

# *Bryn Mawr Presbyterian Church*

Wednesday, December 21, 2022 | 7:00 p.m., Sanctuary  
Longest Night Service





# WELCOME TO BMPC

## **LABYRINTH**

On this Longest Night, we move from darkness to light. Outside the Sanctuary main doors on the Education Building Lawn, our labyrinth has been placed as a way to mark your journey here tonight. A labyrinth offers a sacred, nonjudgmental place to pray, meditate and breathe. Walking a labyrinth engages the entire body in releasing the noise of everyday life and allows the possibility of receiving the Light to refresh the soul. We invite you to walk or to simply take in the light.

## **FOR THOSE SEEKING SUPPORT**

The Middleton Center, a specialized ministry of Bryn Mawr Presbyterian Church, helps people navigate the turning points and challenges in their lives. If you would like more information on the services and support offered by the Middleton Center, please call 610-525-0766 or visit [www.middletoncenter.org](http://www.middletoncenter.org).

## Christmas Worship

### **CHRISTMAS EVE FAMILY**

**SERVICE.** 4:30 p.m., Sanctuary and Livestreamed. Family Service with Nativity Tableau and musical leadership by BMPC's Children's Choir, Youth Chorale and the Bryn Mawr Festival Brass. Prelude begins at 4:15 p.m. Infant and toddler childcare available without reservations from 3:45-5:45 p.m. in the Education Building, Room 101.

### **CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE OF LESSONS & CAROLS.**

7:30 p.m., Sanctuary and Livestreamed. Carols and anthems led by BMPC's Sanctuary Choir and Mainline Musicians. The Rev. Dr. Agnes W. Norfleet will preach. Prelude begins at 7:10 p.m.

### **CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICE.**

10:00 a.m., Sanctuary and livestreamed. The Rev. Rebecca Kirkpatrick preaching. This service will be livestreamed on the church website, Facebook and YouTube.

[www.bmpc.org/livestream](http://www.bmpc.org/livestream)  
[www.facebook.com/brynmawrpres](http://www.facebook.com/brynmawrpres)  
[www.youtube.com/brynmawrpres](http://www.youtube.com/brynmawrpres)

# GATHERING OF GOD'S PEOPLE

PRELUDE

Improvisation

Jeffrey Brillhart

WELCOME

Agnes W. Norfleet

## † CALL TO WORSHIP

One: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;  
those who lived in a land of deep darkness, on them a light has shined.

**All: For the yoke of their burden, the weight across their shoulders,  
you have broken into pieces, O God, our Redeemer.**

One: For a child has been born for us, a Savior given to us;

**All: And he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting  
Father, Prince of Peace.**

## † HYMN 129

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

ES IST EIN' ROS'

## CALL TO CONFESSION

Rebecca Kirkpatrick

Show us your mercy, O Lord, and grant us your salvation. Hear our prayers  
for forgiveness so that truth shall spring up from the earth, and righteousness  
shall look down from heaven.

## PRAYER OF CONFESSION (in unison)

God of Mercy, we gather in this Advent Season to pray for ourselves, those we  
love, and the people of the world who live with the painful memories of loss.  
We admit we have often become cautious and self-centered amid the fears that  
surround us: the threat of illness, violence, turmoil and uncertainty. Forgive our  
lack of noticing the fear and pain of those to whom we could show compassion.  
We ask for strength today, courage for tomorrow and peace for the journey,  
in the name of Jesus who shares our life in joy and sorrow, in death and  
resurrection.

*A moment of silence for personal reflection and confession.*

## ASSURANCE OF PARDON

One: The promise of scripture is this: See, the home of God is among mortals.  
God will dwell with them and they will be God's people. God will wipe  
every tear from their eyes.

**All: The former things have passed away, and the One seated upon the  
throne says: See I am making all things news.**

One: In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

**All: Let us forgive one another and be at peace.**

† Please stand, if able.

**ANTHEM**

Sheep May Safely Graze  
Misoon Ghim, mezzo-soprano;  
Hannah Silverberg and Klaus Volpert, flute

J.S. Bach

Sheep may safely graze and pasture in a watchful shepherd's sight. Those who rule with wisdom guiding bring to hearts a peace abiding bless a land with joy made bright.

**PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD****THE MAGNIFICAT**

Luke 1:46-55

Rebecca Kirkpatrick

**A READING**

Poem for the Winter Solstice

By Sally Atkins

This was how winter found us - lonely for light,  
And the sounds of the birds, and listening for voices of flowers.  
In the trembling silence of stars,  
Like trees we sent our roots deep into the ancient Earth.  
We stretched our long branches of arms toward the dark sky  
In search of light. And yet it was the darkness that healed us.  
Out of the silence sound was born.  
It was a music extending into the night.  
Out of the darkness light emerged.  
We saw faces filled with wonder. They were our own faces.  
We saw hands opening in a gesture of greeting.  
They were our own hands.  
Perhaps there is still hope for us,  
For we still know the old and holy ways.  
They are soft and slow like secrets within,  
Like words whispered in love. Like human breathing.  
Perhaps there is hope for us.  
For we are, all of us, scared and scarred, and sacred,  
Scared and scarred.... and Sacred.

**ANTHEM**                      “For, Behold, Darkness Shall Cover the Earth”                      G.F. Handel  
   “The People That Walked in Darkness”  
   Nicholas Provenzale, baritone

For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people:  
but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee. And  
the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.  
The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light. And they that dwell in  
the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.

**THE GOSPEL**                      Luke 2:1-7; Luke 23:50-56                      Agnes W. Norfleet  
  
One: The Word of the Lord.  
**All: Thanks be to God.**

**MEDITATION**                      *Wrapped and Laid because...*                      Agnes W. Norfleet

† **HYMN 110**                      Love Has Come                      BRING A TORCH

## RESPONSE TO THE WORD

**LITANY OF REMEMBERING**                      Brian K. Ballard

One: This first candle we light to remember those whom we have loved and  
lost. We pause to remember their names, their faces, their voices, the  
memory that binds us to them in life and in death, especially in this  
season of Advent and Christmas.

**All: O God, may your eternal love and peace surround them.** (Silence)

One: The second candle we light represents the wide range of losses we  
experience and grieve – broken relationships, the loss of health, jobs, faith  
that used to be certain, and dreams that have shattered.

**All: Heal, reconcile and renew us, as you lead us into a future of hope.**  
(Silence)

One: The third candle we light to remember the sadness we share with one  
another. We pause to remember the moments of disbelief, emptiness,  
anger and anxiety. We acknowledge our own misplaced priorities and our  
failures to work for the common good.

**All: May the dawn defeat the night, and light defeat darkness.** (Silence)

One: The fourth candle we light to remember God's promises and the gift of peace which the Christmas story offers the world. We remember those suffering the ravages of war, the forced migrations, the plight of hunger and homelessness. May the Christ, who shares human pain and suffering, lead us to new life and provide abundant life for all.

**All: Show us the way, and increase our faith that the darkness of this world will not overcome your light.** (Silence)

One: Jesus said, "I am the light of the World.

**All: Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but have the light of life." Amen.**

**INDIVIDUAL PRAYERS OF PETITION**

*Those who desire to add to the light shining in darkness, while offering personal prayers of petition or thanksgiving, are invited to come forward to the Communion Table and light a votive candle while the congregation remains seated and sings.*

<b>HYMN 144</b>	In the Bleak Midwinter	CRANHAM
<b>HYMN 145</b>	What Child is This?	GREENSLEEVES
<b>HYMN 150</b>	As With Gladness Men of Old	DIX

**PRAYER FOR THE PREPARATION OF CHRISTMAS** Brian K. Ballard

God of All Creation, you sent your Word to life among us, full of grace and truth. Give us grace to honor all that you have created in goodness. Teach us to care for all living things, as you care for us that the earth may be blessed with healing and peace. Now, let us go in thanksgiving, carrying the hope of your manger in our hearts, that we may bear Jesus' gifts of love and life. Amen.

† <b>HYMN 677</b>	The Day Thou Gavest, Lord, Is Ended	ST. CLEMENT
† <b>BENEDICTION</b>		Agnes W. Norfleet
<b>POSTLUDE</b>	Improvisation	Jeffrey Brillhart

# WORSHIP NOTES

## BULLETIN COVER

Detail from Epiphany © 2015 John August Swanson | Eyekons

## **Worship Staff**

**Agnes W. Norfleet**, Pastor

**Brian K. Ballard**, Associate Pastor for Pastoral Care & Senior Adults

**Leigh DeVries**, Associate Pastor for Youth & Their Families

**Rebecca Kirkpatrick**, Associate Pastor for Adult Education & Mission

**Rachel Pedersen**, Associate Pastor for Children & Family Ministry

**Franklyn C. Pottorff**, Associate Pastor for Congregational Life & Stewardship

**Jeffrey Brillhart**, Director of Music & Fine Arts

**Edward Landin Senn**, Assistant Director of Music

## **Contact Information**



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24/7 Answering Service for Pastoral Emergencies: 610-525-2821

The Middleton Center: 610-525-0766 • [info@middletoncenter.org](mailto:info@middletoncenter.org)

The Weekday School (Preschool): 610-525-2821, ext. 8840