



Fourth Sunday of Advent  
Central Christmas Pageant  
December 21, 2025  
Worship begins at 11 a.m.



*Love, Susannah & Caroline Tusher (Central Youth)*

# Gathering Around the Word

Prelude

*Glory to the Newborn King!*  
Geneva Handbell Choir

Dan R. Edwards

Welcome and Announcements

Rev. Shannon J. Kershner

Ringling of the Bell

*As the tower bell rings, may it call out to the city and the world that Central Presbyterian Church is worshipping God.*

✦ Call to Worship and Lighting of the Advent Candle      Meg Watson, Graham Kirkland and Louisa Kirkland  
FROM THE CHILD OF BLESSING PROJECT  
People of God,  
**Live in the love of the Lord.**  
The world is weary.  
And yet, we have reason to hope.  
We have received God's promise: a sign.  
People of God,  
**Live in the love of the Lord.**  
We wait for God's kingdom coming,  
when God will restore us and save us.  
People of God,  
**Live in the love of the Lord.**  
We light the fourth candle,  
praying for God's love, God's coming kingdom.  
People of God,  
**Live in the love of the Lord.**

✦ Hymn 136      *Go Tell It On the Mountain*      GO TELL IT

✦ Call to Confession      Rev. Kate Culver

✦ Prayer of Confession  
FROM THE CHILD OF BLESSING PROJECT  
**Loving God, thank you for your grace. You have called us to walk with you, but we have not followed. Forgive us when we ignore you and each other. Have mercy on us and show us your way so that we can learn to do your will. In Jesus' name we pray.... (Silent Confession) Amen.**

✦ Assurance of Pardon  
Friends, believe the good news of the gospel.  
**In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!**

✦ Passing of the Peace

✦ Hymn 137      *He Came Down*      HE CAME DOWN

**He came down that we may have joy;  
he came down that we may have joy;  
he came down that we may have joy;  
hallelujah forevermore.**



## Proclaiming the Word

*Once in Royal David's City*  
Carmen Holden, soloist, Don Papenbrock, organ

IRBY

(After the solo, please rise and join in singing verses 2-4)

Once in royal David's city  
stood a lowly cattle shed,  
where a mother laid her baby  
in a manger for his bed:  
Mary was that mother mild;  
Jesus Christ, her little child.

**He came down to earth from heaven  
who is God and Lord of all,  
and his shelter was a stable,  
and his cradle was a stall;  
with the poor and meek and lowly,  
lived on earth our Savior holy.**

**Jesus is our childhood's pattern;  
day by day like us he grew;  
he was little, weak and helpless;  
tears and smiles like us he knew;  
and he feels for all our sadness,  
and he shares in all our gladness.**

**And our eyes at last shall see him,  
through his own redeeming love;  
for that child so dear and gentle  
is our Lord in heaven above;  
and he leads his children on  
to the place where he is gone.**

## Shine Bright: A Children's Pageant The Christmas Story in a Different Light

Opening Prayer

Emily Hilimire

### *The Friendly Beasts*

TRADITIONAL

Nazareth Choir; Rachel Stewart, conductor; Rand Lines, piano  
Soloists: Elliott Hackshaw (donkey); Phoebe Hunter (cow); Cameron Dake (dove);  
Freya Holden (sheep); Xola Harwell (camel)

Jesus our brother kind and good was humbly born in a stable of wood,  
And the friendly beasts around him stood, Jesus, our brother, kind and good.

"I", said the donkey shaggy and brown, I carried his mother uphill and down.  
I carried her safely to Bethlehem town, "I" said the donkey shaggy and brown.

"I", said the cow all white and red, I gave him my manger for his bed;  
I gave him my hay to pillow his head, "I", said the cow all white and red.

"I", said the sheep with the curly horn, I gave him my wool for his blanket warm;  
He wore my coat on Christmas morn. "I", said the sheep with curly horn.

"I", said the dove from the rafters high, I cooed him to sleep so he would not cry;  
We cooed him to sleep, my mate and I. "I", said the dove from the rafters high.

"I" said the camel all yellow and black, Over the desert upon my back  
I brought him a gift in the wise men's pack, "I" said the camel all yellow and black.

All of the beasts, remembering it well, in the stable dark were proud to tell ...  
Of the gifts they gave Emmanuel, the gifts they gave Emmanuel.

Please stand and join the pageant cast in singing.

