**(Large Print)**

**Springfield Presbyterian Church (USA)**

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

A colorful stained glass window

Description automatically generated with low confidence

**December 19, 2021 - 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!** (Greeting)

**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.**

**LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE – LOVE**

A: God’s love is like an open door.

B: God’s love is the streetlight that guides us home.

A: God’s love is a warm bed to fall into.

B: God’s love is a table with room for you.

A: God’s love is a crackling fireplace.

B: God’s love is the sun that streams through the windows.

A: God’s love is the roof over our heads and the floor beneath our feet.

B: God’s love is a home for you and me, for neighbors and strangers, for family and friends, for enemies and partners.

A: God’s love is a home for all.

B: Today we light the candle of love to remind us of this truth.

A: May it burn brightly in this space and even brighter in our hearts.

B: Amen.

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

Leader: We are seeking—  
**People: A deeper faith, a place to belong, the feeling that God is here in this room.**

Leader: We are seeking—

**People: A joy that overflows, the movement of the Spirit, a hand to hold, when alone in the dark.**

Leader: We are seeking—

**People: The freedom to be, the courage to love, the conviction to act in the face of injustice.**

Leader: We are seeking,

**People: But here in this space, we are found. Take a deep breath. This is your sanctuary. God is here. We are found. Amen.**

**\* HYMN** *As with Gladness Men of Old*

As with gladness men of old did the guiding star behold;  
As with joy they hailed its light, leading onward, beaming bright;  
So, most gracious Lord, may we evermore be led to thee.

As with joyful steps they sped, Savior, to thy lowly bed,  
There to bend the knee before thee, whom heaven and earth adore;  
So may we with willing feet ever seek thy mercy seat.

As they offered gifts most rare at thy manger, rude and bare,  
So may we with holy joy, pure and free from sin’s alloy,  
All our costliest treasures bring, Christ, to thee, our heavenly king.

Holy Jesus, every day keep us in the narrow way;  
And when earthly things are past, bring our ransomed souls at last  
Where they need no star to guide, where no clouds thy glory hide.

**CALL TO CONFESSION**

Leader: Mary’s world turned upside down with the visit of an angel. This is a moment we can relate to, because over the course of the last year and a half, our world has seemed to turn upside down more than once. When those moments come, we hope to respond with grace; but more often than not, fear can get the best of us. So today we turn to God in prayer, asking for God’s guidance and grace in the places and moments we need it most. Let us pray together now...

**PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

**God of safe spaces, we wish we were more like Mary, who in the face of great change, went and sought help. She did not wait for help to find her; she walked to the shelter she needed. Too often we wait silently for the world to change around us instead of speaking up for the things we need. Forgive us for failing to care for ourselves the way you would care for us. Give us the courage to be more like Mary. God of safe places, we wish we were more like Elizabeth, who greeted Mary with laughter and contagious joy. How many people have crossed our doorstep and how many times have we failed to see them? Give us the courage of Mary, and the grace of Elizabeth. Gratefully we pray, amen.**

**SILENT PRAYERS OF CONFESSION**

**RESPONSE** *On Jordan’s Bank the Baptist’s Cry* (v. 2) Tune #430

Then cleansed be every life from sin; make straight the way for God within,

And let us all our hearts prepare for Christ to come and enter there.

**WORDS OF ASSURANCE**

Family of faith, even if we miss the person standing on our doorstep, even if we fail to care for ourselves the way God would care for us, even if we forget and ignore, turn away and shut down, God still loves us. There is nothing we can do to lose God’s love. Rest in this promise:

Leader: If we get lost,

**People: We will be found.**

Leader: If we mess up,

**People: We are forgiven.**

Leader: If we withhold love,   
**People: God is lavish in loving us. We are claimed. We are loved. We are forgiven. Thanks be to God. Amen.**

**\* MUSICAL RESPONSE OF PRAISE** *Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee*

All thy works with joy surround thee; earth and heaven reflect thy rays;

Stars and angels sing around thee, center of unbroken praise.

