**(Large Print)**

**Springfield Presbyterian Church (USA)**

7300 Spout Hill Road, Sykesville, MD 21784 410-795-6152

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**December 17, 2023 - 10:30 am**

**WELCOME VISITORS!**

We're glad you are here! Cards at the ends of each pew are for you to fill out and drop in the Offering Plate. Please let us know you are visiting and join us for refreshments and fellowship following the service. The Sanctuary has an induction loop system to assist the hearing impaired. The system will also work on the telephone setting of hearing aids.

Springfield Presbyterian Church is rooted in the gospel of Jesus Christ, led by the Holy Spirit, and called to loving relationships through vibrant worship and service. Valuing all people, we are committed to developing disciples and fostering stewardship.

**PREPARATION FOR THE WORD**

(**\*** those who are able are invited to stand)

**PRELUDE**

**GATHERING OF THE PEOPLE**

The Lord be with you! **And also with you!**

(Greetings and Announcements)

**LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE**

Leader: Whenever we light this candle we proclaim:

**People: Christ is the Light of the world and the center of our lives.**

**INTROIT AND PROCESSION** *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* (v. 6) GTG #88

**CANDLE LIGHTING** Advent IV: The Candle of Love

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

Leader: How does a weary world rejoice?

**People: We sing songs of hope.**

Leader: We allow hope to change us, to strengthen us.

**People: We tell the stories of what could be.**

Leader: We listen for God’s word.

**People: We resist the temptation to give up or give in.**

Leader: We remember Mary’s song.

**People: We gather for worship.**

Leader: We hope.

**People: We hope. Against all odds, we hope.**

Leader: Friends, this is the day that the Lord is still making.

**People: Let us rejoice and be glad in it. Let us worship our God.**

**\*HYMN***Canticle of the Turning* GTG #100

My soul cries out with a joyful shout that the God of my heart is great, and my spirit sings of the wondrous things that you bring to the ones who wait. You fixed your sight on your servant’s plight, and my weakness you did not spurn, so from east to west shall my name be blest. Could the world be about to turn?

**Refrain:**

My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Let the fires of your justice burn. Wipe away all tears, for the dawns draws near, and the world is about to turn.

Though I am small, my God, my all, you work great things in me, and your mercy will last from the depths of the past to the end of the age to be. Your very name puts the proud to shame, and to those who would for you yearn, you will show your might, put the strong to flight, for the world is about to turn. **[Refrain]**

From the halls of power to the fortress tower, not a stone will be left on stone. Let the king beware for your justice tears every tyrant from his throne. The hungry poor shall weep no more, for the food they can never earn; there are tables spread; every mouth be fed, for the world is about to turn. **[Refrain]**

Though the nations rage from age to age, we remember who hold us fast: God’s mercy must deliver us from the conqueror’s crushing grasp. This saving word that our forebears heard is the promise which holds us bound, till the spear and rod can be crushed by God, who is turning the world around. **[Refrain]**

**CALL TO CONFESSION**

Leader: Family of Faith, we all know that a small group of convicted people can change the world. That’s how it’s always been. People like

Mary, people like Zechariah, people like John the Baptist. And yet, we rarely feel like we can be one of those people. We downplay our ability to make a difference. We choose pessimism over optimism. We sweep hope under the rug for the sake of realism. We forget the words to Mary’s song. Fortunately for us, our God carries enough hope and grace for all of us. So let us go to God in prayer. Let us speak the truth of our lives, and let that honesty change us. Friends, let us pray:

**PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

**Holy God, more days than not, hope feels like the rain. We try to hold onto it with cupped hands, but eventually, it slips right on through. Forgive us for holding hope so loosely. Forgive us for allowing the realities of today to define tomorrow. We know that this world needs people of hope, so today we pray: turn us into those people. Teach us how to sing Mary’s song of hope for the world. With open hearts we pray, amen.**

**SILENT PRAYERS OF CONFESSION**

**RESPONSE** *Restore in Us, O God*  Tune #434

Restore in us, O God, the splendor of your love;

Renew your image in our hearts, and all our sins remove.

**WORDS OF ASSURANCE**

Leader: Beloved People of God, no matter how many times we let hope slip through our fingers, we still belong to God. So hear and repeat these words after me: I am God’s beloved.

**People: I am God’s beloved.**

Leader: I am forgiven.

**People: I am forgiven.**

Leader: I am blessed and sent to serve.

**People: I am blessed and sent to serve.**

Leader: This is the good news of the Gospel. This is the great hope we hold onto. Thanks be to God for God’s unending love. Amen.

**\* MUSICAL RESPONSE OF PRAISE** *Blessed Assurance* Tune #839

Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine! O what a foretaste of glory divine! Heir of salvation, purchase of God, born of his Spirit, washed in his blood. This is my story; this is my song, praising my Savior all the day long; This is my story; this is my song, praising my Savior all the day long.

**\* THE PEACE** The peace of Christ be with you! **And also with you!**

(You may greet those around you.)

**\* RESPONSE** *Here I Am, Lord*

Here I am, Lord, Is it I, Lord? I have heard you calling in the night.

I will go, Lord, if you lead me. I will hold your people in my heart.

**THE PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD**

**PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION**

Loving God, the grass withers and the flowers fade, but your Word stands forever. So today we pray – help us to truly hear it. Allow your words to sink deep into the marrow of our bones. Allow your words to lift our hearts in hope, that we might feel one day closer to your promised day. With hopeful and grateful hearts we pray, amen.