**Joy to the world, the Lord is come!  
Let earth receive her king;  
let every heart prepare him room,  
and heaven and nature sing,  
and heaven and nature sing,  
and heaven, and heaven and nature sing.**

✠ Affirmation of Faith

Susan Landrum

APOSTLES' CREED, TRADITIONAL

**I believe in God, the Father almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Offertory Sentence

Music at the Offertory

*Jesus, Jesus, Rest Your Head*  
Jerusalem Choir, Karen Brown, piano

Traditional Appalachian Carol  
arr. Cathy Mocklebust

✠ At the Presentation

*Advent Doxology*

OLD HUNDREDTH

**All praise, eternal Christ, to thee  
whose advent sets thy people free;  
once more upon thy people shine,  
and fill the world with love divine.**

✠ Prayer of Dedication

Susan Landrum

Prayers of the People and The Lord's Prayer  
TRADITIONAL

Rev. Shannon J. Kershner

**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.**

## Bearing and Following the Word into the World

✠ Hymn 134

*Joy to the World*  
(versus 2-4)

ANTIOCH

**Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!  
Let all their songs employ,  
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains repeat the sounding joy,  
repeat the sounding joy,  
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.**

**No more let sins and sorrows grow,  
nor thorns infest the ground; he comes to make his blessings flow  
far as the curse is found,  
far as the curse is found,  
far as, far as the curse is found.**

**He rules the world with truth and grace,  
and makes the nations prove  
the glories of his righteousness  
and wonders of his love,  
and wonders of his love,  
and wonders, wonders of his love.**

✠ Charge and Benediction

Rev. Shannon J. Kershner

Postlude

*Carillon on a Ukrainian Bell Carol*  
Don Papenbrock, organ

Gerald Near



We are so grateful to the leadership of Vanessa Hunter and Dane Jefferson, who co-directed this year's pageant, Rand Lines, who is the pageant accompanist, and Rachel Stewart, who is the conductor! We are also so grateful to the members of the Central staff who make this possible, with special mention of the music team and AV team. And of course, none of this is possible without the love and support of each family member who participates with their time, talent, and energy!

## Pageant Cast

(in order of appearance)

Royal David's City Soloist – Carmen Holden  
Opening Prayer – Emily Hilimire  
Storyteller #1 – Ella Davis  
Storyteller #2 – Gabby Szymanski  
Storyteller #3 – Julia Ashe  
Storyteller #4 – Beth Szymanski  
Storyteller #5 – Kai Hilimire  
The Emperor's Herald – Finley Sutton  
Joseph – Marshall Dake  
Mary – Brianna Stewart  
The Innkeeper's Child – Leland Jefferson  
The Shepherd of the Lord – Freya Holden  
Shepherds – James Woods and Freya Holden  
Sheep – Henry Lines,  
Host of Angels – Willow Latham, Bodhi Latham, Xola Harwell, Serena Perkins  
The Angel Child – Carmen Holden  
The Angel of the Lord – Penelope Lines  
The Excited Shepherd – Cameron Dake  
Herod – Sam Sutton  
Herod's Advisor – Elliott Hackshaw  
The Three Magi – Calder Stewart, Roscoe Ashe, Quinlyn Jefferson  
The Kings' Attendant – Aubrey Johnson  
The Star – Phoebe Hunter  
  
The Friendly Beasts:  
Donkey – Elliott Hackshaw  
Cow – Quinlyn Jefferson  
Sheep – Freya Holden  
Dove – Cameron Dake  
Camel – Xola Harwell  
  
Stage Assistant – Julia Ashe  
Photographer – Izzy Wood

## Sanctuary Flower Memorials

Each December, members of our congregation contribute to the Sanctuary Flower Fund in honor or memory of special people in their lives. During Advent and on Christmas Eve, the arrangements in the sanctuary add a visual reminder of the beauty and spirit of the season. These gifts will also be used throughout the year to bring joy and beauty to our worship services.

### **We recognize those who contributed this year:**

Melanie, Jason, Ally and Tyler Bliss in memory of Bob Bliss

The Boggs family in memory of Ralph and Do Black; Lou and Wade Boggs; and David Gilbert

Lee and Betty Carroll in memory of Vern McCarty

Bert and Kaye Carmichael in memory of Joe and Jane Conyers

Anita Carwile in memory of Ed Carwile

Marcia Catterall in memory of Robert Catterall

Columbia Theological Seminary

Martha Crenshaw in memory of Ike Lee

Ben Evans in memory of Allen Brockman

Camille Gaffron in memory of Jane and Joe Conyers

Beth Grashof in honor of the members of the hospitality team.  
It is an honor and pleasure to work alongside them.

