



THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF BLAIRSVILLE

*“a community of believers, called by God, led by the Holy Spirit
to know Christ and to make Christ known”*

Rev. Timothy R. Monroe

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THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF BLAIRSVILLE

December 24, 2023 ~ 11:00 a.m.

Fourth Sunday of Advent

THE ORDER OF SERVICE

Words of Greeting

Dennis Gould, Liturgist

Leader: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Sharing of Opportunities, Joys and Concerns

PREPARATION FOR THE WORD OF GOD

Prelude

“Angels We Have Heard On High”

Organ and Piano Duet

Introit

“O Come, O Come Emmanuel”

Arr. Edgar Horton

Handbell Choir – Director, Vicky Westley

Call to Worship

L: I will sing of your steadfast love, O LORD, forever;
with my mouth I will proclaim your faithfulness
to all generations.

**P: I declare that your steadfast love is established forever;
your faithfulness is as firm as the heavens.**

L: You said, ‘I have made a covenant with my chosen one,
I have sworn to my servant David:

**P: “I will establish your descendants forever,
and build your throne for all generations.”’**

*Hymn # 198 “Good Christian Friends, Rejoice”

*Prayer of Confession

**Almighty and all-loving God, through your Son Jesus Christ you
have reconciled the world to yourself. Help us now to be
reconciled with one another, that again we might dwell in the
warmth of your love. Inspire us with your Holy Spirit to put
aside the cloak of pride and put on Christ, that we might forgive
and be forgiven; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

*Assurance of Forgiveness

*Gloria Patri

***O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here, until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.***

Lighting of the Advent Candle
Jean Heberling and Elaine Jellison

***A candle is burning, a candle of love,
a candle to point us to heaven above,
a baby for Christmas, a wonderful birth,
for Jesus is bringing God's love to our earth.***

*Sharing of the Peace

DECLARATION OF THE WORD OF GOD

Special Music	"Do You Hear What I Hear?" Abigail Bruner, signing	By Martina McBride
Gospel Lesson		Luke 1:26-38
Special Music	"O Come, Christmas Joy"	Arr. Linda Lamb
New Testament Lesson		Romans 16:25-27
Message	<i>The Day Before</i>	Mr. Clark Bruner

RESPONSE TO THE WORD OF GOD

*Affirmation of Faith *(The Apostles' Creed)*
**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.**

*Hymn # 208

“Oh, How Joyfully”

Sacrament of Holy Communion

Invitation to the Lord’s Table

Elder Gene Artman

Prayers of the People & the Lord’s Prayer (“...*debts...and debtors...*”)

Special Music

“Let Us Break Bread Together”

“Break Thou the Bread of Life”

Arr. Robert Garth & Kevin McChesney

Sharing of the Bread and the Cup

(Please come forward to receive the sacrament)

(Those who remain at their seat, will be served)

Prayer after Communion

*Hymn # 182

“O Come, All Ye Faithful”

*Benediction

*Response

“Angels We Have Heard on High”

Arr. Edgar Horton

*Postlude

*(*All who are able, please stand)*

This morning we celebrate the Lord’s Supper. Anyone who professes faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior is invited to receive and share the sacrament.

PLEASE JOIN us in the ritual of friendship by signing the attendance pads that are at one end of each of the pews. If you are here for the first time, we would appreciate it if you would give us your local telephone number. Please help yourself to a copy of our newsletter, *Uplift* available at the back of the church. We thank you for joining your voice to ours in sacred worship.

THE HANDBELL CHOIR

Carter Schaffer

Bonni Dunlap

Karen Kerin

Cindy Borbonus

John Kerin

David Kerin

Brylea Borbonus

Bill Westley

Vicky Westley - Director

THE WORSHIP ASSISTANTS for this morning's service are Guest Speaker, Mr. Clark Bruner; Liturgist, Dennis Gould; Communion Leader, Gene Artman; Advent Readers, Jean Heberling and Elaine Jellison; Director of Music, Cindy Borbonus; Organist, Pam Irwin; Handbell Choir Director, Vicky Westley; Signing, Abigail Bruner; Usher, Alan Lowman and Mya Johnson; and Property Manager, Kim McKinney.

THE BEAUTIFUL POINSETTIAS in the sanctuary this morning are given in memory and in honor of loved ones by many in the congregation. A special thank you to Chris Antis, Brylea Borbonus and the deacons for their work in arranging to have the flowers for our Christmas celebration!

A CHRISTMAS EVE Service of Lessons and Carols will be held at 7:00 p.m. this evening. Matthew Cyphert will share his talents with special music and the service will conclude in candlelight. We hope you will join us!

OFFICE HOURS will be abbreviated this week. Please call before you stop. The office will be closed Monday and Tuesday.

