

*First Presbyterian Church of River Forest Presents
A Christmas Concert*

GOD IS WITH US
Emmanuel

Presented by

FIRST PRES CHOIR
JANE HOLSTEIN, DIRECTOR

WITH SPECIAL GUEST ARTISTS
KAIA STRING QUARTET

**DECEMBER 17, 2023
4:00 PM**

*First Presbyterian Church of River Forest
7551 Quick Avenue, River Forest*



firstpresrf.org

Concert Program

PROCESSIONAL

arr. Paul Detterman
12th Century Carol

O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel
that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.

O come, thou Dayspring, come and cheer our spirits by thine advent here.
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night, and death's dark shadows put to flight.

O come, O come, great Lord of might, who to thy tribes on Sinai's height
in ancient times did give the Law, in cloud and majesty and awe.

O come, thou branch of Jesse's stem,
unto thine own and rescue them!
From depths of hell your people save,
and close the path to misery.

**ALL: O come, desire of nations, bind all peoples in one heart and mind.
Bid all our sad divisions cease, and be thyself our Prince of peace.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!**

Cheryl Rotundo, *soprano*

WELCOME & OPENING PRAYER

Donna Marsh, Pastor

THE YEARNING

Craig Courtney
Text: Susan Boersma

There is a yearning in hearts weighed down by ancient grief and centuries of sorrow.
There is a yearning in hearts that in the darkness hide and in the shades of death abide,
a yearning for tomorrow.
There is a yearning for the promised One, the first-born of creation.
There is a yearning for the Lord who visited his own, and by his death for sin atoned,
to bring to us salvation.
Emmanuel, Emmanuel, within our hearts the yearning.
There is a yearning that fills the hearts of those who wait the day of his appearing.
There is a yearning when all our sorrows are erased, and we shall see the One who placed
within our hearts the yearning.
Emmanuel, Emmanuel, within our hearts the yearning.

FOR UNTO US A CHILD IS BORN *from Messiah*

George Frederic Handel
Isaiah 9:6

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given,
and the government shall be upon his shoulders,
And his name shall be called,
Wonderful Counselor, the mighty God,
the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.

SEE AMID THE WINTER'S SNOW

Dan Forrest
Text: Edward Caswall

Alleluia! Alleluia!
See, amid the winter's snow, born for us on earth below,
See the tender Lamb appears, promised from eternal years.
Hail, thou ever-blessed morn, hail redemption's happy dawn.
Sing through all Jerusalem: "Christ is born in Bethlehem."

Alleluia! Alleluia!
Lo, within a manger lies He who built the lofty skies,
He, who throned in light sublime, sits amid the cherubim.
Hail, thou ever-blessed morn, hail, redemption's happy dawn.
Sing through all Jerusalem: "Christ is born in Bethlehem."

Alleluia! Alleluia!
Sacred infant, all divine, what a tender love was Thine,
Thus to come from highest bliss down to such a world as this.
Hail thou ever-blessed morn, hail redemption's happy dawn.
Sing through all Jerusalem: "Christ is born in Bethlehem."

*HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING *Hymn 185*

Felix Mendelssohn
Text: Charles Wesley

Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King:
peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!"
Joyful, all ye nations, rise, join the triumph of the skies;
with th'angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King."

Christ, by highest heaven adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord,
late in time behold him come, offspring of the Virgin's womb:
veiled in flesh the Godhead see; hail th'incarnate Deity,
pleased with us in flesh to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel.
Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King."

Hail the heaven born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings, risen with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by, born that we no more may die,
born to raise us from the earth, born to give us second birth.
Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King."

NO NIGHT THERE

Dan Forrest
Text from the Scriptures

God is with us; God is for us; do not be afraid.
There shall be no night there, no crying there,
God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes.
Even in the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil
God is with us, God is for us.
"Lo, I am with you always, even to the end."

Psalms 118:6
Revelation 22:5
Revelation 21:4
Psalms 23:4
Matthew 28:20

ANGELS WE HAVE HEARD ON HIGH

Craig Courtney
Traditional French Carol

Angels we have heard on high sweetly singing o'er the plains,
and the mountains in reply echo back their joyous strains.
Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
Say what may the tidings be which inspire your heavenly song?
Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Come to Bethlehem, and see him whose birth the angels sing;
come, adore on bended knee Christ the Lord, the newborn King.
Gloria in excelsis Deo!

GLORIA IN EXCELSIS *from Lux: The Dawn From on High*

Dan Forrest
Luke 2:14

*Gloria in excelsis Deo.
Et in terra pax.*

Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace.

HE IS BORN

Michael Tyree

He is born, the divine Christ Child; play the oboe and bagpipes merrily!
He is born, the divine Christ Child; sing we all of the Savior mild.
Jesus, Lord of all the world, coming as a Child among us;
Jesus, Lord of all the world, grant to us your heavenly peace.

KAIA String Quartet

TWO CAROLS

Elaine Hagenberg

WEXFORD CAROL

Irish, 12th Century

Good people all, this Christmas time, consider well, and bear in mind,
what our good God for us has done in sending his beloved Son.
With Mary holy, we should pray to God with love this Christmas Day;
In Bethlehem upon that morn, there was a blessed Messiah born.

Near Bethlehem did shepherds keep their flocks of lambs, and feeding sheep;
to whom God's angels did appear, which put the shepherds in great fear.
"Prepare and go," the angels said, "to Bethlehem. Be not afraid,
for there you'll find this happy morn a princely babe—sweet Jesus born."

