

***THE CHRISTMAS PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AND DEDICATION (in unison):**
 Most merciful God, for Whose chosen handmaid and her holy Babe there was no room at the inn in Bethlehem, we give You thanks and praise for the gift of Your Son, and for the promise of the gospel signified by the sacrament of this Holy Supper. Help us all by Your Spirit truly to make room for the Lord Jesus in our lives, that His peace and joy may fill our hearts, and His love flow through us to the blessing of others. O God, You have made this most holy night to shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant, we pray, that, as we have known the Light on earth, we may come to the fullness of its joy in heaven; through Jesus Christ Your Son, our Lord. Amen.

***THE HYMN OF RESPONSE: #195**
"Joy to the World! The Lord Is Come" ANTIOCH

***THE BENEDICTION**

***THE CONGREGATIONAL AND CHORAL RESPONSE:**
"Angels We Have Heard On High" (refrain) GLORIA
 Glo-ri-a in excelsis De-o, Glo-ri-a in excelsis De-o!
 (meaning, "Glory to God in the highest!" Luke 2:14)

***THE CHRISTMAS EVE POSTLUDE:**
"In Dulci Jubilo" J. S. Bach

*The congregation standing. Please feel free to be seated if you need to do so.
 Lyrics and music reproduced under CCLI#64526.

| <u>Christmas Eve Orchestra</u> | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Violin I: | Christy Lynn, Lisa Maroney |
| Violin II: | Jeffrey Wooters, Elizabeth Olmsted, Grayson Laughon |
| Viola: | Daniel Kepel |
| Cello: | Elise Roberts |
| Bass: | Eric Hollandsworth |
| Trumpets: | Shepherd Wells, Mark Campbell |
| Horn: | Kelly Hartless |
| Trombone: | Walker Pennock |
| Tuba: | Bill Folger |
| Piano: | Miriam Amos, Noah Caldwell |
| Organ: | Peggy Bettcher, Hadley Hall |

Welcome to Rivermont!

Whether you are new to Lynchburg or new to our church, we are so grateful to the Lord that He has brought you to us this Christmas Eve. We would love to connect with you more personally and we invite you to fill out a Digital Connect Card by scanning the QR code into your mobile device. You can also fill out a Connect Card from the pew rack and place it in the offering plate. We would love to have you join us for worship in our Sanctuary on Sunday mornings at 8:30 am and 11:00 am.



GETTING TO KNOW RIVERMONT: Pastor Brett will host an eight-week class about the life, ministry and mission of Rivermont EPC, during the Sunday School hour beginning January 7. This class is designed for the curious, as well as for those desiring to pursue formal membership at Rivermont EPC. Please go to our website at www.rivermont.org/gtkr for more information and to register.

Sunday, December 31
 8:30 am & 11:00 am - Worship Services
 9:45 am - Church-Wide Sunday School in the Sanctuary
 Adult Sunday School Teacher Training (Room 203/204)

YEAR-END DONATIONS: For tax purposes, year-end donations for 2023 must be received or postmarked by Sunday, December 31. The church office will be closed Dec. 25 - Jan. 1, but the outside black mailbox at the top of the ramp will be monitored during this time to receive donations. Those needing an update on their donations before the end of the year, please contact Kelly Nelson at the office, or by email: Kelly@rivermont.org.

Contact Us

MAIL: 2424 Rivermont Avenue
 Lynchburg, VA 24503
PHONE: (434) 846-3441
HOURS: Monday - Friday 8:30AM-5:00PM

EMAIL: rhonda@rivermont.org
WEB: www.rivermont.org
FACEBOOK: facebook.com/rivermontepc
TWITTER: twitter.com/rivermontepc

Rivermont Evangelical Presbyterian Church is a member of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, a group of churches whose beliefs are summarized in the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms. For more information, go to www.epc.org.



OUR MISSION: *For the glory of God and the good of His people, REPC seeks to follow Jesus Christ in His mission to awaken gospel renewal through Spirit-empowered worship, discipleship and mission, beginning in the Rivermont community and extending to the ends of the earth.*

ORDER of WORSHIP

December 24, 2023
 Christmas Eve

Preparation for Worship

As the Prelude begins, prepare your heart for worship and please silence your mobile devices.

THE SILENT PRAYER OF PREPARATION:

Most merciful God, Who so loved the world as to give Your only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life: grant us, we humbly pray, the precious gift of faith, whereby we may truly and fully embrace all the promises of the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ; and grant us the indwelling presence and power of Your Spirit, that we may live in the fullness of salvation, abounding in hope, overflowing with joy, and secure in the knowledge of Your love; to the glory of Your name. Amen.

