



the First Sunday of
Advent

64 O that you would tear open
the heavens and come
down,
so that the mountains would
quake at your presence—
2 as when fire kindles brushwood
and the fire causes water to
boil—
to make your name known to
your adversaries,
so that the nations might
tremble at your presence!



3 When you did awesome deeds
that we did not expect,
you came down, the mountains
quaked at your presence.
4 From ages past, no one has
heard
no ear preceived,
no eye has seen any God besides
you,
who works for those who wait
for him.

Isaiah 64:1-4

Abington Presbyterian Church

December 3, 2023
10:00 a.m. Celebration Worship

ABINGTON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

First Sunday of Advent

ORDER OF WORSHIP

December 3, 2023

GATHERING

The people gather wherever they may in response to God's call, offering praise in words of scripture, prayer, and song. The people acknowledge their sinfulness and receive the good news of God's forgiveness.

PRAYER BEFORE WORSHIP *A time for quiet preparation before worship*

Faithful God, your promises stand unshaken through all generations. Renew us in hope, that we may be awake and alert as we watch for signs of the presence of our Lord Jesus. Amen.

PRELUDE *Creator of the Stars of Night*

Alec Rowley

LIFE AND WORK OF THE CHURCH

CALL TO WORSHIP

Psalm 80

Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, you who lead us like a flock!

You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth before us.

Stir up your might, and come to save us!

Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may be saved.

*HYMN

Rejoice! Rejoice Believers



1 Re - joice, re - joice, be - liev - ers, and let your lights ap - pear; The eve - ning is ad -
2 See that your lamps are burn - ing; re - plen - ish them with oil; look now for your sal -
3 Our hope and ex - pec - ta - tion, O Je - sus, now ap - pear; a - rise, thou Sun so



vanc - ing, and dark - er - night is near. The bride - groom is a - ris - ing and
va - tion, the end of sin and toil. The mar - riage feast is wait - ing; the
longed for, a - bove this sha - dowed sphere! With hearts and hands up - lift - ed, we



soon he will draw nigh. Up, watch with ex - pec - ta - tion; at mid - night comes the cry.
gates wide o - pen stand; a - rise, O heirs of glo - ry; the Bridegroom is at hand!
plead, O Lord, to see the day of earth's re - demp - tion, and ev - er be with thee!

(* -- Indicates all who are able may stand)

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

Jesse, Mariam, Isaac, and Jacob Freeman

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God of the future,
you are coming in power to bring all nations under your rule.
We confess that we have not expected your kingdom,
for we live casual lives, ignoring your promised judgment.
We accept lies as truth,
exploit neighbors, abuse the earth,
and refuse your justice and peace.
In your mercy, forgive us.
Grant us wisdom to welcome your way,
and to seek things that will endure
when Christ comes to judge the world.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

*HYMN OF PRAISE

Longing for Light

CHRIST BE OUR LIGHT

Longing for light, we wait in darkness.
Longing for truth, we turn to you.
Make us your own, your holy people,
Light for the world to see.
Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts.
Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light!
Shine in your church gathered today.

Longing for peace, our world is troubled.
Longing for hope, many despair.
Your word alone has power to save us.
Make us your living voice.
Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts.
Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light!
Shine in your church gathered today.

*THE PEACE OF CHRIST *Greet one another with the sign of Christ's peace.*

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

WORD

God's Word is read and its message is proclaimed in scripture, music and interpretation.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE *All Grades are dismissed to Sunday School*

CHORAL PRAYER

Creator of the Stars of Night

9th Century chant

The text of this prayer sung by Chapel Choir may be found at Hymn #84

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE READING

Isaiah 64:1-9

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

SCRIPTURE READING

Psalm 80:1-7

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

SCRIPTURE READING

Mark 13:24-37

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

SERMON

TEAR OPEN THE HEAVENS AND COME DOWN *Dr. James Thornton*

*HYMN 349

"Sleepers, Wake!" A Voice Astounds Us

WACHET AUF

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

from *The Nicene Creed*

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God, begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary
and became truly human.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

THANKSGIVING and SENDING

*After the proclamation of God's Word, we respond with gratitude prepared to go
into the world where we are called to live according to God's will.*

OFFERTORY SENTENCE

OFFERTORY

Thou Shalt Know Him When He Comes

Mark Sirett

Thou shalt know him when he comes,
Not by any din of drums,
Nor his manners, nor his airs,
Nor by any thing he wears.
Thou shalt know him when he comes,
Not by a crown nor by a gown,
But his coming known shall be,
By the holy harmony
Which his coming makes in thee.
Thou shalt know him when he comes.

***DOXOLOGY**

HYMN 606

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow
praise God, all creatures here below;
praise God above, ye heavenly host;
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.	And also with you.
Lift up your hearts.	We lift them to the Lord.
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.	It is right to give our thanks and praise.

