



**Carrollton Presbyterian Church**  
*A Heart In The City*

# **Worship for the Lord's Day**

## **Fourth Sunday in Advent**

### **December 21, 2025**

#### **11:00 a.m.**



*In Too Deep*  
by Nicolette Faison  
Inspired by Matthew 1:18-25  
30"x40" Acrylic and marker on canvas

## **Centering Moment**

I have struggled to sit with Joseph and how he processes all of this change with his new wife. Somehow life is always in alignment with the text, and now, as I process a divorce, I think more often of what it would feel like for someone else to come in and try to fit into my established family system. This made me think of a Joseph who can't sleep well at night, as his mind is uneasy with the words of Gabriel in his ear. I wanted Joseph to have an uncomfortable sleep form with a clenched fist that shows us he is tense even while he dreams. His foot is raised up in a way that looks almost as if he could pop up at any moment....We don't see Joseph often in holy art. We receive the occasional holy family portrait, which is often not detailed, but Joseph does not really get his own place in the story. He is almost like the forgotten father after Jesus comes of age, so his time is really now. I don't think his position needs to be a cornerstone for the birth story; however, as my own life changes, I can appreciate the importance of his devotion and obedience to God.

-Rev. Nicolette Faison

### **Bulletin indications:**

\* indicates standing in body or rising in spirit as able.

**Bold text** indicates words spoken by the whole congregation.

# Preparing to Worship God

**Tolling of the Bell**

**Welcome and Announcements**

**Prelude**

O, Come, O, Come  
Emmanuel

Anne Krentz Organ

## Gathering Around God's Word

### \*Call to Worship

Here in worship—

**we pray together,**

we stand together,

**we sing together,**

we listen together.

**Here in worship—**

**we are not alone.**

So when life gives you reason to grieve, to fear, or to worry,  
remember this moment.

**We are not alone.**

Let us worship our with-us God.

**\*Hymn 107**

Awake! Awake,  
and Greet the New Morn

REJOICE, REJOICE

**Advent Candle Lighting**

20s and 30s Group

**Hymn of Preparation**

Advent Candles

Dr. Angela Saunders

*refrain and verse 4 - love, then refrain again*

*(See Pew Pockets)*

### \*Call to Confession

### \*Prayer of Confession

#### and Assurance of God's Forgiveness

When you were afraid, did I stay by your side?

Did I offer my hand, or did I leave you alone?

When you were afraid, did I choose solidarity?

Did I see your fear, or did I only see mine?

**Friend, none of us are perfect. We all make mistakes.**

**Fortunately, God offers grace, and we do too.**

**So take a deep breath, and let's start again.**

Thank you. Your mercy is a gift.

**Now we must ask—**

**when you were afraid, did we stay by your side?**

**Did we offer our hands, or did we leave you alone?**

**When you were afraid, did we choose solidarity?**

**Did we see your fear? Or did we only see ours?**

Friends, none of us are perfect. We all make mistakes.

Fortunately, God offers grace, and I do too.

So take a deep breath, and let's start again.

**Thank you. Your mercy is a gift.**

**We accept your grace and would love to start again.**

May it be so, with God's help.

**Alleluia, amen.**

## **\*Passing of the Peace**

Just as we have been forgiven in Christ, let us forgive and be at peace with one another, saying, "The peace of our Lord be with you!"

### **And also with you!**

Let us share the peace of Christ with one another.

### **\*Hymn 113**

Angels We Have Heard on High

GLORIA

*Gloria in excelsis Deo!*

*Gloria in excelsis Deo!*

## **Listening for God's Word**

### **Time with Children**

All children are invited to come forward for a time with Pastor Leigh.

