



Fourth Sunday of Advent

SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY

DECEMBER 24, 2023

10:30 A.M.

PEACE BE WITH YOU

As pastors of Catonsville Presbyterian Church, we know that this is a community of love, care, and true welcome. We pray that you will experience our hospitality and our delight in your presence.

Not only do we welcome you and your family, but we seek to welcome the full range of experiences, identities, and feelings that you carry. Our life together is often marked by a desire to thoughtfully engage God's world and our own humanity. We're compelled by the reality that the Christian life is often full of doubt, fear, loneliness, shortfalls, and uncertainty, in the same way that it can be full of beauty, belonging, love, and hope.

Whoever you are today, whoever you have been, and whoever you have yet to be: you are welcome in this space. We hope to meet you this morning, and if not, we hope to say hello in the coming days. If you are interested in learning more about our ministry at Catonsville Presbyterian Church, consider opening your phone's camera and following the QR



code on this page. We'll send a short email with some ways to get connected this week and in the weeks to come.

Once again, welcome. You are a beloved child of God.

Ken Kovacs

Pastor • kkovacs@catonsvillepres.org

Dorothy Boulton

Associate Pastor • dboulton@catonsvillepres.org

WELCOME TO WORSHIP

ABOUT OUR CONGREGATION

We actively engage our intellects and our hearts in what we believe to be true: that God's peace, justice, and radical love are good news for every corner of our lives. We seek to be a place of freedom and liberation, where people of all ages and backgrounds deepen their connection to God and others while making a tangible difference in our Catonsville community and throughout the world.

Rooted in this faith, our congregation proudly affirms the gifts, callings, and God-given identities of LGBTQIA+ members, friends, and guests. God invites all of us to explore and discover the person God has created and known before all time.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH MINISTRIES

Educational ministries are currently held on the second week of each month. These Second Sundays include childcare and youth programming beginning at 10:00 a.m. and multi-age church school for those in kindergarten through fifth grade. Visit catonsvillepres.org/ministries/families to learn more.

Today, you can find children's bulletins, books, and activities in the back of the sanctuary. The Fellowship Hall is available for families to use if desired. The service can be heard in the room and there's plenty of space for active children.

WELCOMING ALL GOD'S PEOPLE

Catonsville Presbyterian Church recognizes that people of all ages have varying abilities and needs. If you meet or see someone with differing needs, whether an adult or a child, please recognize that underlying conditions may occasionally cause behavior that might be misrepresented as inappropriate. Please reach out. Ask if there is a way you might assist and otherwise be understanding and supportive.

If you or a family member has special needs, please speak to one of the pastors or the Deacon of the Day. We want to fully appreciate each individual's gifts and talents and help you to feel a part of this faith community.

“The stress should not be on the ‘low estate’ but on the word ‘regarded.’ [Mary’s] low estate is not to be praised, but God’s regard, as when a prince gives his hand to a beggar, the meanness of the beggar is not to be praised, but the graciousness and goodness of the prince. The evil eye looks only on the reward and the result of the humility. True humility does not know that it is humble.”

Martin Luther (1483-1546) on the Magnificat

ORDER OF WORSHIP

Service for the Lord's Day

GATHERING AROUND THE WORD

PRELUDE

Pastoral Symphony, George Frideric Handel

† CALL TO WORSHIP

(The congregation responds aloud with the bold text)

Look! The young woman is with child;
She will call him Emmanuel, for God is with us.

A ruler will come from Bethlehem,
And he will be the shepherd of peace.

Come, let us worship God!

† HYMN # 109

“Blest Be the God of Israel”

PRAYER OF ADORATION

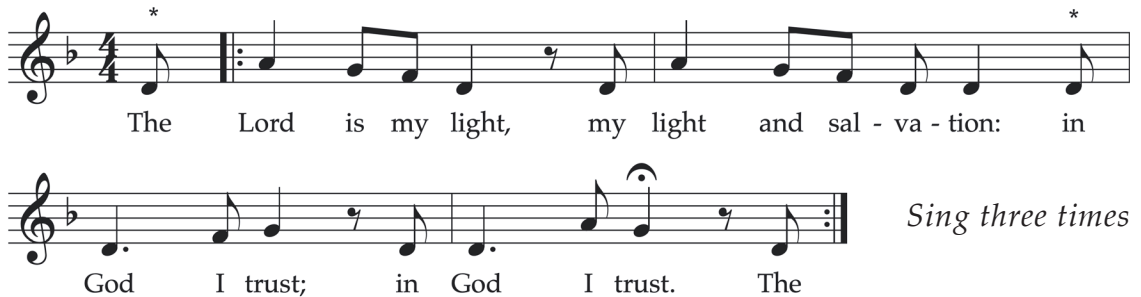
LIGHTING OF THE FOURTH ADVENT CANDLE

Carl and Agnes Schneider

† Please rise in body or in spirit

RESPONSE: HYMN # 842

“The Lord Is My Light”



The Lord is my light, my light and sal - va - tion: in
God I trust; in God I trust. The

Sing three times

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Merciful God, as we watch and wait for signs of your expansive love,
forgive our narrow thinking.