John and Ginger Heidbreder in memory of Robert Catterall

Rod and Ann Hunter in memory of our parents, William and Mabel Hunter,  
and Thomas and Catherine Covington

Kristie and Tim Johns in memory of Kristie's mother, Lynda Young, and grandmother, Frances Byrd;  
and Tim's mother, Terry Foxx, and grandmother, Gladys Garland

Caroline Kelly in honor of Mary Sidney Kelly, Amelia and Ellie Harbert

Martha Kimes

Hugh Landrum in memory of Shirley Landrum

Katherine Lines in honor of Fred and Elizabeth Lines, who make our holidays so special

Jerry and Debbie Miller in honor of the dedicated Central staff and pastors

Vicki Norman in memory of Margaret and Tom Norman

Bobbie Paul in memory of Pat Walsh

Terrylynn Pons in memory of Reverends J. Alberto Pons and Erenie Pons

Carolyn Porter in memory of family members who are no longer with us

Glenn Rainey

Jackie Randolph in memory of my parents

Charlie and Peg Richards in memory of J. McDowell and Evelyn Knight Richards;  
Emory L. and Catherine Owen McGinty; and Kemie Nix

Kristeen Sorrells and Ernest Windsow in memory of my parents, Jack and Eleanor Sorrells

Rachel Stewart in honor of Brianna and Calder Stewart

Ellen Thompson in memory of Janet and Bill Thompson



## Celebrating Advent

Today we celebrate the Fourth Sunday of Advent, and we're excited to be in this season together. Below is a quick look at the upcoming Advent events at Central. For full details, please visit the CPC website calendar or check Realm. We hope you'll join us for these meaningful moments of worship, fellowship, and celebration!

Sunday, December 21	11:00 a.m.	Christmas Pageant
	12:00 p.m.	Congregational Lunch
Wednesday, December 24	4:00 p.m.	Cookies, Cocoa & Connection
	5:00 p.m.	Christmas Eve Worship
Thursday, December 25		Christmas Day

## This Week at Central

### December 21 - December 28, 2025

#### Sunday, December 21

8:45 a.m.	Breakfast Ministry
9:00 a.m.	Nursery Opens
9:00 a.m.	Christmas Pageant Call Time
9:45 a.m.	Issues in Theology Class (Greene Room)
	Sojourners Class (Brotherhood Room)
11:00 a.m.	Worship and Christmas Pageant in the Sanctuary
12:00 p.m.	Congregational Lunch (Tull Hall)
6:00 p.m.	Christmas on the Hill (Shrine of the Immaculate Conception)

#### Monday, December 22

9:00 a.m.	Church of the Common Ground (Courtyard)
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#### Tuesday, December 23

#### Wednesday, December 24

4:00 p.m.	Cookies, Cocoa and Connection (Tull Hall)
5:00 p.m.	Christmas Eve Service in the Sanctuary

#### Thursday, December 25

Christmas Day
Church Offices closed

#### Friday, December 26

Church Offices closed
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#### Saturday, December 27

Church Office Closed
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#### Sunday, December 28

8:45 a.m.	Breakfast Ministry
9:00 a.m.	Nursery Opens
11:00 a.m.	Worship in the Sanctuary

## Special Participants in Today's Worship

Candle Lighters: Meg Watson Graham Kirkland and  
Louisa Kirkland

Tower Bell Ringer: Tricia Berrett

Deacon of the Day: Jacqueline Randolph

### Hospitality Team

Beth Grashof

Becky Battle

Philip Covin

Liz Burkhardt

Sandy Hoke

Linda Massengill

Chris Sciarrone

Ellen Thompson

## Central Presbyterian Church Staff

The Rev. Shannon Johnson Kershner, Senior Pastor & Head of Staff

The Rev. Kate Culver, Associate Pastor

Susan Landrum, Director of Christian Formation & Congregational Life

Thom Dixon, Director of Music & Worship Arts

Don Papenbrock, Organist & Choral Accompanist

Kristie Johns, Director of Financial Operations

Melissa Johnson, Executive Assistant & Event Coordinator

John White, Facilities Manager

Abraha Diedre, Custodian

Karen Brown, Pianist, Nazareth & Jerusalem Choirs

Kelly Grba, Music Intern

Aaron Cummings, Music Intern

Josh Smith, Audio Engineer

Jamel Morris-Barclay, Audio Assistant

Sarah Anderson, Video Production Manager

Toby Abrelate, Video Assistant

Dean Hammond, Volunteer Technology Director

### Give

You may give via the  
envelope in the pew, online at  
[www.cpcatlanta.org](http://www.cpcatlanta.org) or  
using the QR code.