With thankful heart and joyful mind, the shepherds went the Babe to find,
And as God's angels had foretold, they did our Savior Christ behold.
Within a manger he was laid, and by his side the virgin maid
attending on the Lord of Life, Who came to earth to end all strife.
With Mary holy we should pray to God with love this Christmas day;
In Bethlehem upon that morn, there was a blessed Messiah born.

SUSSEX CAROL

English, 17th Century

On Christmas night all Christians sing, to hear the news the angels bring;
News of great joy, news of great mirth, news of our merciful King's birth.

Then why should men on earth be sad, since our Redeemer made us glad;
when from our sin he set us free, all for to gain our liberty.

When sin departs before his grace, then life and health come in its place.
Angels and men with joy may sing, all for to see the newborn King.

All out of darkness we have light, which made the angels sing this night.
"Glory to God in highest heaven, now and forever more," Amen!

*Half of the offering this afternoon will help defray the cost of this concert.
Half will help support outreach to refugee families arriving in the community.
[donate by Zelle® at donations@firstpresrf.org]*

JOY TO THE WORLD *Hymn 179*

George Frederic Handel
Psalm 98, Isaac Watts

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.

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 sin 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.

GOOD KING WENCESLAS / GOD REST YE MERRY, GENTLEMEN

Michael Tyree

KAIA String Quartet

THE FIRST NOEL

Dan Forrest
Traditional English Carol

The first Noel, the angel did say, was to certain poor shepherds in fields where they lay;
in fields where they lay keeping their sheep, on a cold winter's night that was so deep.
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, born is the King of Israel.

They looked up and saw a star shining in the east, beyond them far;
and to the earth it gave great light, and so it continued both day and night.
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, born is the King of Israel.

Then let us all with one accord sing praises to our heavenly Lord,
that hath made heaven and earth of naught, and with his blood mankind hath bought.
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, born is the King of Israel.

SILENT NIGHT

Franz Gruber, arr: Joel Raney
Text: Joseph Mohr

Silent night, holy night, all is calm, all is bright
round yon virgin mother and child. Holy infant, so tender and mild,
sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night, shepherds quake at the sight;
glories stream from heaven afar, heavenly hosts sing Alleluia!
Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born!

**ALL: Silent night, holy night, Son of God, love's pure light;
radiant beams from thy holy face with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.**

WONDERFUL PEACE

Gustav Nordqvist
tr. Norman Luboff

Peace, peace, wonderful peace,
Peace to the world is given;
Hushed are the angels, so still in the night,
Then in the east shone a heavenly light.
Join in the chorus, his praises sing!
"Glory to God, to the newly born King!"
Peace, peace, wonderful peace,
Peace to the world is given.

Peace, peace, bearer of peace,
All of good will receive him.
Holiest of nights, O most wondrous of days,
Shepherds and kings lift their voices in praise.
Join in the chorus, his praises sing!
"Glory to God, to the newly born King!"
Peace, peace, wonderful peace,
Peace to the world is given.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH CHOIR
Dr. Jane Holstein, Director

Sopranos

Debbie Detterman
Lynne Hurdle
Laura Juliano
Jess McAdam
June Oliver
Cheryl Rotundo
Beth Siegel
Annika Tenhor

Altos

Mary Ann Cooper
Jess Hwang
Ruth Johnson
Carly Jones
Jill Panovich
Kristen Schumacher

Tenors

Lin Hancock
Rick Hibbert
James Kiel
Bret Juliano
Josh Siegel
David Weck

Basses

Douglas Colber
James Hunt
Gregg Johnson
James Richards
Ryan Schumacher

KAIA STRING QUARTET

Victoria Moreira, violin Naomi Culp, violin
Susan Bengtson Price, viola Hope DeCelle, cello

OTHER INSTRUMENTALISTS

Cindy Fudala, flute Dr. Josh Ring, piano
Christine Phillips, oboe Dr. Paul Detterman, organ
Mackenzie Bufis, percussion

COMMENTATOR

The Rev. Donna Marsh



Every year Christmas has a special meaning. This year, marked by so much division and war, we offer you and your loved ones the texts and music of this concert as a reminder of God's promise that he is, in fact, Emmanuel: God with us through it all. May you have a blessed Christmas and a hopeful new year.

Merry Christmas

PLEASE JOIN US FOR WORSHIP

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 20

7:00 pm | Darkest Night Service*

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24

10:15 am | Family Service*

8:00 pm | Candlelight Service*

10:30 pm | Candlelight Communion Service

MONDAY, DECEMBER 25

10:15 am | Christmas Day Carol Sing

First Presbyterian Church of River Forest is wheelchair and hearing accessible.

*Live stream at firstpresrf.org

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF RIVER FOREST

Sunday Worship	10:15 am Sundays, in person or live stream
Adult Education	9:00 am Sundays, in person or online
Sunday Kids Club & Parent Oasis	9:00 am Sundays, kids preschool-5th grade & their parents
Middle & High School Classes	9:00 am Sundays
Middle & High School Groups	Sunday evenings
Summer Bible Camp	Registration opens mid-February for July camp
Lenten Soup Suppers	Wednesday evenings, beginning February 21
Holy Week & Easter Sunday Worship	March 24 through March 31

YOU ARE WELCOME AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF RIVER FOREST

First Pres is a community dedicated to growing as apprentices of Jesus Christ to reflect God's love. We are happy to have you with us today and invite you to fill out one of the welcome cards in the pews.