

# The Gayton Kirk

December 1, 2024

11 AM Service

## First Sunday of Advent



“The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light”

Photo of Liturgical Planning Team Artwork

**WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Betty Doll

**RINGING THE HOUR**

Marney Titmus

## Introduction

Janet James

Advent is a season of waiting, watching, and wonder. Not like “waiting in line,” but rather like waiting for a concert to begin, a love letter to arrive, or the stars to come out on a cold, clear night. A time of anticipation, expectation, and excitement. A time of renewing our hope, peace, joy, and love, getting ready for the marvel on the way.

The word itself is from the Latin *adventus* (“arrival”) – and of course the wondrous One who’s arriving is Jesus Christ, the Light of the World. Over the next four weeks, we’ll read scripture, pray, sing, and light candles to remind us of the growing light of God’s presence, even and especially in the shadows of despair, conflict, sorrow, and hate.

Dark skies are perfect for stargazing, for seeking out the Light of the World among the deep indigos, bottomless blues, and inky blacks of God’s night sky. Just as the shepherds and Magi looked up to the heavens and faithfully followed the stars, we’ll spend the next four weeks training our eyes to wait, and to watch, and to wonder at all God has done – and will do – for the love of this broken, beautiful world.

**PRELUDE**

Margaret Storti, piano

## CALL TO WORSHIP

Betty Doll

The God who breathed this world alive  
And sustains it day by day,  
Whose hands flung stars into space  
And controls our destiny  
Says, "Do not be afraid, for I am with you."  
The God who filled the ocean depths  
And set tides on their way,  
Who caused mountains to be raised up  
And rainbows to display  
Says, "I have called you by name, you are mine."  
The God who made the fertile earth  
And seed within to sow,  
Whose artistry creates butterflies  
And the early morning dew  
Says, "You are precious in my sight."

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

Betty Doll

**Christ with me,  
Christ before me,  
Christ in me,  
Christ beneath me,  
Christ above me,  
Christ on my right,  
Christ on my left,  
Christ when I lie down,  
Christ when I sit,  
Christ when I stand,  
Christ in the heart of everyone who thinks of me,  
Christ in the mouth of everyone who speaks of me,  
Christ in every eye that sees me,  
Christ in every ear that hears me.  
Amen.**

**HYMN # 314** "Longing for Light, We Wait in Darkness"

Margaret Stori, piano

## LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

**Liberation**, by Sri Aurobindo

I have thrown from me the whirling dance of mind  
And stand now in the spirit's silence free,  
Timeless and deathless beyond creature-kind,  
The centre of my own eternity.

I have escaped and the small self is dead;  
I am immortal, alone, ineffable;  
I have gone out from the universe I made,  
And have grown nameless and immeasurable.

My mind is hushed in a wide and endless light,  
My heart a solitude of delight and peace,  
My sense unsnared by touch and sound and sight,  
My body a point in white infinities.

I am the one Being's sole immobile Bliss:  
No one I am, I who am all that is.

May your Word be a lamp unto our feet, and a light unto our paths. Let your light shows us the way to go, both night and day. **Amen.**

**Luke 21: 25-36**

<sup>25</sup>“There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves. <sup>26</sup>People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. <sup>27</sup>Then they will see ‘the Son of Man coming in a cloud’ with power and great glory. <sup>28</sup>Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.”

<sup>29</sup>Then he told them a parable: “Look at the fig tree and all the trees; <sup>30</sup>as soon as they sprout leaves you can see for yourselves and know that summer is already near. <sup>31</sup>So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near. <sup>32</sup>Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all things have taken place. <sup>33</sup>Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. <sup>34</sup>“Be on guard so that your hearts are not weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of this life, and that day catch you unexpectedly, <sup>35</sup>like a trap. For it will come upon all who live on the face of the whole earth. <sup>36</sup>Be alert at all times, praying that you may have the strength to escape all these things that will take place, and to stand before the Son of Man.”

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**SERMON**

The Rev. Janet James

**HYMN # 88**      “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

Margaret Storti, piano

## CALL TO OFFERING

Deb Kuhn

With joyful and radiant hearts,  
we gratefully give who we are  
and what we have to God.

*It is appropriate to respond to God with our time, talents, and money. Your offering can be placed in the offering plate along with prayer concerns written on the card attached to the bulletin (program) or through the chat feature online. Please use first names only.*

Financial offerings can also be made by mail to P.O. Box 29635, Henrico, VA 23242 or donate by PayPal on The Kirk's website [www.thegaytonkirk.org](http://www.thegaytonkirk.org) website or use the QR Code below.