Field and forest, vale and mountain, flowery meadow, flashing sea,

Chanting bird and flowing fountain, call us to rejoice in thee.

**\* 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**

Holy God, we come to your Scripture today hoping that it will feel a bit like an open door, like Elizabeth welcoming Mary, like coming home. We want to fall into it. We want to find sanctuary here. We want to breathe easier just hearing these words. And we want to find ourselves laughing because this good news is just too good to keep inside. So hover close to us now, we pray. Open the door to our hearts so that we might find sanctuary in your words. Gratefully we pray, amen.

**FIRST SCRIPTURE LESSON** *Psalm 100*

1 Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth. 2 Worship the Lord with gladness; come into his presence with singing. 3 Know that the Lord is God. It is he that made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. 4 Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise. Give thanks to him, bless his name. 5 For the Lord is good; his steadfast love endures for ever, and his faithfulness to all generations.

**SECOND SCRIPTURE LESSON**  *Luke 1:39-55*

39In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, 40where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. 41When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the child leapt in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit 42and exclaimed with a loud cry, ‘Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. 43And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? 44For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leapt for joy. 45And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfilment of what was spoken to her by the Lord.’ 46And Mary said, ‘My soul magnifies the Lord, 47and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, 48for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; 49for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. 50His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. 51He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. 52He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; 53he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. 54He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, 55according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants for ever.’

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

**All: Thanks be to God.**

**SERMON** *Seeking Sanctuary* Rev. Becca Crate-Price

**THE RESPONSE TO THE WORD**

**\* HYMN** *Once in Royal David’s City*

Once in royal David’s city stood a lowly cattle shed,  
Where a mother laid her baby in a manger for his bed:  
Mary was that mother mild; Jesus Christ, her little child.

He came down to earth from heaven who is God and Lord of all,  
And his shelter was a stable, and his cradle was a stall;  
With the poor and meek and lowly, lived on earth our Savior holy.

Jesus is our childhood’s pattern; day by day like us he grew;  
He was little, weak and helpless; tears and smiles like us he knew;  
And he feels for all our sadness, and he shares in all our gladness.

And our eyes at last shall see him, through his own redeeming love;  
For that child so dear and gentle is our Lord in heaven above;  
And he leads his children on to the place where he is gone.

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

**ANTHEM** *Come Messiah!* By: Lloyd Larson

**PRESENTATION OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS**

**\*** PRAYER OF DEDICATION

**\* HYMN** *O Little Town of Bethlehem*

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!  
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by.  
Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light;  
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary and, gathered all above,  
While mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wondering love.  
O morning stars, together proclaim the holy birth,  
And praises sing to God the king, and peace to all on earth.

How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is given!  
So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of his heaven.  
No ear may hear his coming, but in this world of sin,  
Where meek souls will receive him, still the dear Christ enters in.

O holy child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray;  
Cast out our sin and enter in; be born in us today.  
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;  
O come to us; abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel!

**\* CHARGE AND BENEDICTION**

Leader: As you leave this service, your service begins: Comfort the homesick.

**People: Open your doors to others.**

Leader: Seek sanctuary.

**People: Be brave enough to go home by another way.**

Leader: And remember that here in God’s house, all are welcomed—so come back soon.

**People: In the name of our Foundation—God, Spirit, and Son— go in peace.**

**\* UNISON AMEN POSTLUDE**

**Sunday December 26, 2021 Lectionary – 1st Sunday of Christmas**

1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26; Psalm 148; Colossians 3:12-17; Luke 2:41-52

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

Today 12/19 Christmas Eve 12/24

Sunday Opener Beth Oates Ron Holmes

Greeters & Ushers Jim & Mary Steve & Donna

Rhodes Mazer

Lay Leader Dylan Vasbinder

**Announcements**

**Annual SERRV Sale:** Check your inbox for an email from SPC about the annual holiday SERRV sale! Orders can be placed online through the provided link, with 20% of total sales for SPC to send to the charitable cause of our choice. Happy shopping!

**Upcoming Worshipping Opportunities:**

**December 21** at 7:00 pm – The Longest Night (Zoom only)

Our Longest Night service speaks to the darkness that enfolds us in this time, whether that is grief, sorrow, or other challenges in this busy and hectic season.

