



**New Castle Presbyterian Church
Third Sunday of Advent**

December 15, 2024

10:30 a.m.

GATHER IN GOD'S NAME

Bell Prelude

O Come, O Come Emmanuel

Michael Helman

**Welcome & Words about The Life and Work of the Church
Greeting of Peace**

As Jesus greeted his disciples, so let us greet one another:
The peace of Christ be with you! **And also with you!**

Steeple Bell

Choral Introit

Advent Canon

Michael Sharp

Choir & Sunday School Children

Handbells - Minerva Lermond and Ellie Gerhart

Bethany Faiz - Piano

Call to Worship

Linda Bennett & Kim Beebe

In a weary and worn world, how do we begin again? Where do we start?

Let us begin with the good news!

Let us begin by trusting that we are loved by a gracious God.

Let us start small and do the good that is right in front of us. Let us do small things with great joy!

Yes, let us begin with joy. Today we light the candles of hope, peace, and joy. **May these lights cast out the shadow of death and shine onto a new world. May the warmth of God's light fill us with joy. Amen.**

***Hymn #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.

Call to Confession

Prayer of Confession

God of our salvation, there are days when the world feels like it's crumbling. There are days when I doubt that I can make a difference.

What can my hands do? What can my voice say?

Shake me free of my own paralysis and self-doubt. Remind me that I am not called to fix everything. Christ is the Savior of the world; I am simply called to do the good that is mine to do. With hope in my heart and fire in my bones, I pray. Lord, I believe. Help my unbelief...

(Time for silent prayer.)

Assurance of Pardon

Let us proclaim the Good News together:

In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven! Thanks be to God.

*Response #582

**Glory to God, whose goodness shines on me,
and to the Son, whose grace has pardoned me,
and to the Spirit, whose love has set me free.**

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen.

World without end, without end. Amen. (sing 3x)

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen.

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PROCLAIM GOD'S WORD

Anthem

Advent Jubilate John Parker & Larry Shackley

Bethany Faiz - Piano

What a day is coming, what a day is near, when our burdens are lifted and our hearts fill with cheer. For the time is approaching when our eyes see his face, and with joy we will greet him in his beauty and grace! Christ is coming, Jubilate! Christ is coming, Hallelujah! Sing glory to God, Jubilate Deo! Christ is coming, Jubilate! Christ is coming, Hallelujah! Sing glory to God! Glory to God! Glory to God! Jubilate Deo!

What a grand celebration, what a day there will be, when our merciful Savior in love sets us free. Every girl, every woman, every boy, every man, will be gathered together at his gracious command! Christ is coming, Jubilate! Christ is coming, Hallelujah! Sing glory to God, Jubilate Deo! Christ is coming, Jubilate! Christ is coming, Hallelujah! Sing glory to God! Glory to God! Jubilate Deo! Christ is coming! Jubilate Deo!

Scripture Conversation with Children

Prayer for Illumination

Listening God, we know that you are constantly speaking to us. Through scripture and music, nature and relationships, you make yourself known again and again. So, in this moment, quiet the noise in our heads and help us to listen. Speak to us through the chaos. Speak to us as only you can. May we hear the good that is ours to do. With hope in our hearts, we pray. Amen.

Scripture Lesson

Isaiah 58:9b-12

Page: OT 688

Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer; you shall cry for help, and he will say, “Here I am.” If you remove the yoke from among you, the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil, ¹⁰ if you offer your food to the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted, then your light shall rise in the darkness and your gloom be like the noonday.

¹¹ The Lord will guide you continually and satisfy your needs in parched places and make your bones strong, and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water whose waters never fail. ¹² Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; you shall be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of streets to live in.

This is the Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

Scripture Lesson

Luke 3:7-16

Page: NT 60

⁷ John said to the crowds coming out to be baptized by him, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? ⁸ Therefore, bear fruits worthy of repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our ancestor,’ for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. ⁹ Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.”

¹⁰ And the crowds asked him, “What, then, should we do?” ¹¹ In reply he said to them, “Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none, and whoever has food must do likewise.” ¹² Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, “Teacher, what should we do?” ¹³ He said to them, “Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you.” ¹⁴ Soldiers also asked him, “And

we, what should we do?" He said to them, "Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages."

¹⁵ As the people were filled with expectation and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, ¹⁶ John answered all of them by saying, "I baptize you with water, but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the strap of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

This is the Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

Sermon

Words for the Beginning: Do the Good that is Yours to Do

GIVE THANKS TO GOD

***Hymn #88**

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

Verses 1, 2, 6, and 7



1 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som
2 O come, thou Wis - dom from on high, who or - derest
3 O come, O come, thou Lord of might, who to thy
4 O come, thou Root of Jes - se, free thine own from



cap - tive Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile
all things might - i - ly: to us the path of knowl - edge
tribes on Si - nai's height in an - cient times didst give the
Sa - tan's tyr - an - ny; from depths of hell thy peo - ple



here un - til the Son of God ap - pear.
show; and teach us in her ways to go. Re-joyce! Re-joyce!
law in cloud and maj - es - ty and awe.
save and give them vic - tory o'er the grave.