We glorify your name and lift our voices in joyful praise:

HYMN

Holy, Holy, Holy



Great is the mystery of faith:

**Christ has died,
Christ is risen,
Christ will come again.**

We join together in the prayer Christ taught his disciples, saying:

LORD'S PRAYER

**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.**

INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Gifts of God for the people of God ... **Let us keep the feast.**

RECEIVING OF ELEMENTS

Please come forward to one of the stations for Communion today. Gluten free communion bread will be available in front of the lectern. Self-contained packets will be available at the middle of the sanctuary.

PRAYER FOLLOWING COMMUNION

*HYMN 352

My Lord! What a Morning

MY LORD! WHAT A MORNING

*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Sleepers, Wake

Max Reger

Worship Leaders:

Preacher: The Rev. Dr. James W. Thornton

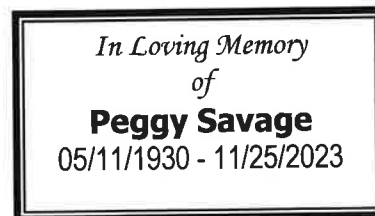
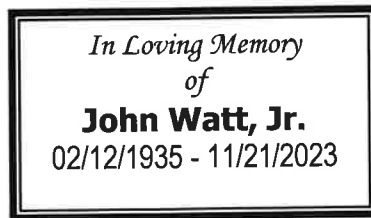
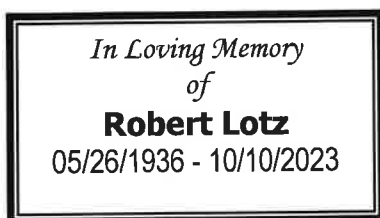
Liturgist: David Bishop

Children's Message: Ruth Sall

Organ: Erik Meyer

Gluten free communion bread will be available in front of the lectern.

Hearing assistant devices are available in the Narthex, please see an usher for assistance.

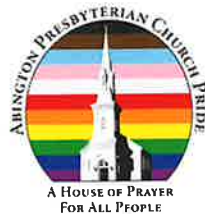


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For Pastoral Care: To notify the church of an illness, hospitalization, death, or to request prayer, contact a minister or call your Deacon or the Church Office at (215) 887-4530.

In need of special prayers this week: Suzy Paravla (daughter of Susan Davis), Linda Maisenhelder, Will Pompilli (son of Teresa Pompilli), Wayne Gibbons, Jr., Judy Meissner, Susan Johnson, John and Phyllis Frazier, Robin Cupo, Laura Lafferty, Emil Kupper, Victor Johnson III (Pete Johnson's nephew), Laurie Betts, Sally Hardy, Katie Link, Jennifer Edward (friend of Nick Cupo), Marilyn DeBacco (mother of Barb Foy), Ted Hyczko, Bill Kostik (Shelia Jackson's brother), Gordy Hawkinson (Nick Cupo's Uncle), Jen Klauder (friend of Cindi Willis), Valerie Steigerwalt (niece of Marlyn Whyte), John Connelly (friend of Joanne and Jeff Bates), Jim Holman (friend of Joanne and Jeff Bates), Paul Costello Family, Mary Ann Wherry, Miriam Whitten, Victor V. Johnson, Jr, Richard Decembrino family, Olive Biggs, Stephen Krewson, Kristine Biddle (mother of Isaiah and Kade Holt).

Joys: Our church family would like to celebrate and share joys in our midst including the arrival of a child, grandchild, or great-grandchild in your family. Please let Susan in the office know about these happy events that we may share here.



Abington Presbyterian Church celebrates God's infinite love and believes all people are equal in the eyes of God. We welcome all to worship and serve with us. We seek to work together to oppose intolerance, racism, and injustice that threaten the unity of humankind.

ABINGTON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Founded 1714

1082 Old York Road, Abington, PA 19001

Phone: (215) 887-4530 Fax: (215) 887-5988 E-mail: jthornton@apcusa.org

Web Site: www.apcusa.org

The Rev. Dr. James W. Thornton, Head of Staff

Tia McCoun, Congregational Care Associate

Ruth Ideen-Sall, Director of Christian Education

John Sall, Director of Music Ministries

Eric Meyer, Organist

Ashley Rossi & Justin Feil, Youth Fellowship Coordinators

ABINGTON PRESBYTERIAN LIFE

December 3, 2023

10:00 AM				
AGE/GRADE	ROOM	TEACHER	TOPIC	Pick Up
Birth– 2 year olds	110-112	Childcare	Childcare	110-112
Preschool	221	Christine Sacco	Advent	221
K—2nd Grades	Youth Lounge (72)	Connie Allgyer	Science	Parish Hall
3rd—5th Grades	Youth Lounge (72)	Connie Allgyer	Science	Parish Hall

Children ages 30 months through 5th grade attend Sunday School during the 10am service. Preschool classes start at 10am and are listed in the grid. Kindergarten through 5th graders start the worship service with their families and proceed to their classrooms after the Children's Moment. All children are welcome to attend Sunday School. If you are a visitor today, please feel free to accompany your child to his or her classroom.