## OFFERTORY HYMN

Margaret Storti, piano

## PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Deb Kuhn

God Most High, receive the gifts of our lives  
as an offering of gratitude for your grace.  
Overshadow us with your Holy Spirit  
and let it be with us according to your word,  
for nothing is impossible with you. **Amen.**

## PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Janet James

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ,  
let us pray for the life of the world,  
saying: **O Christ, our light, hear our prayer.**

We pray for the church . . .  
Shape us through the mystery of your will  
into one body, one people,  
sharing in the promise of the gospel.  
**O Christ, our light, hear our prayer.**

We pray for the world . . .  
Work out your eternal purpose among us,  
so that the nations may be reconciled  
and all peoples may live in peace.  
**O Christ, our light, hear our prayer.**

We pray for this community . . .  
Defend the cause of the poor,  
deliver the weak and needy,  
and establish justice in this place.  
**O Christ, our light, hear our prayer.**

We pray for loved ones . . .  
Lift up the hearts of those who mourn;  
let them rejoice in your presence  
and give thanks for your grace.  
**O Christ, our light, hear our prayer.**

Lord Jesus Christ, hope of the world,  
help us to bear witness to your light  
so that all may believe and have life in you;  
in your holy name we pray. **Amen.**

## HOLY COMMUNION

The Rev. Janet James

*(Our communion bread is gluten free, and we use juice in lieu of wine.  
Those at home are encouraged to set aside bread or bread substitute and  
wine or wine substitute to join us for communion)*

## GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

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

Holy God, you created the world  
and all who live in it.  
As your first act of Creation,  
you said, "Let there be light."  
And there was light, and it was good.

You make the sun rise on the good and evil alike,  
 for your love has no prejudice.  
 It is not dependent on who we are  
 but is steadfast and true because that is who you are.

**Holy, Holy, Holy**      Tune: Tracy Fedke, b. 1975 arr: Koiné

Ho - ly, ho - ly, Lord God of heav-en - ly hosts.

Ho - ly, ho - ly, Lord God of heav-en - ly hosts.

Heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho-san - na! —

Ho-san - na! Ho - san-na in the high - est! Ho-san - na! —

Ho-san - na! — Bless-ed is he who comes! Bless-ed is he who comes!

— Bless-ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! —

Jesus, Light of the World,  
 you came into the world so we may have life.  
 In the mystery of God, you call us to be light in the world  
 because life is something to be shared.  
 With your compassion on the sick, the poor, and the outcast,  
 you taught us what love is.

In the glory of your resurrection  
 you demonstrated how far love will go.  
 Love, life, light - you have given us a purpose in the world.

Holy Spirit, light within us,  
 you enable us to be the fragrance of life  
 and the salt of the earth.



You lead our hearts  
so that we may season the world with grace.  
In the same way,  
you gather us at this table to sustain us  
so that we may be salt and light in the world.

Ever thankful,  
we pray that you would sprinkle salt on this meal we share today.  
May it renew our communion in Christ and with one another.  
With joy, we celebrate  
that this meal is not limited to this time and place.  
And so as you bind us together with the cup and the loaf,  
we give thanks that this table extends  
to every cathedral, sanctuary, home and group  
where two or three have gathered in your name.

With the boldness of those who know  
the love of God,  
the light of Christ,  
and the communion of the Holy Spirit,  
we join our voices in the prayer you taught us.

**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.**

#### **WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

As Jesus sat down to eat with his disciples,  
he took the bread, broke it and gave thanks.  
He then passed it to his disciples, saying,  
“Eat! This is my body broken for you.”

Next, he took the cup, and after he had blessed it,  
he gave it to the disciples and said,  
“Drink! This is the blood of the new covenant.  
My blood shed for you.”

You are the salt of the earth.  
You are the light of the world.  
These are holy statements.  
And they are impossible statements.  
But when faced with the impossible,  
Jesus reminds us that in him, all things are possible.

So, come: eat and drink  
so that your body and soul may be nourished  
to go out into the world  
and continue the ministry of Jesus.

**COMMUNION IS SHARED**

*After we receive the bread and the cup,  
let us hold the cup and drink together.*

**COMMUNION HYMN # 84** “Creator of the Stars of Night”  
Margaret Storti, piano

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

**HYMN # 52** “When Israel Was in Egypt’s Land” Margaret Storti, piano

**POSTLUDE** Margaret Storti, piano

**BLESSING AND CHARGE** Janet James

## WORSHIP NOTES

### Worship Liturgists:

First Sundays: **Betty Doll**, Mike Doll, Cathi Thornton, Deb Kuhn

Second Sundays: **Susan Trulove**, Lilly Craddock, Beverly Evans, Norma Smith

Third Sundays: **Sally Wambold**, Barbara Crump, Lily Titmus, Marney Titmus

Fourth Sundays: **Linda Smiley**, Patti McCloskey, Janice Baldwin, Xavier Rivera, Juan Rivera

Fifth Sundays: **Betty Doll**, Lilly Craddock, Xavier Rivera, Sally Wambold

Liturgical Planning Team and helpers: Betty Doll, Lynn Dowdy, Susan Hillyer, Deb Kuhn, Patti McCloskey, Leah Viar, John and Marie Barnett, Carolyn Bedford, Brian and Sandra Gellings, Marney Titmus, Carol Woodcock

Would you like to become a member of the Gayton Kirk? Please let Janet James, pastor, know of your interest.

