

# THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF LANSING



Martini, Simone, 1283-1344, Lippo Memmi. Annunciation with St. Margaret and St. Ansanus, Vanderbilt Divinity Library

510 W. Ottawa Street ■ Lansing, Michigan 48933

(517) 482-0668 [www.lansingfirstpres.com](http://www.lansingfirstpres.com)

Facebook – Lansing First Presbyterian

Church Office Hours (M-F) 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 & 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

# SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY

Dec. 24, 2023 10:00 a.m.

Fourth Sunday in Advent

## WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

*In order to maintain our worship environment, please turn off your cell phones. Thank you.*

## PRELUDE

Sergei Kvitko

## CALL TO WORSHIP

Christopher Venetis

Forever is a very long time.

**We will sing of God's steadfast love forever.**

Forever is a very long time.

**God's faithfulness is as firm as the heavens.**

Forever is a very long time.

**We will trust God forever.**

**Let us worship God!**

**++HYMN #347 [GTG]** Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence

*The flowering of English hymnody in the 19th century included the rediscovery, translation, and verification 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, PICARDY.*

## LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH

Paul Clifton

### LOVE

**We sing the response:**

**84[GTG]** *Creator of the stars of night, your people's everlasting light,*

*O Christ, Redeemer of us all, We pray you hear us when we call.*

## SERVICE OF RENEWAL

Call to Confession

Christopher Venetis

Unison Prayer of Confession

**An angel spoke to Mary: "Do not be afraid!"**

**And yet, O Lord, we find ourselves paralyzed**

++indicates to stand in body or spirit

**by fear of what we do not know.  
Forgive us of our sins, O Lord,  
and give us the faith of Mary to respond to your grace  
with lives of grateful praise.  
Let us hear the good news that she first heard:  
Light is breaking. Love is coming.  
The world is about to turn!**

Assurance of Pardon

Christopher Venetis

Every valley is lifted up; every mountain, made low.  
Now the glory of the Lord is revealed,  
for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.  
In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!  
**Thanks be to God.**

++Response to Forgiveness #87 [GTG]

***"Comfort, comfort now my people; tell of peace!" So says our God.  
"Comfort those who sit in darkness, mourning under sorrow's load.  
To my people now proclaim that my pardon waits for them!  
Tell them that their sins I cover, and their warfare now is over."***

**++PASSING THE PEACE OF CHRIST**

Christopher Venetis

May the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.  
**And also with you.**

**#757 [GTG] (verse one)**

***Dona nobis pacem. Dona nobis pacem.***

**CHILDREN'S MOMENT**

Ms. Megan

**PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION**

Christopher Venetis

Holy God, our hope and strength,  
by the power of your Spirit  
prepare the way in our hearts  
for the coming of your Word,  
so that we may see the glorious signs

of your promise fulfilled;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**OLD TESTAMENT LESSON** Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26

Christopher Venetis

<sup>1</sup>I will sing of your steadfast love, O LORD, forever; with my mouth I will proclaim your faithfulness to all generations. <sup>2</sup>I declare that your steadfast love is established forever; your faithfulness is as firm as the heavens. <sup>3</sup>You said, "I have made a covenant with my chosen one, I have sworn to my servant David: <sup>4</sup>I will establish your descendants forever, and build your throne for all generations." Selah

<sup>19</sup>Then you spoke in a vision to your faithful one, and said: "I have set the crown on one who is mighty, I have exalted one chosen from the people. <sup>20</sup>I have found my servant David; with my holy oil I have anointed him; <sup>21</sup>my hand shall always remain with him; my arm also shall strengthen him. <sup>22</sup>The enemy shall not outwit him, the wicked shall not humble him.

<sup>23</sup>I will crush his foes before him and strike down those who hate him.

<sup>24</sup>My faithfulness and steadfast love shall be with him; and in my name his horn shall be exalted. <sup>25</sup>I will set his hand on the sea and his right hand on the rivers.

<sup>26</sup>He shall cry to me, 'You are my Father, my God, and the Rock of my salvation!'

The Word of the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

**CHORAL ANTHEM** "When Angels Sing" by Mark A. Miller, Sue Carey, soloist

*Within each lifetime an angel's voice is heard; celestial sounds pierce time and space.*

*For just a moment, the breathless beauty of heaven's song reveals God's grace.*

*Peace in our hearts, peace when angels sing, peace. E still and listen heart.*

*Listen, listen.*

*When angels sing.*

*Despite our sorrow, the dawn brings life anew; and raging storms begin to cease.*

*For just a moment, the breathless beauty of heaven's song brings us peace.*

*Peace in our hearts, peace when angels sing, peace. E still and listen heart.*

*Listen, listen.*

*When angels sing.*

**GOSPEL LESSON**

Luke 1:26-55

Rev. Stanley Jenkins

**The Birth of Jesus Foretold**

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, 'Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you.' But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with

God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.' Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be, since I am a virgin?' The angel said to her, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God.' Then Mary said, 'Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.' Then the angel departed from her.

### Mary Visits Elizabeth

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leapt in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, 'Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leapt for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfilment of what was spoken to her by the Lord.'