As we repent in the wilderness with John,
we confess that we often lack the imagination to testify to the coming light.

As we visit the home of Elizabeth,
we lament our loss of wonder and our failure to recognize miracles among us.

Even as we hear the witness of angels and the shepherds,
we confess that we do not make haste to go and see the Christ.

Forgive our apathy and small-mindedness.

When the wait is over and all is finished,

open our minds to recognize the strength and wisdom of Christ, God with us.

Silent prayer of confession

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Hear this good news: in Christ, there is strength and wisdom,
expansive love and everlasting grace.

We are forgiven and being transformed
to go and proclaim the wonder
of the one who is coming.

Come, Lord Jesus. Come.

† **RESPONSE OF PRAISE: HYMN # 654** “In the Lord I’ll Be Ever Thankful”

Sing two times

In the Lord I'll be ev - er thank - ful; in the Lord I will re -
joyce! Look to God; do not be a - fraid. Lift up your
voice - es; the Lord is near. Lift up your voice - es; the Lord is near.

† **PASSING OF THE PEACE**

LIFE IN COMMUNITY



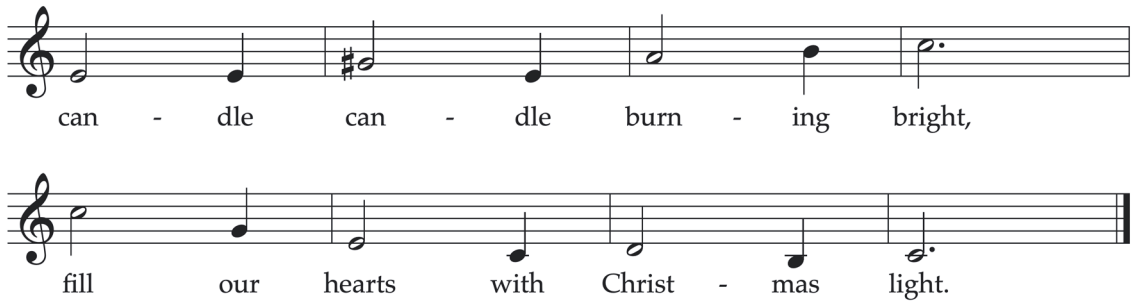
Come in your faith, and in your doubt! If you are joining us for the first time, we invite you to share your information by scanning the QR code. We would love to connect.

Upcoming events and recent announcements are available in the back of the bulletin and on our website at catonsvillepres.org.

PROCLAIMING THE WORD

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Light the Ad - vent can - dle, four:
Think of joy for - ev - er - more;
Christ Child in a sta - ble born,
gift of love that Christ - mas morn.
Can - dle, can - dle, burn - ing bright,
shin - ing in the cold win - ter night;



PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Saving God, liberate us from the sins which distort our vision and disrupt our hearing as we approach your Word. Standing firm in your love, let us open ourselves to the truth you reveal to us today. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26
Pages 545-546 of the Old Testament

HYMN # 101

“No Wind at the Window”

SCRIPTURE

Luke 1:46b-55
Page 57 of the New Testament

MEDITATION

“On the Threshold of the Turning”
Ken Kovacs

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

CALL TO OFFERING

OFFERING OF TITHES AND GIFTS



† Please rise in body or in spirit

OFFERTORY

O Holy Night, Adolphe Charles Adam

† **DOXOLOGY # 607**

“Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow”

**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**

Holy God, your love is magnified in the gifts of your Son, whom you so freely share with us. Bless these gifts that we offer to lift up the lowly and fill the hungry in your coming reign of justice and peace; in Christ’s name. Amen.

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND
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.**

† **HYMN # 347**

“Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence”

† **BENEDICTION**

Magnify the Lord and rejoice, for nothing is impossible with God.

And the blessing of God, who creates, redeems, and restores, be with you now and always.

Come, Lord Jesus. Come!

† **POSTLUDE**

Angels We Have Heard on High,
setting by Dale Wood

WORSHIP PARTICIPANTS

Dorothy Boulton
Associate Pastor

Keith and Kathy Glennan
A/V Production

David Hutton
Liturgist

Wendy Johnston
Organist and Assistant
Director of Music

Greg Knauf
Director of Music

Ken Kovacs
Pastor

Vickie Lord
Social media support

Page Peercy
Soloist

Carl and Agnes Schneider
Candle Lighters

SOURCES

Image: “The Magnificat.” Stained glass window. Church of Reconciliation, Taizé Community, Taizé, France.

