-given gifts.
- Live lives of service to those outside our walls.

Concord Presbyterian Church  
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