**FIRST SCRIPTURE LESSON**  *Luke 1:46-55*

46 And Mary said, ‘My soul magnifies the Lord, 47 and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, 48 for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; 49 for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name.   
50 His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.   
51 He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. 52 He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; 53 he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. 54 He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, 55 according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants for ever.’

**SECOND SCRIPTURE LESSON** *Luke 1:67-80*

67 Then his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke this prophecy: 68 ‘Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has looked favorably on his people and redeemed them. 69 He has raised up a mighty savior for us in the house of his servant David, 70 as he spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets from of old, 71 that we would be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us.   
72 Thus he has shown the mercy promised to our ancestors, and has remembered his holy covenant, 73 the oath that he swore to our ancestor Abraham, to grant us 74that we, being rescued from the hands of our enemies, might serve him without fear, 75in holiness and righteousness before him all our days. 76 And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways, 77 to give knowledge of salvation to his people by the forgiveness of their sins. 78 By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us, 79 to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.’ 80 The child grew and became strong in spirit, and he was in the wilderness until the day he appeared publicly to Israel.

Leader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

**SERMON** *We Sing Stories of Hope* Rev. Becca Price

**THE RESPONSE TO THE WORD**

**\*HYMN** *Lullaby of Praise* (see last page)

**PASTORAL PRAYER AND THE LORD’S PRAYER**

**PRESENTATION OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS**

OFFERTORY

**\*** SONG OF THANKS *In the Bleak Midwinter* Tune #144

What can I give him poor as I am? If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb; If I were a wise man, I would do my part; yet what I can I give him: give my heart.

**\*** PRAYER OF DEDICATION

**\* HYMN** *I Can Celebrate You* (see last page)

**\* CHARGE AND BENEDICTION**

Leader: Family of faith, as we leave this place, we go into a weary world–

**People: So let us speak tenderly and advocate for the weariness amongst us and around us.**

Leader: Let us do the good that is ours to do.

**People: Let us choose connection and hold onto hope.**

Leader: And remember, that Christ took on flesh for us. We are God’s beloved.

**People: So let us go rejoicing, for this weary world needs it. Amen!**

**\* UNISON AMEN**

**POSTLUDE**

**Sunday December 24, 2023 Lectionary**

Isaiah 9:2-7; Psalm 96; Titus 2:11-14; Luke 2:1-14 (15-20)

**Assisting in Worship: We appreciate those who serve:**

Today 12/17 Next Week 12/24

Sunday Opener: Barbara Cornell Beth Oates

Ushers/Greeters: Elizabeth Meirowitz Cynthia Smith

Brenda McClung Leah Halvorson

Lay Leader: Christy Yeager Max Carroll

Fellowship Host: Barbara Cornell CoCaMO Committee

Communion Servers: 1. Don Vasbinder 6. Sharon Pappas

2. Barbara Cornell 7. Barbara Nickell

3. Sue Holmes 8. Tony Caviglia

4. Bob Steppling 9. Linda Black

5. Alex McClung

**Happy Anniversary!** December 14 – Tony & Linda Caviglia

December 27 – Leah & Jeff Halvorson

**Happy Birthday!** December 19 – Becky Spicer

December 20 – Stephanie Bunting

December 31 – Lindsey Mazer

**Announcements**

**Christmas Joy Offering**, received **TODAY**, helps to build and support God’s household with leaders past, present and future. Your support of this offering provides critical financial assistance to current and retired church workers and their families, while also developing future leaders in the church and in the world at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color.  Half the offering supports future leaders and half continues our support for past leaders. In 2022, $1.1 million in gifts meant 223 could stay in their home, assisted living or long-term care; we helped 272 retired church workers

and surviving spouses; 621 emergency grants were given for people facing hardship.

**Inclement Weather:** If we feel the need to cancel in-person Worship, there will be a message on the Church answering machine, as well as on Facebook. You may also receive an email with that information.

***Today:***

**Sunday December 17 – 4th Sunday of Advent**

10:30 am Worship

11:30 am Fellowship

***This Week:***

**Wednesday December 20**

6:00 – 7:30 pm Bell Choir Practice

7:30 – 8:45 pm Adult Choir Practice

**Thursday December 21**

7:00 pm Blue Christmas Worship Service

***Next Week:***

**Sunday December 24 – Christmas Eve**

6:00 pm Youth & Youth Alumni Reception

6:46 pm Bell Choir Performs

7:00 pm Worship Service

Office Hours: Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday, 10:00 am - 3:00 pm

**Springfield Presbyterian Church**

10:30 am Worship (and Sunday School 1st & 3rd Sundays)

11:30 am Fellowship

**Website:** [*www.springfield-church.org*](http://www.springfield-church.org)**Church Office**: 410-795-6152

**Like us on Facebook:** www.facebook.com/SpringfieldPresbyterianChurch

**Pastor:** Rev. Becca Price

**Email:** springfieldpastor@gmail.com

**Clerk of Session:** Sharon Pappas

**Minister of Music/Accompanist:** Aaron Thacker

**Bell Choir Director:** Daria Dodonova

**Youth Group Coordinator:** Dylan Vasbinder

**Administrative Assistant:**Donna Mazer**e-mail:**[*spc.office@verizon.net*](mailto:spc.office@verizon.net)