



December 21, 2025, 10:30 am
4th Sunday of Advent

Welcome to worship! Led by the Holy Spirit, we glorify God, nurture the faith with each other, and witness the fullness of Christ's love in the world. Beyond the pews, we hope you will grow in faith with us on Sunday mornings and throughout the week. Our weekly announcements are e-mailed each Wednesday and posted online. Printed copies are available at the entrance.



Children are welcome in the Sanctuary throughout the service and are encouraged to borrow activity bags at the entrance with children's bulletins and other materials to engage in worship. Childcare is available for infants through 4-year-olds in the nursery, which is located on the 1st floor of the Education Building.

Assisted listening devices are available at the Princess Anne Street side entrance. Restrooms are located underneath the Sanctuary, accessed via the stairs off the porch on the Princess Anne Street side or elevator, or in the Education Building next to the offices or kitchen, both with elevator access. Our service is livestreamed via YouTube.

We are glad you are here as we give glory to God together!

810 Princess Anne Street, Fredericksburg, VA 22401

ORDER OF WORSHIP

✠ We rise in body or spirit.

We say or sing words in bold together.

GATHERING

Prelude

Ring in Exaltation!
Jubilate Ringers

Douglas E. Wagner

Welcome and Announcements

Gathering Prayer

God-with-us, we remember in this moment we are not alone. Here in worship – we pray together, we stand together, we sing together, we listen together. When life gives us reason to grieve, to fear, or to worry, we gather together and remember we are not alone, for you are our Emmanuel. Amen.

Introit

Keep Your Lamps
Youth Choir

Traditional spiritual

Lighting the Advent Candles

The Youth Group

In a world full of fear, where do you see the presence of love?

We see love all around us.

We see love when people hold open the door, in a warm embrace, a homemade casserole, a phone call after a long day, in random acts of kindness and intentional acts of empathy.

Even in a fearful world, love is all around us.

Today we light the candle of love as a reminder of this good news.

May this flicker of light help us remember that even in a fearful world, love is here.

Love is world-changing. Love is shining bright.

Thanks be to God for a love like that!

✠Hymn 105

People, Look East

✠Prayer of Confession

Liturgist: Mary Katherine Greenlaw

Loving God, we confess that we often make mistakes. When we are afraid, we abandon each other, live in isolation, and allow fear to

envelop us. Yet in our imperfection, you offer us grace, calling us to take a deep breath and start again. Thank you for this gift of mercy. Help us accept your grace and extend it to one another, that we may move forward into solidarity through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

✠ Assurance of Pardon

This is the good news of the gospel: God offers us a way forward.

We are forgiven and loved. Thanks be to God!

✠ Joyful Response (Hymn 113, refrain)

Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!

✠ Peace and Greeting

The peace of Christ be with you. **And also with you.**

HEARING THE WORD OF GOD

Prayer for Illumination

Scripture Readings: *Isaiah 41:5-10*

p. 818 in the pew Bible

Psalms 80:1-7, 17-19

p. 665 in the pew Bible

Anthem

I Would Have Been Surprised, Too
Covenant Choir

Don Schlosser

Moment with the Children

Anthem

The Shepherds' Lamb

Boersma/Forrest

Tina Christie, Flute; Brendan Shirk, Oboe

A stable bare, a starlit sky, and under Heaven's watchful eye a miracle in manger lay, the Lamb of God upon a bed of hay. The first news of this glorious birth was told to those of little worth, who left their flocks, as angels said, to find the Lamb of God in manger bed. The shepherds paused at stable door, looked on the Lamb and in Him saw their own good Shepherd, born a Lamb, themselves the flock within the Shepherd's hand. With shepherds gaze in wonder on the mystery of Heaven's plan; The shepherd, born to live with us, is born to die for us, the shepherds' Lamb.

Scripture Reading: *Matthew 1:18-25*

p. 1 in the pew Bible

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

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

✠ Hymn 834

Precious Lord, Take My Hand

*Precious Lord, take my hand; lead me on, help me stand
I am tired, I am weak, I am worn.
Through the storm, through the night, lead me on to the light;
take my hand, precious Lord, lead me home.*

*When my way grows drear, precious Lord, linger near;
when my life is almost gone,
hear my cry, hear my call, hold my hand lest I fall;
take my hand, precious Lord, lead me home.*

✠ Affirmation of Faith

**We have seen the valley. We have seen a sky without stars.
We have seen the longest night, and *still* we believe.
We believe in a with-us God. We believe in the hope of tomorrow.
We believe that good news is louder than fear.
We believe this good news is for all people.**

**So even when our knees shake, even when our voice trembles,
even when fear is all around us, we will hold onto that good news.
We will reach for each other. We will look for God in our midst.
We will sing songs of joy. We will proclaim: *Unto us, love is born.*
We have seen the longest night, and we have seen unimaginable love.
So *still*, we believe. Amen.**

Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer

Natasha Taylor

... forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors ...

Presentation of Offerings

Gifts, tithes, and offerings may be placed in the plates at the Sanctuary entrance. We also give thanks to God for offerings given via mail and online at fredericksburgpc.org/give.

✠ Song of Praise (Hymn 143, verse 4)

***All creation, join in praising God the Father, Spirit, Son,
evermore your voices raising to the eternal Three in One:
come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ,
the newborn king!***

✠ Prayer of Dedication

SENDING

✠Hymn 110

Love Has Come

during the hymn, children and youth are dismissed to the Undercroft for vespers rehearsal

✠Charge and Benediction

✠Postlude

The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came arr. Anna Laura Page
Join us this evening at 5:00 pm for our Christmas Vespers service.



Serving in Worship Today:

Choirmasters: Mary Ann & Larry Casey

Organist: Amy Shirk

Ushers: Linda Benn, Diane Peterson

Elevator Assistant: Barry Hall

Sanctuary Guild: Joan Darby, Maryann Piersall

Videographers: Vicky Wilder, Ed Foresman

Church Family News

We pray for: Tom Lewis, Dick Szymanski

We continue to pray for: Carole Fariss, Kaci LeFebre, Mary Lowman

Liturgy by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org.

People, Look East—Text: Eleanor Farjeon, 1928, alt ©1960; David Higham Associates, Ltd; Music: French folk melody; harm. Martin Shaw; ©1928;

Oxford University Press

Angels We Have Heard on High-- Text: French carol; arr. James Chadwick 1860, alt.; Music: French Carol; arr. Edward Shippen Barnes, 1937;

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The Shepherd's Lamb; Forrest; Beckenhorst Press; ©2015

Precious Lord, Take My Hand—Text: Thomas A. Dorsey, 1938; Music: George N. Allen, 1844; arr. Thomas A. Dorsey, ©1939;

Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp.

Love Has Come – Text: Ken Bible, Music: French melody; arr. Eric T. Myers, 2012; © 1996; LWhymns.com (admin. Music Services)

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