Call to Worship: Liturgy, Music, Preaching, and the Arts, Presbyterian Church (USA) Office of Theology and Worship (Louisville: Presbyterian Publishing Corporation, 2023).

Glory to God: The Presbyterian Hymnal (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2013).

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ABOUT THE CRÈCHE

The hand-carved, olivewood crèche was made by Palestinian Christians in Bethlehem (Israel). Ken Kovacs brought it back from Bethlehem after being on a Holy Land pilgrimage tour in 2007 that was hosted by Princeton Theological Seminary and the Cousins Foundation. It was purchased from gifts made to the Memorial Fund.

LEARNING & GROWING

Access the articles for Adult Education at catonsvillepres.org/belonging

How to Know a Person

Sunday, January 7 | Led by Ken Kovacs | 9:00 a.m. in the Library

David Brooks' *How to Know a Person* is a book for our times. With the increasing divisiveness of American society and growing isolation many are experiencing these days, people are searching for communion and community, yet don't know how to connect. "People want to connect," Brooks writes, "Above almost any other need, human beings long to have another person look into their faces with love and acceptance. The issue is that we lack practical knowledge about how to give one another the attention we crave. Some days it seems like we have intentionally built a society that gives people little guidance on how to perform the most important activities of life."

Perils and Promise of the Pulpit

Sunday, January 21 | Led by Ken Kovacs | 9:00 a.m. in the Library

Thomas Long, the "dean" of American Protestant preachers, former professor of preaching at Princeton Seminary and Candler Divinity School at Emory, wrote an essay in *The Presbyterian Outlook*, which has received a lot of attention: *The Perilous and Promising Pulpit*.

Long believes, "In a new and disturbing way, preaching has become perilous." But there's room for promise when we remember what is really going on when a congregation faithfully and courageously listens for the Word of God.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Church Office Hours

In observance of Christmas, the church office is closed and will reopen at 9 a.m. on Thursday, December 28.

Called to Serve

Do you feel the Spirit nudging you to take up a leadership position at CPC? Do you feel called to serve on the Session or Deacons? What about the Child Care Council or the Envision board? Is there someone you think would make a wonderful Elder or Deacon, someone with the gifts and skills to work on the Council or with Envision? Nominate someone or yourself using the form found at catonsvillepres.org/belonging. Questions? See Melissa Lambdin, chair of the Nominating Committee.

Church Library

The Peace & Justice and Dismantling Racism committees are pleased to announce that we now have a new resource library. This is similar to a “little free library,” so continue to bring in books and put them on the shelves. You’re also invited to take books and begin circulating ideas. When contributing, please donate books that fit the broad theme of education on diversity, dismantling racism, social and structural change, environment, community building and revitalization. There are books for all ages.

EVENTS THIS WEEK

Day	Event	Location/time	Contact
Today	Worship	Sanctuary, 10:30 a.m.	Church office office@catonsvillepres.org
	Family Christmas Eve	Sanctuary, 4 p.m.	Church office office@catonsvillepres.org
	Candlelight Christmas Eve	Sanctuary, 8 p.m.	Church office office@catonsvillepres.org
Tues.	Needlework Group	Zoom, 10:30 a.m.	Cindy Gunderson cinron.md@gmail.com
Next Sun.	First Sunday of Christmas Carol Sing	Sanctuary, 10:30 a.m.	Church office office@catonsvillepres.org

PLEDGE UPDATE

			2023	2024
<p>“Thank you for your amazing response to the 2024 stewardship campaign. We are so grateful for your generosity.” — Jadie Mayes and Keith Glennan, <i>pledge secretaries</i></p>		Less than \$1,000	8	19
		\$1,000 - \$2,000	11	21
		\$2,000 - \$3,000	11	21
		\$3,000 - \$5,000	9	9
		\$5,000 - \$7,500	8	12
Total amount pledged	\$318,733	\$371,594	6	3
Average pledge amt.	\$5,402	\$4,039	6	7

ADVENT & CHRISTMAS WORSHIP AT CATONSVILLE PRESBYTERIAN

Family Christmas Eve Service

December 24 | 4:00 p.m.

Candlelight Christmas Eve Service

December 24 | 8:00 p.m.

First Sunday of Christmas Carol Sing

December 31 | 10:30 a.m.