Nursery Care— is offered for children birth through toddler in the nursery and the toddler rooms (110 and 112)

Christian Education Offerings

8:45am

- Middle School Sunday School at 8:45am in the Parish Hall basement. All 6th - 8th graders are welcome to join us.
- Confirmation Class, contact Bill Stock for more information.
- Adult Education at 8:45am in the Parlor.
- For more information contact Ruth Sall at 215-887-4530 or rsall@apcusa.org.



Adult Forum

Advent is a time of anticipation and joy, not just for family gatherings and gifts, but for the celebration of the incarnation of our Lord. How can you be more open to receiving and sharing God's joy and gladness this season? Join us at Adult Forum as we encounter works of sacred music and visual arts that speak of joy and we explore how mindfulness and breathing can help us embody the joy and peace of the season. Sundays at 8:45 am in the Parlor.

December 3 *Advent in Song* with John and Ruth Sall

December 10 *Advent in Gentle Movement and Breath* with Tink McDevitt

December 17 *Advent in the Visual Arts* with Michelle Feil

APC GIVING

	YTD 10/31/23	YTD 10/31/22	Annual 2023 Budget
Income	\$534,692	\$531,681	\$658,500
Expenses	\$574,570	\$615,514	\$728,500
(Deficit)/Surplus	(\$39,878)	(\$83,833)	(\$70,000)

COME TO A CHRISTMAS PARTY!

All APC seniors are welcome to join APC staff and Older Adult Committee members to a Christmas Party at Rydal Park. Please join us for entertainment, caroling, fellowship and refreshments as we gather together to celebrate the Christmas Season.

WHEN: Wednesday, December 6
TIME : 1:30 - 3 P. M.
WERE : Sun and Social Room, 6th Floor
THEME: Christmas memories



YOUTH NEWS

Youth Group TODAY - Target shopping trip!

Please bring cash if you can to pool together with other youth to buy gifts for Gemma children. Meet outside the church office at 4 p.m. and we will carpool to Target. Return by 5:30 p.m. for dinner.

Youth Group Caroling & Christmas Party

When: Sunday, Dec. 17, 2023 from 4-7 p.m. (no choir rehearsal that night)

Where: APC. We will carol offsite and return for the party.

What: Caroling followed by a Gift exchange. Bring a wrapped present costing \$10 or less, & a snack to share.

Winter Retreat Weekend

RSVP to justinfeil4@gmail.com by Dec. 17 to attend

When: Jan. 12-14, 2024 (MLK weekend)

Where: YMCA of the Pines in Medford, NJ

Who: All 6th-12th graders welcome

What: Weekend retreat together with games, movie, arts and crafts, service

Cost: \$0!!!!!! All fees covered by Colton Fund!



RSVP FOR Senior High Lock-In

Who: all 9-12th graders

What: Fun, games, movie, projects, food, and a little sleep

When: 7 p.m. Friday Dec. 22 - pick-up by 8:30 a.m. Saturday, Dec. 23

Where: APC

Cost: None.

RSVP to justinfeil4@gmail.com please!

Mission Council Offers Alternative Gifts for Christmas Giving Opportunities. Locally you can support **Gemma Services** whose vision and mission illustrates the deep belief in the importance of every individual. The new tagline, "Because You Matter," has the power to transform hope into action for children, youth and families facing emotional and behavioral challenges often caused by loss or serious traumas such as abuse, neglect and addiction. Your donations will help children and families experience joy and hope during the Christmas season.

Alternative Gifts purchased from the Presbyterian Giving Catalogue are tangible ways that we can share our faith by supporting people at home and around the world who are in need of hope and relief from the traumas of poverty and upheaval.

Please review the **Alternative Gift Form** included with the worship materials to place your order. Checks are payable to Abington Presbyterian Church, marked Gemma Services or Alternative Gifts. Please include your member number.



Mission Council Offers Christmas Giving Opportunities



Purchasing alternative gifts for family and friends are tangible ways that we can share our faith by supporting people at home and around the world who are in need of hope and relief from the traumas of poverty and upheaval. A small gift has a big impact and adds joy to families celebrating Christmas.