**December 24** at 7:00 pm – Christmas Eve Lessons & Carols (in person and Zoom)

Join us as we celebrate Christ our Savior entering this world to redeem His beloved! We gather to remember the stories that brought Jesus here and reflect on where Jesus enters our lives here today.

**December 26** at 10:30 am – 1st Sunday of Christmas (Zoom only)

Join us in your PJ’s for a brief service of worship as we celebrate all that Christmas has brought us and look toward what we are called to do in response to such good news.

We are a congregation with big hearts for our church family and our community. There are several opportunities listed below for you, through the church, to make contributions:

**Supporting Past, Present, and Future Leaders—Christmas Joy**

The Christmas Joy Offering has been a cherished Presbyterian tradition since the 1930s. The Offering distributes gifts equally to the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions and to Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. The Assistance Program provides critical financial support to church workers and their families. Presbyterian-related schools and colleges provide education and leadership development while nurturing racial and ethnic heritage. This has been a Presbyterian commitment for nearly 140 years. Envelopes provided with the bulletin, or include memo note on your check to church. The offering will be officially received on **December 19**, anytime in December will be welcome.

**Mountain Manor, Maryland Treatment Centers, Buttercup Road, Sykesville----**Maryland Treatment Centers have 40 years of experience and provide a local chemical dependency residential treatment center in our community, Buttercup Road, Sykesville. The residents stay from three to six months, often arriving with nothing but the clothes on their back. We have committed to helping to maintain the supply of clothing. There are tags on our Christmas tree at church for those you would like to help. We are hoping to provide underwear for men and women, and jeans, sweats, hoodies, or T-shirts. Sizes vary widely so more unisex in style is helpful. Donations are inspected for logos, decals, or wording that would be inappropriate for this setting. A basket is provided in the Narthex for your **unwrapped** gifts. This collection will run at least through the end of December.

**Happy-Thon Holiday Event**

On behalf of Downtown Sykesville Connection, we are once again collecting donations to contribute to the annual Happy-Thon that was held on December 18 at 3:00 pm at the Sykesville Town House. With your generous donations, this organization is able to provide presents to children who may not receive any otherwise. This program will continue to nurture a sense of belonging and the emotional connection that are the pillars of a strong community. Donation envelopes are in each pew. Cash or checks payable to SPC will gladly be accepted. We thank you for opening up your hearts once again for this meaningful community event.

**Fellowship Reminder:** Following the Worship service, we will gather downstairs for fellowship, but will not have food and will continue to wear our masks. We, as a Session, have made this decision out of an abundance of caution and the desire to keep our family of Christ safe and healthy.

**Congregational Care / Mission & Outreach:** Do you know of a member or friend of our church family who is ill, needs prayers, would like call, a visit or a card, or might benefit from meal train? If so, please contact the Church Office (410-795-6152), Cathy Marsh (410-549-6916) or Diana Steppling (862-266-2242).

***Today:***

**Sunday December 19 – 4th Sunday of Advent**

10:30 am Worship

11:30 am Fellowship

***This Week:***

**Tuesday December 21 – The Longest Night**

7:00 pm Worship (Zoom only)

**Wednesday December 22**

6:15 – 7:15 pmBell Choir Practice

7:30 – 8:45 pm Adult Choir Practice

***Looking Ahead:***

**Friday December 24 – Christmas Eve**

7:00 pm Lessons & Carols (in person and Zoom)

**Sunday December 26 – 1st Sunday of Christmas**

10:30 am Worship (Zoom only)

Office Hours: Tuesday, Wednesday & Friday

**Springfield Presbyterian Church**

10:30 am Worship

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 Crate

**Email:** springfieldpastor@gmail.com

**Clerk of Session:** Sharon Pappas

**Minister of Music:** Linda Caviglia

**Accompanist/Organist:** Aaron Thacker

**Youth Group Coordinators:** Charles & Deb Sperling

**Sunday School Coordinator:** Connie Robinson

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