Em - man - u - el shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el.

5 O come, thou Key of David, come, and open wide our heavenly home;
make safe the way that leads on high,
and close the path to misery.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel.

6 O come, thou Dayspring, come and cheer
our spirits by thine advent here;
disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
and death's dark shadows put to flight.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel.

7 O come, Desire of nations, bind
all peoples in one heart and mind;
bid envy, strife, and discord cease;
fill the whole world with heaven's peace.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel.

One stanza of this paraphrase of the great O Antiphons may be sung on each of the last days of Advent as follows:

Dec. 17: O Wisdom (2)

Dec. 18: O Lord of might (3)

Dec. 19: O Root of Jesse (4)

Dec. 20: O Key of David (5)

Dec. 21: O Dayspring (6)

Dec. 22: O Desire of Nations (7)

Dec. 23: O Emmanuel (1)

These titles of the coming Christ appeared in daily Vesper antiphons sung during the week before Christmas; their roots date at least to the reign of Charlemagne. Both text and tune are the fruit of 19th-century efforts to reclaim Christian treasures from pre-Reformation sources.

***Response #607**

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Christ, all people here below;
Praise Holy Spirit evermore.
Praise triune God, whom we adore. Amen.**

***Prayer of Dedication**

O God, in a weary and worn world, how do we begin again? Where do we start? John tells us to do the good that is ours to do. It's that easy and that hard. Help us to trust in your promise of joy and live as your children. Bless our offerings that your joy would offer new beginnings to all who need it. Amen.

Prayers of the People

The 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.**

GO IN GOD'S NAME

*Hymn #100

My Soul Cries out with a Joyful Shout

Em C D

1 My soul cries out with a joy - ful shout that the
 2 Though I am small, my God, my all, you
 3 From the halls of power to the for - tress tower, not a
 4 Though the na - tions rage from age to age, we re -

Em C D Em

God of my heart is great, and my spir - it sings of the
 work great things in me, and your mer - cy will last from the
 stone will be left on stone. Let the king be - ware for your
 mem - ber who holds us fast: God's mer - cy must de -

G D Em C Em

won - drous things that you bring to the ones who wait.
 depths of the past to the end of the age to be.
 jus - tice tears ev - ery ty - rant from his throne.
 liv - er us from the con - quer - or's crush - ing grasp.

G D

You fixed your sight on your ser - vant's plight, and my
 Your ver - y name puts the proud to shame, and to
 The hun - gry poor shall weep no more, for the
 This sav - ing word that our fore - bears heard is the

Em C D Em

weak - ness you did not spurn, so from east to west shall my
 those who would for you yearn, you will show your might, put the
 food they can nev - er earn; there are ta - bles spread; ev - ery
 prom - ise which holds us bound, till the spear and rod can be

G D Em C Em

name be blest. Could the world be a - bout to turn?
 strong to flight, for the world is a - bout to turn.
 mouth be fed, for the world is a - bout to turn.
 crushed by God, who is turn - ing the world a - round.

Refrain

G D

My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Let the

Em C D Em

fires of your jus - tice burn. Wipe a - way all tears, for the

C D Em C Em

dawn draws near, and the world is a - bout to turn.

By employing an energetic Irish folk song for its melody, this ballad-like paraphrase of the *Magnificat*, Mary's song at her meeting with her relative Elizabeth (Luke 1:46-55), recaptures both the wonder and the faith of the young woman who first recognized what God was doing.

***Charge and Benediction**

Choral Benediction

Steeple Bell

Postlude

People, Look East

arr. Lloyd Larson

Bethany Faiz - Piano

Please remain seated through the Postlude. As you exit, you may recycle your bulletin in the basket at the door. Join us after worship for Coffee Hour in the Fellowship Hall

Thank you for serving today:

Worship Leader: Jean Norvell

Counters: Peter McCurdy/Marshall Freund

Ushers: Amy & Scott Selheimer

Coffee Hour: Sunday School

Nursery: Jane Fouracre/

Sunday School: Mallory Mackie/Chris Fagles

Today we remember in the Special Gifts Memorial Case:

Clara Filler Zimmerman

Ethel George Lamberto

1897-1966

1918-1993



SIGN UP TO VOLUNTEER ON A SUNDAY MORNING

We are in need of ushers and worship leaders in December & January.

Please sign up today: <https://www.newcastlepreschurh.org/on-line-signups>

ALL AGES SUNDAY SCHOOL – THIS SUNDAY

Over lunch, our All-Ages Sunday School will explore the quilt imagery of our Words for the Beginning Advent series! Come help make our paper quilt for Christmas: *Love Knows Your Name*.

MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH GROUP

We'll gather today from 11:30 to 2 for a New Castle-themed escape room. We will be walking outside, so be sure to dress for the weather. At our midway point, we'll take a lunch break. Contact Pastor Miriam to RSVP.

NCPC MEN'S GROUP

Men's Group will gather for food and fellowship on Monday, December 16 at 7 p.m. at Iron Hill in Wilmington. Please RSVP to Steven Foltz. All ages are invited to attend.

SPECIAL SERVICES IN DECEMBER

Join us for our **Longest Night Service at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, December 18**. For all who struggle in this season of merry carols, this candlelight service is a quieter time to gather in the promise and comfort of Emmanuel: God with us. Our **Christmas Eve services** will be a Family Service at 5 p.m. and a Traditional Service at 7:30 p.m.

CHRISTMAS CAROLING – DECEMBER 22

Join us on Sunday, Dec. 22 at 6 p.m. for caroling around Old New Castle; we'll begin to walk from the CE Building. We'll provide sheet music, but please bring a flashlight. Christmas lights and festive attire is encouraged! We'll end at the CE Building for refreshments around 7:00pm. You are welcome to come even if you don't go caroling!

CODE PURPLE

First & Central Presbyterian welcomes Wilmington's unhoused neighbors into their social hall every Saturday during the winter months. From 6 to 10 to a.m., guests receive a warm welcome, light breakfast, and hospital services, including WiFi, charging stations, and shower services. NCPC's Mission and Outreach committee invites you to sign up at <https://shorturl.at/X6Vyd> or contact Amy Selheimer.

BAYLOR PAPERBACK BOOK COLLECTION

We remember all who are incarcerated and separated from their families through the holidays. Through Sunday, December 22nd, Mission & Outreach will collect new or gently used softback books for the library at Baylor Women's Correctional Institution. Let us share some joy through the written word!

GUATEMALAN ADVENT PROJECT

It's time again to help with the Guatemalan Advent Project. This year you can buy chickens for women in Guatemala. These chickens are given to women to raise for their families as a source of nourishment. There will be information at Coffee Hour for the next few weeks on how you can give. This is a great gift for that friend or family member who is hard to buy for. Questions? See Scott or Amy Selheimer.

CHRISTMAS EVE POINSETTIAS

For our Christmas Eve service, the Meeting House will be decorated with poinsettias. Donate a poinsettia for \$15 in memory or in honor of a loved one by returning the order form (located in entrance to Meeting House and CE bldg.) to the Church Office by **Monday, Dec. 16.**



This Week's Schedule

SUNDAY	12/15		3rd Sunday of Advent
		10:30am	In-Person & Live Stream Worship
		11:30am	All-Ages Sunday School/ Youth Group
		6:00pm	Open Mic Night
Monday	12/16	7:00pm	Men's Gathering @ Iron Hill Brewery
Wednesday	12/18	3:00pm	Bible Study
		7:00pm	Longest Night Service
Thursday	12/19	7:00pm	Celebration Ringers
Friday	12/20		Deadline for January Newsletter
Saturday	12/21	8:00am	Tai Chi
SUNDAY	12/22		4th Sunday of Advent
		10:30am	In-Person & Live Stream Worship
		11:30am	Coffee Hour
		6:00pm	Caroling in Old New Castle
		7:00pm	Refreshments in Fellowship Hall

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New Castle Presbyterian Church

25 E. 2nd Street
New Castle, DE 19720

Phone: (302) 328-3279

www.newcastlepreschurch.org

Fax: (302) 328-5670

Rev. Miriam Foltz, Pastor - pastor@newcastlepreschurch.org

Kris Krawczyk, Admin. Assistant - office@newcastlepreschurch.org

Mallory Mackie, Sunday School Coord.

Eileen Larkin, Dir. of Music

Dan Knox, Treasurer

Minerva Lermond, Dir. of Handbells

Lyn Briggs, Recording Secretary

Bethany Faiz, Accompanist

SESSION

2025	2026	2027
Melissa Boris	Cynthia Beam	Julie Barry
Jennifer Dunham	Peter McCurdy	Sarah McCann
Connie Reese	OPEN	Amy Selheimer
Clerk of Session: Scott Selheimer		

Session meets the 1st Tuesday of the month

DEACONS

2025	2026	2027
Toni Marley	Lindy Ballance	Julia Spock
Janet Spring	Liz Toto	Beverly Stoudt

Deacons meet the 2nd Sunday of the month

TRUSTEES

2025	2026	2027
Marshall Freund	Mary Fontinha	Gary Graham
Mike Smith	Gail Seitz	Kelly McCurdy

Trustees meet the 3rd Monday every other month (Sept/Nov/Jan/Mar/May)