CHRISTMAS EVE MUSIC FOR BRASS

Directed by Walker Pennock

CHRISTMAS EVE MUSIC FOR STRING ORCHESTRA

"Concerto Grosso in G Minor (The Christmas Concerto)"

Arcangelo Corelli

1. *Vivace/Grave*
2. *Allegro*
3. *Adagio/Allegro/Adagio*
4. *Vivace*
5. *Allegro*
6. *Largo*

WELCOME:

Pastor Ron Cox

*THE CALL TO WORSHIP: from Isaiah 9:2,6-7 (responsively)

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;

Those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined.

For to us a Child is born,

To us a Son is given;

And the government shall be upon His shoulder, and His name shall be called

Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Of the increase of His government and of peace there will be no end,

On the throne of David and over His kingdom,

To establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore.

The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will do this.

*THE HYMN OF PRAISE: #208

"O Come, All Ye Faithful"

ADESTE FIDELES

THE LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE - Christ

7:00 pm: Grace Petty

9:00 pm: Lissa Hull and Elese Frazier

"For to us a Child is born, to us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon His shoulder, and His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." (Isaiah 9:6)

THE PRAYER OF ADORATION AND CONFESSION

THE ASSURANCE OF PARDON: Luke 2:10-11

*THE CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE: #203

"Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"

MENDELSSOHN

THE READING OF HOLY SCRIPTURE: Matthew 2:1-21

THE PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

THE SERMON:

"How to Miss Christmas"

Dr. David Weber

THE PRAYER FOR A RIGHT RESPONSE TO GOD'S WORD

*THE AFFIRMATION OF FAITH: THE NICENE CREED (in unison)

We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible;

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father; by Whom all things were made; Who, for us and our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary, and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; He suffered and was buried; and the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father; and He shall come again, with glory, to judge both the living and the dead; Whose kingdom shall have no end.

And we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life, Who proceeds from the Father and the Son; Who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified; Who spoke by the prophets; and we believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church; we acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins; and we look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

*THE GLORIA:

"Angels We Have Heard on High" (refrain)

GLORIA

Glo-ri-a in excelsis De-o, Glo-ri-a in excelsis De-o!

(meaning, "Glory to God in the highest!" Luke 2:14)

THE RECEPTION OF THE CHRISTMAS EVE OFFERING

(The Christmas Eve Offering is dedicated to the Body Life Fund, which is used primarily to support members of our congregation who have particular financial needs arising from extraordinary circumstances.)

THE OFFERTORY ANTHEM:

"What Child Is This?"

Sanctuary Choir

arr. Molly Ijames

What Child is this, Who, laid to rest, on Mary's lap is sleeping,
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet while shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ, the King, Whom shepherds guard and angels sing.
Joy, joy for Christ is born, the Babe, the Son of Mary.
Why lies He in such mean estate, where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear, for sinners here the silent Word is pleading.
Nails, spear shall pierce Him through, the cross be borne for me, for you.
Hail, hail the Word made flesh, the Babe, the Son of Mary.
So bring Him incense, gold, and myrrh, come, peasant, king, to own Him.
The King of kings salvation brings; let loving hearts enthrone Him.
Raise, raise a song on high; the virgin sings her lullaby.
Joy, joy for Christ is born, the Babe, the Son of Mary.
This Babe, the Son, the Son, of God.

*THE COMMUNION HYMN: #210

"Silent Night! Holy Night"

STILLE NACHT

THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER:

If you are not a member of this congregation but are a baptized believer who is welcome to receive Communion in your home church, then you are invited to receive the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper with us. Baptized children of this congregation are welcome to receive the Sacrament after they have received instruction and admission by the Session. After reviewing the Communion packet with your child, contact the church office to set up a meeting with the pastors. The packet may be found at www.rivermont.org/communion.

The Words of Invitation and Institution

The Prayer of Consecration, concluding with The Lord's Prayer (in unison):

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.

The Distribution of the Bread and Cup

(At the beginning of the distribution, the congregation will sing:)

**O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin and enter in; be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us, our Lord, Emmanuel. Amen.**

THE DISTRIBUTION ANTHEM:

"Thou Didst Leave Thy Throne"

Sanctuary Choir

arr. Craig Courtney

Thou didst leave Thy throne and Thy kingly crown
When Thou camest to earth for me.
But in Bethlehem's home there was found no room for Thy holy nativity.
O come to my heart, Lord Jesus, there is room in my heart for Thee!
Heaven's arches rang when the angels sang, proclaiming Thy royal degree;
But in lowly birth didst Thou come to earth and in great humility.
O come to my heart, Lord Jesus, there is room in my heart for Thee!
When the heav'ns shall ring and the angels sing at Thy coming to victory,
Let Thy voice call me home, saying,
"Yet there is room, there is room at My side for Thee."
And my heart shall rejoice, Lord Jesus, when Thou comest and callest me.