Gifts for Gemma Services

Gemma Services changes lives by transforming hope into action for children, youth and families facing emotional and behavioral challenges often caused by loss or serious traumas such as abuse, neglect and addiction. The holidays are a magical time at Gemma. "Wow! It looks like a fairy tale!" exclaimed a child in residence as they arrived at the Harrison gym for the annual holiday celebration last year, which had been transformed into a winter wonderland. "This is the best night of my life!" exclaimed another child upon receiving a stack of donated gifts. You can help Gemma show hundreds of children and families who participate in our programs how much they matter this holiday season!

Presbyterian Giving Catalogue

Gifts purchased from the Presbyterian Giving Catalogue are tangible ways that you can provide help and relief to people, families and communities around the world.

Farming Tools, \$10. Growing and harvesting crops is possible only with the proper tools, such as shovels and machetes. This necessary equipment can help bring a fruitful yield from the land.

Family of Chickens, \$25. Eggs for food, feathers for pillows and fertilizer for crops. By giving a family of chickens, you can help improve the food security and livelihoods of farmers and families around the world.

Kitchen Kit, \$25. Food requires preparation and families who have lost everything in a disaster often lack the basic tools needed to cook a meal. A kitchen kit contains cooking pots, utensils, bowls, cups and spoons.

Sewing Machine, \$50. New sewing equipment can launch a business that mends, alters and sells clothing and linens. Your gift can help provide a stable source of income for a family in a developing part of the world.

Water Filter, \$50. In many places, residents must cope with contaminated local water systems. A water filter provides a family with safe water for drinking, bathing and cooking and keeps 300 empty water bottles out of local landfills.

Refugee Food Basket, \$50. Extend a caring hand with a basket of food and essential supplies to our neighbors around the world who are struggling and searching for a peaceful place to call home.

Teacher Training, \$85. Your gift can increase access to education for girls around the world by expanding teacher training. Through a learning program that doesn't require technology – not even electricity – more teachers can be effectively trained to serve in remote communities where girls may otherwise have little opportunity for schooling.

Women's Empowerment Project, \$100. Where women receive education and economic opportunity, communities thrive. By helping to provide agricultural and vocational training, literacy education and access to loans and credit services for women, you are helping them in their efforts to care for their families and reduce hunger and poverty in their communities.

GEMMA SERVICES and Alternative Gift donations should be made by December 18, 2023.

Please fill out this form with your check for GEMMA donation and/or ALTERNATIVE GIFTS from the Presbyterian Gift Catalogue and mail to the church. *Please make checks payable to Abington Presbyterian Church and add your member number.* We will mail you a card(s) with the project(s) you purchased for your honoree.



\$ _____ **TOTAL: GEMMA Gift Donation.** \$25 suggested per gift donation.

\$ _____ **TOTAL: Presbyterian Gift Catalogue**

NAME _____ Member # _____

Your address: _____

COME TOGETHER TO CREATE CHANGE. Small Gifts. Big Impact.
Abington Presbyterian Church: 1082 Old York Road, Abington, PA 19001
Questions: Please contact Georgene Pilling at gapilling25@gmail.com.

Music
at Abington

Christmas by 
Candlelight



Star of Promise

4:30 p.m. & 7:00 p.m. Sunday, December 10, 2023

Abington Presbyterian Church Oratorio, Youth, & Children's Choirs

Audience Carols and Candlelight Procession

Directed by John Sall and Ruth Sall

with the Abington Symphony Orchestra and Erik Meyer, organ

Abington Presbyterian Church, 1082 Old York Road, Abington PA
livestream option available at www.apcusa.org/MusicAtAbington
free childcare • fully accessible • free will donations received

CHRISTMAS DONATIONS 2023

We are so very blessed at APC to enjoy beautiful and inspiring music in a lovely and worshipful sanctuary. At our most holy times of year we are even more fortunate to be able to witness even more of those gifts in a sanctuary that has been lovingly decorated. Thanks to those who have given their time, talents and treasure we are able to make this happen each year.

This Christmas, consider making a gift to enrich the season and enhance our music with added musicians as well as beautifying the sanctuary with flowers and special decorations in memory/honor of a loved one. We ask that you mark your check as "Christmas Gift" and include this form with your donation.

Yes, I/We would like to remember/honor a loved one with a gift:

Your Name:

Your Name (s) as printed in the Bulletin:

In Memory of:

In Honor of:

Enclosed please find \$ () Check () Cash

APC envelope # (if available)

Please make checks payable to Abington Presbyterian Church.



We want to be able to support and thank our veterans in the APC family.

Please reach out to the church office if you or someone you know should be on our Veteran's list.



Christmas Eve Services

No 8:00am Simple Gifts Worship Service
10:00am Celebration Worship Service

5:00pm Family Friendly Service
7:30pm Traditional Service
Childcare available for both services

December 31st

10:00am only with Communion



This QR Code takes you to the donation page on our APC website



SCAN ME