

121 O Little Town of Bethlehem



1 O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, how still we see thee lie!
 2 For Christ is born of Mar - y and, gath - ered all a - bove,
 3 How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly, the won - drous gift is given!
 4 O ho - ly child of Beth - le - hem, de - scend to us, we pray;



A - bove thy deep and dream - less sleep the si - lent stars go by.
 while mor - tals sleep, the an - gels keep their watch of won - dering love.
 So God im - parts to hu - man hearts the bless - ings of his heaven.
 cast out our sin and en - ter in; be born in us to - day.



Yet in thy dark streets shin - eth the ev - er - last - ing light;
 O morn - ing stars, to - geth - er pro - claim the ho - ly birth,
 No ear may hear his com - ing, but in this world of sin,
 We hear the Christ - mas an - gels the great glad ti - dings tell;



the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee to - night.
 and prais - es sing to God the king, and peace to all on earth.
 where meek souls will re - ceive him, still the dear Christ en - ters in.
 O come to us; a - bide with us, our Lord Em - man - u - el!



Though he was famed during his lifetime as a great preacher, no sermon Phillips Brooks ever preached has been heard or read by as many people as have sung this carol he wrote in December 1868 for the Sunday School children of Holy Trinity Episcopal Church in Philadelphia.



PEACE

**Welcome to
 Riverside Presbyterian Church**

December 24, 2017 ~4:00 pm

Christmas Eve

Ask an usher for audio hearing units. ~ Please silence your cell phones.

CHIMING THE HOUR

WELCOME

PRELUDE Bell Choir *Pat a Pan* arr. Jefferey A. Hall

* PASSING OF THE PEACE (Responsive)

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

And also with you.

CHILDREN'S ANTHEM *How Far Is It to Bethlehem*
arr. David W. Music

LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH

BELL CHOIR *Joseph Dearest, Joseph Mine* arr. Kevin McChesney

CALL TO WORSHIP (Responsive)

Welcome to this most magical night when angels
and shepherds mingle and the birth of a baby changes the world.

We come to celebrate with joy and wonder.

Celebrate the light that shines all around us.

We will sing and praise our most wondrous God.

Let us kneel before the Christ child,
who promises God's peace for all people.

* CAROL #60 *Silent Night, Holy Night*
Riverside Ringers & Singers

* CHRISTMAS PRAYER (Unison)

**O wondrous God of the stars, we come tonight with
breathless wonder to see the babe who will change our lives.
We hear the names "Wonderful Counselor," "Mighty God,"
"Prince of Peace," and we are in awe. You have touched the
earth this night with your unconditional love.**

**Touch us— touch our hearts and minds and souls. May we
never tire of this story. May we never take it for granted.
Make this night magical again. Amen.**

CHILDREN'S ANTHEM *Lift Your Eyes* Aaron David Miller
READING *This Year* by Ann Weems

INVITATION TO OFFER OUR GIFTS

OFFERTORY *Carol of the Bells* Leontovich/Wilhousky
PRAYER OF DEDICATION

CAROL #38 *It Came Upon the Midnight Clear*
READING *Christmas Bells* by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

CAROL #51 *See Amid the Winter's Snow*
READING *Peace on Earth* by Anne Weems

CHORAL ANTHEM *Before the Marvel of This Night* Carl Schalk

ORGAN INTERLUDE

SCRIPTURE READING *The Christmas Story According to Luke*

CAROL #31 *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*
READING *Amazing Peace* by Maya Angelou

CAROL #44 *O Little Town of Bethlehem*
SHARING THE LIGHT OF CHRIST

*As we sing the carol please pass the light of Christ to those in the
pew next to you. Please hold the lit candle upright and tilt the unlit
candle. It is our Christmas prayer that in the dark streets of our
world the light of Christ will shine forth peace, love and Good News.*

At the conclusion of the carol you are invited to depart in silence.

* *You are invited to stand if able.*

PARTICIPANTS IN THE SERVICE

Special thanks to the readers this evening: Dennis Cobb, Lynda Nadkarni,
Ellen Hamilton and Lisa Aulerich-Marciniak

Thank you to the Riverside Ringers and Singers, the acaBELLa Ringers
and the RPC Chancel Choir for joining today's Ministry of Music.

Ushers: Claire and Will Gangware

Andrew Ministers: Lynda Nadkarni and Susan Lynch