For a copy of our weekly newsletter, *Kirk Happenings*, please go to [thegaytonkirk.org](http://thegaytonkirk.org), scroll down the website's front page, and click the box that says, "Kirk Happenings."

### The Gayton Kirk Staff

Brendan Donahue, Audio-Visual Director

Janet James, Pastor

Russ Kerr, Parish Associate

Margaret Storti, Pianist

John Donelson, Musician in Residence

Marilyn Johns, Zoom Master

Chrestine Shehata, Child Care

Yonan Shehata, Sexton

Flutists-Outdoor/Midday Prayer Service: Allen Burris, Deb Saidel, Myrick Crampton

The Gayton Kirk Jazz Trio: Joe Sarver, Ross Riddell, Bruce Sullivan

COVER ART Photo of the Liturgical Planning Team artwork

### LITURGY

Faith and Worship:

[https://www.faithandworship.com/prayers\\_Epiphany.htm#gsc.tab=0](https://www.faithandworship.com/prayers_Epiphany.htm#gsc.tab=0)

Call to Worship Journal:

<https://calltoworshipjournal.org/january-6-2025-epiphany-of-the-lord/>

IMAGINATIVE WORD "Liberation," by Sri Aurobindo

<https://allpoetry.com/poem/8583035-Liberation-by-Sri-Aurobindo>

HYMN "Down to Earth as a Dove" from the Presbyterian Hymnal, with permission, Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL. 60188

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# **THE GAYTON KIRK WEEKLY CALENDAR**

## **SUNDAY DECEMBER 1 - FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

- 8:30 AM - Celtic Worship Service in-person and Zoom (*host, Marilyn Johns*)
- 11:00 AM - Worship Service in-person, live streaming, and on Zoom (*host, Marilyn Johns*)
- 12:15 PM - Congregational Meeting to Elect Officers - on Zoom (*host, Marilyn Johns*)
- 5:00 PM - Jazz Vespers in-person, live streaming, and on Zoom (*host, Marilyn Johns*)
- 5:45 PM - Jazz Vespers Discussion - in person and Zoom (*host, Marilyn Johns*)
- 6:00 PM - Jazz Vespers Fellowship - in-person

## **MONDAY DECEMBER 2**

- 11:00 AM - Coffee and Scripture - Zoom (*host, Marilyn Johns*)
- 1:30 PM - Creative Expressions - in-person (*led by Sandra O'Neill*)
- 3:00 PM - *Let Justice Roll Down* Women's Bible Study - in-person (*led by Barbara Crump*)
- 5:00 PM - River City Players Auditions

## **TUESDAY DECEMBER 3**

- 11:55 AM - Kirktown Ukes - in-person (*Kay Cox and Tina Bechtle*)
- 1:00 PM - Bridge and Learn to Play Bridge - in-person (*Ellen Welthy and Tina Bechtle*)
- 7:00 PM - River City Players Auditions

## **WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 4**

- 9:45 AM - *Falling Upward* class - in-person (*led by Bland Weaver*)
- 12:00 PM - Tuckahoe Kiwanis Club
- 12:30 PM - Midday Prayer Service (*in the spirit of Taize*) - in-person
- 1:00 PM - Creative Art Fellowship - in-person (*led by Robin Ricketts*)

## **THURSDAY DECEMBER 5**

- 10:30 AM - Chair Yoga - in-person (*led by Robin Ricketts*)
- 5:30 PM - Handbells (*led by John Donelson*)
- 7:00 PM - River City Players Callbacks

## **FRIDAY DECEMBER 6**

- 6:45 PM - Celtic Harp Circle Rehearsal

## **SUNDAY DECEMBER 8 - SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

- 8:30 AM - Celtic Worship Service in-person and Zoom (*host, Marilyn Johns*)
- 11:00 AM - Worship Service in-person, live streaming, and on Zoom (*host, Marilyn Johns*)
- 3:30 PM - Artist's Reception - Small Works
- 5:00 PM - Jazz Vespers in-person, live streaming, and on Zoom (*host, Marilyn Johns*)
- 5:45 PM - Jazz Vespers Discussion - in person and Zoom (*host, Marilyn Johns*)
- 6:00 PM - Jazz Vespers Fellowship - in-person