Catonsville Presbyterian Church

1400 Frederick Rd., Catonsville MD 21228

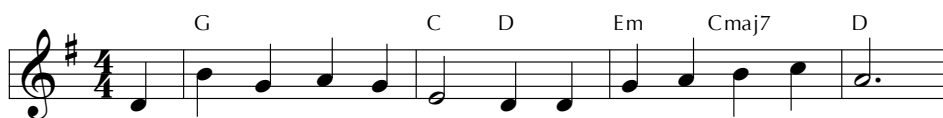
catonsvillepres.org • (410) 747-6180

@CatonsvillePres on Facebook, Instagram and YouTube

Please note that today's service is streamed.

109 Blest Be the God of Israel

Song of Zechariah



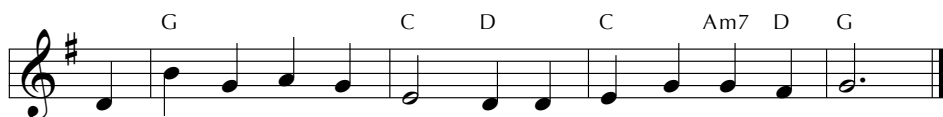
1 Blest be the God of Is - rael, who comes to set us free;
 2 God from the house of Da - vid a child of grace has given;
 3 On those who sit in dark - ness the sun be - gins to rise,



who vis - its and re - deems us, who grants us lib - er - ty.
 a Sav - ior comes a - mong us to raise us up to heaven.
 the dawn - ing of for - give - ness up - on the sin - ner's eyes.



The proph - ets spoke of mer - cy, of free - dom and re - lease;
 Be - fore him goes the her - ald, fore - run - ner in the way,
 God guides the feet of pil - grims a - long the paths of peace.



God shall ful - fill that prom - ise and bring the peo - ple peace.
 the proph - et of sal - va - tion, the har - bin - ger of day.
 O bless our God and Sav - ior with songs that nev - er cease!

This 20th-century British paraphrase of the Song of Zechariah (Luke 1:68–79) broadens the implications of what John the Baptist's father says in order to affirm that God's work is ongoing. The tune is named for the composer's oldest sister, who was his first piano teacher.

101 No Wind at the Window

1 No wind at the win - dow, no knock on the door;
 2 "O Mar - y, O Mar - y, don't hide from my face.
 3 "This child must be born that the king - dom might come:
 4 No pay - ment was prom - ised, no prom - is - es made;

no light from the lamp - stand, no foot on the floor;
 Be glad that you're fa - vored and filled with God's grace.
 sal - va - tion for man - y, de - struc - tion for some;
 no wed - ding was dat - ed, no blue - print dis - played.

no dream born of tired - ness, no ghost raised by fear:
 The time for re - deem - ing the world has be - gun,
 both end and be - gin - ning, both mes - sage and sign;
 Yet Mar - y, con - sent - ing to what none could guess,

just an an - gel and a wom - an and a voice in her ear.
 and you are re - quest - ed to moth - er God's Son."
 both vic - tor and vic - tim, both yours and di - vine."
 re - plied with con - vic - tion, "Tell God I say, Yes."

This 20th-century retelling of the Annunciation (Luke 1:26-38) effectively incorporates characteristic features of the folksong style its Irish tune requires, especially in the lists of "no" and "both." The tune is named for a many-talented Irish saint of the 6th century.

Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence 347

Capo 3: (Bm)
Dm(G) (D)
B \flat F(Bm) (C)
Dm E \flat 

1 Let all mor - tal flesh keep si - lence, and with fear and
 2 King of kings, yet born of Mar - y, as of old on
 3 Rank on rank the host of heav - en spreads its van-guard
 4 At his feet the six - winged ser - aph, cher - u - bim, with

(G) (F \sharp) (G) (D) (Em)
B \flat A B \flat F Gm

trem - bling stand; pon - der noth - ing earth - ly
 earth he stood, Lord of lords, in hu - man
 on the way, as the Light of light de -
 sleep - less eye, veil their fac - es to the

(Bm) (C) (G) (D)
Dm E \flat B \flat F

mind - ed, for with bless - ing in his hand
 ves - ture, in the bod - y and the blood,
 scend - eth from the realms of end - less day,
 pres - ence, as with cease - less voice they cry,

(B) (Em) (Bm) (A)
D Gm Dm C

Christ our God to earth de - scend - eth,
 he will give to all the faith - ful
 that the powers of hell may van - ish
 "Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia,

(Bm) (Em) (F \sharp m) (Bm)
Dm Gm Am Dm

our full hom - age to de - mand.
 his own self for heaven - ly food.
 as the shad - ows clear a - way.
 al - le - lu - ia, Lord most high!"

The flowering of English hymnody in the 19th century included the rediscovery, translation, and versification of ancient Christian hymns, such as this text from one of the earliest existing Christian liturgies. It is set here to an adaptation of a 17th-century French melody.