### Mary's Song of Praise

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

**SERMON**

Rev. Stanley Jenkins

**++HYMN #129 [GTG] Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming**

*Although the early copies of this 15th-century German text include many more stanzas than are printed here, the simpler, shorter form has much to commend it. This early 17th-century harmonization of the traditional chorale melody in its and rewards singing in parts.*

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

Rev. Stanley Jenkins

The Lord be with you

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

(Prayers continue)

Lord's Prayer (**unison**)

**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.**

**Choral Amen #600[GTG]**

***Amen, Amen. Amen, amen, amen.***

**PRESENTING OUR GIFTS**

**OFFERTORY ANTHEM "Gabriel's Message" arr Gail Lund**

*The angel Gabriel from heaven came. His wings as drifted snow, his eyes as flame.  
All hail said he, thou blessed mother Mary, most highly favored lady, Gloria.  
For known a blessed mother thou shalt be. All generations laud and honor thee.  
Thy Son shall be Emmanuel by seers foretold. Most highly favored lady, Gloria.  
Then gentle Mary meekly bowed her head. "To me be as it pleaseth God." She said.  
"My soul shall loud and magnify His holy name." Most highly favored lady, Gloria.  
Of her Emmanuel the Christ was born in Bethlehem all on a Christmas morn.  
And Christian folk thru-out the world shall ever say, most highly favored lady, Gloria.*

## Offering

**++ Doxology** (Tune of #145 [GTG] Greensleeves)

***We bring our gifts to celebrate your gift of incarnation:  
The Word made flesh in Jesus Christ, the Lord of all creation.  
Praise, praise to you, O God, and to your Son, forever be;  
Praise Holy Spirit, praise the blessed Trinity.***

## Prayer of Dedication

**++HYMN #144 [GTG]** In the Bleak Midwinter

*Thought this text describes winter weather in England rather than in Palestine, the poet is using familiar surroundings as a means of making the Nativity more immediate and personal. The tune name honors a Gloucestershire village near the composer's (Gustav Holst) birthplace in Cheltenham (CRANHAM).*

## BENEDICTION

**BLEST BE THE TIE 306[GTG]**

***Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love:  
The fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above.***

## POSTLUDE

Sergei Kvitko

\*PLEASE BE AWARE THAT WE USE CAMERAS TO BROADCAST VIDEO OF OUR CHURCH SERVICES. Licensed music streamed with permission under ONE LICENSE, License #A-731144. All rights reserved."

## INFORMATION FOR THE DAY

Participants in this morning's service:

Liturgist	Christopher Venetis
Organist/Pianist	Sergei Kvitko
Director of Music	Megan Hagle
Dir. Church Life/Comm. Outreach	Prince Solace
Pastor	Rev. Stanley Jenkins
Bell Choir Director	Darin Showalter

Concerns of the congregation:

In care facilities: Jean Dietrich (Story Point of Grand Ledge)  
Dianne Rector (Rosewood Adult Foster Care- DeWitt)

**LARGE PRINT BULLETINS** are available.

**FLOWER CHART** There are many dates available on the chart to celebrate special days in our church family. The new price is \$50. Simply sign up on the chart (in the office hall), indicate the occasion that you would like celebrated or honored (birthday, anniversary or memorial), write a check to the church and give it to Betsy, and we will order for you. If you would like to purchase or provide a silk arrangement for use when we don't have a fresh arrangement scheduled, please see Judy Whitman. Thank you! - Worship Committee.

**"YOUR SUPPORT IS VITAL TO OUR MISSION! PLEASE SCAN THIS CODE WITH YOUR SMARTPHONE TO GIVE SECURELY ONLINE."** Take a picture with your phone and it will take you to the website to make a donation.



**MORE LIGHT**  
PRESBYTERIANS





## THIS WEEK AT A GLANCE



### **Sunday, December 24 Christmas Eve**

10:00 a.m. Morning Worship – SANCTUARY  
12:30 p.m. Victory in Jesus Ministries Worship – CHAPEL  
7:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Service - SANCTUARY

### **Monday, December 25 Merry Christmas – Church offices closed for the week.**



### **Tuesday, December 26 Church office closed**

### **Wednesday, December 27 Church office closed**

5:30 p.m. Yoga – Yoga room

### **Thursday, December 28 Church office closed**

7:00 p.m. Victory in Jesus Bible study – LIBRARY

### **Friday, December 29 Church office closed**

5:30 p.m. Yoga – Yoga room

### **Saturday, December 30**

### **Sunday, December 31**

10:00 a.m. Morning Worship – SANCTUARY  
12:30 p.m. Victory in Jesus Ministries Worship – CHAPEL

# CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

**Pledge envelopes now available** in Molly Grove Chapel by the windows.

ACT UGANDA THANKS YOU for your generous support of our Maverick Leadership Scholarship on Giving Tuesday. Now, in the spirit of giving during this Christmas Season, we are seeking funds to help us light up the ACT Resource Center (ARC). The ARC is a gathering place for Muko Sub-County residents and the Uniquely Uganda Handcrafters, as well as office space for the six ACT Staff Members. To ensure reliable power, the ARC uses a solar power system as back-up to the power grid. However, the original solar system is old, making a new system necessary. We are seeking funds, before the end of the year, to help make this happen. The cost of the new solar system is \$4000. If you would like to help, donations can be made payable to ACT Uganda, indicate Solar Power in the memo line of your check, and mail it to: ACT Uganda, P. O. Box 2565, Midland MI. 48641. You can also donate online by visiting our website ([actuganda.org](http://actuganda.org)), choose the Donation page, and select "ACT Resource Center Facility" as your program choice. If you have any questions about this project, please contact Bill Busch at [wfbusch@gmail.com](mailto:wfbusch@gmail.com). As always, we thank you for your kind and vital support of ACT Uganda!

## ADULT FORUM

(11:30-12:30 in Litten Hall downstairs or on Zoom).  
(Childcare can be available through this time.)  
Children's Faith Formation also happening.

Jan. 7

No Class, help undecorate the church

Jan. 14

Slavery to Freedom Art Installation at MSU  
Presenter: Mila Lynn

Jan. 21

Sister City in Japan  
Presenter: Yuta Mastubara