### **Prayer for Illumination**

### **Hebrew Bible Reading**

Isaiah 41:5-10

For the word of God in scripture, for the Word of God among us, for the Word of God within us,

**Thanks be to God!**

### **Anthem**

"One Star"

Cheryl Jones Rogers

### **Gospel Reading**

Matthew 1:18-25

For the word of God in scripture, for the Word of God among us, for the Word of God within us,

**Thanks be to God!**

### **Sermon**

Rev. Leigh Bonner

### **\*Hymn 88**

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

VENI EMMANUEL

(verses 1, 2, 6, 7, and refrain)

## **Responding to God's Word**

### **\*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.**

The Time with Children is “Advent 1, 2, 3, and 4” from *The Complete Guide to Godly Play, Volume 3*, by Jerome Berryman.

---

## Called Congregational Meeting

### Sunday, January 4, immediately following worship

The purpose of this meeting will be to elect our elders to serve on session (class of 2027 and 2028) and approve Pastor Leigh's 2026 terms of call.

**The Tuesday Bible study** will resume on January 6, 2026, 5:15 pm.

We will study A. W. Tozier's The Attributes of God- A Journey into the Father's Heart.

**The Wednesday Prayer/Devotional Group** will resume on January 7, 9:00 am.

For more information about the Bible study and prayer group, contact Mary Anne Taylor. Contact information is on Realm.

**Choir** will resume regular Wednesday night rehearsals on January 7, 2026. This week the choir will meet in the choir room 45 minutes before the Christmas Eve service to warm our voices and run our music prior to the start of the service.

---

## Our Staff

Rev. Leigh Bonner, Pastor  
Debbie Lewis, Administrator for Ministry Support  
Bobby Painter, Director of Music  
Bryant Hand, Organist  
Bronwen Feagins, Pianist

## Our Session

+Elder on Call	
Linda Handyside, Clerk	Administration, Outreach
Amy Richardson, Assistant Clerk	Fellowship
Keith Ellison	Communications, Worship
Karen Hartley	Stewardship & Finance
Dale Howard	Congregational Care
Mike Limerick	Buildings & Grounds
Greg Smith	Communications
+Matthew Wilson	Administration

Office Hours: Mon-Fri 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.  
124 Maple Street, Carrollton, GA 30117  
770-832-6131  
office@carrolltonpresbyterian.net  
www.carrolltonpresbyterian.net

# Announcements

**Crafternoons: An intergenerational celebration for Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany**

**Sundays until January 4, Fellowship Hall, after worship until 1:30 P.M.**

Come for light lunch, prayer, and crafts. Leave filled with the joy of fellowship. RSVP strongly recommended.

**Today:** Clay Hand Candle Holders, Paper Chains of Courage, and food

**Tonight: Keeping Vigil for Hope on the Longest Night Sunday, December 21, 5:00 P.M., Sanctuary**

This brief, contemplative service is designed to be a refuge for those who find the holiday season and dark winter a difficult time. After tonight, the sunlight will grow longer each day. Come and be surrounded by light and love.

**Wednesday, December 24, 5:00 P.M., Sanctuary**

Please join us for our Christmas Eve Worship Service.

**A Breakfast Church Liturgy**

**Sunday, December 28, 11:00 A.M. Fellowship Hall**

To help Amy ensure we have enough food for everyone, please RSVP by using the QR code provided in this bulletin. If you misplaced the bulletin, the QR code is also available in the narthex, outside the Fellowship hall. An RSVP email was also sent this past week.



---

## This Week's Events

### Sunday, December 21 (today)

- 10:00 A.M. Choir Rehearsal
- 11:00 A.M. Worship @ The Sanctuary
- 12:15 P.M. Crafternoons: An intergenerational celebration for Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany @ Fellowship Hall (Clay Hand Candle Holders and Paper Chains of Courage)
- 5:00 P.M. Longest Night Service @ The Sanctuary

### Tuesday, December 23

- 12:00 P.M. Al-Anon @ The Little White House

### Wednesday, December 24

- 5:00 P.M. Christmas Eve Worship @ The Sanctuary

### Wednesday, Thursday & Friday, December 24-26

- Church Office Closed