THE GRANNIES have last minute Christmas gifts available to purchase in the parlor and the Fellowship Hall. If you're in need of a gift to share and enjoy giving gifts homemade with love, then our grannies may have that special gift for you! A list of items is available on the table in the back of the sanctuary. If you have any questions, please see a granny.

OUR CHOIRS will be in recess for the holidays and will resume rehearsals in the New Year. Our Chancel Choir will begin rehearsals Wednesday, January 3rd at 7:00 p.m. in the sanctuary and our Handbell Choir will begin rehearsals Wednesday, January 10th at 6:00 p.m. in the Bell Room.

ORDINATION AND INSTALLATION of officers is scheduled for Sunday, January 7th during morning worship. Those elected as elders and deacons to the Class of 2026 will be ordained and/or installed by our moderator Rev. Don Wilson.

A CONGREGATIONAL MEETING is scheduled for Sunday, January 7th following worship to review the report of the Nominating Committee. The report will include the names of those selected to serve on the Pastoral Nominating Committee.

COMMITTEE CHAIRS are asked to begin thinking about year-end reports for the Annual Ecclesiastical/Corporate Meeting which will be held Sunday, January 28th. Reports are due to the church office by Sunday, January 21st.

CUSTOM KEEPSAKE ORNAMENTS of the church from Wendall August Forge are available to purchase at a cost of \$12.00 each. Checks can be made payable to the church. Please see Linda George or contact the church office for an ornament or for more information.

OFFERING ENVELOPES for the New Year are available for you to pick up at the back of the sanctuary. Please look for your name as we have condensed the number of boxes and your box number may have changed. If you do not have church offering envelopes and would like a box set, please drop a note in the offering plate or contact the church office at 724-459-7991.

AN USHER SIGN-UP SHEET is located on the table in the back of the sanctuary. If you would like to participate in worship as an usher/greeter, please sign-up. There are dates available. Our deacons thank you.

THE PRAYER CHAIN is coordinated by the Adult Sunday School Class. If you have a prayer request or know of someone's need for prayer, please contact Linda George or the church office. All requests are kept confidential.

THE 2024 FLOWER CHART is hanging in the hallway outside the church office. If you would like to order flowers for Sunday worship, please use the chart to sign-up for your choice of date. Flowers are \$20/Sunday and checks can be made payable to the Board of Deacons. We hope that those ordering flowers through the deacons would take the arrangement following worship or pick them up at the church by the following Tuesday. Flowers that remain at the church after Tuesday will be shared with homebound members of the congregation. Please contact the church office with any questions or concerns.

VOLUNTEERS are needed to run the audio/visual equipment in the balcony each Sunday morning. Those interested will be trained. Please see Doug Clayton.

THE MINISTERIUM has decided to continue the tradition of publishing a Community Lenten Devotional in 2024. Those who volunteer will list the biblical reference from one of the listed lectionary texts, share a devotion of about 450 words, followed by a two-sentence prayer. Giving your name is optional but appreciated. All submissions will be gathered and compiled into booklet form, duplicated, then distributed to area churches for use during the Lenten Season. Our congregation has been assigned 3 days. If you feel led to share with your brothers and sisters in Blairsville, please contact the church office and let us know of your willingness and which day you choose. Send devotions to the church office email, upchurch@r-church.com or drop off a hard copy by Sunday, January 21st. Lent begins Wednesday, February 14, 2024 and Easter is March 31, 2024.

Thursday, March 7—Psalm 95:1-2, 6-9; Jeremiah 7:23-28; Luke 11:14-23

Friday, March 8—Psalm 81:6-11, 14, 17; Hosea 14:2-10; Mark 12:28-34

Saturday, March 9—Psalm 51:3-4, 18-21; Hosea 6:1-6; Luke 18:9-14

REGULAR SCHEDULE:

Sunday	10:15 a.m.	Cookies and Coffee in Fellowship Hall
	11:00 a.m.	Worship with Mr. Clark Bruner & Communion with Elder Gene Artman
	7:00 p.m.	Christmas Eve Service of Lessons & Carols & Candlelight
Monday		Merry Christmas! - Office Closed
Tuesday		Office Closed
Wednesday	5:00 p.m.	Daisy Troop Meeting
Thursday	2:00 p.m.	Stitching Group
Friday	5:00 p.m.	Boy Scout Sleepover begins
Saturday	12:00 p.m.	Boy Scout Sleepover ends
Sunday	10:15 a.m.	Cookies and Coffee in Fellowship Hall
	11:00 a.m.	The Real 12 Days of Christmas with guest musicians the Blairsville Brass
January 1		New Year's Day! – Office Closed