

Love

For God so loved
the world that he
gave his one and
only Son, that
whoever believes
in him shall not
perish but have
eternal life.

John 3:16, NIV



Bower Hill Community Church (Presbyterian USA)
Order for Worship ~ Fourth Sunday of Advent ~ “Love Sunday” ~ 21 December 2025

Preparation for Worship:
“*Love is the whole thing. We are only pieces.*”
~Rumi

Prelude

*O Come, All Ye Faithful
Go Tell It on the Mountain*

Bower Hill ‘Phil

Introit

May I Be Empty

Call to Worship:

Leader: Look! The young woman is with child;

People: She will call her child Emmanuel, for God is with us.

Leader: The mystery of the ages is now revealed.

People: To God be glory forever.

Leader: God of grace, your eternal Word took flesh among us when Mary placed her life at the Service of your will. Prepare our hearts for Christ’s appearing; keep us steadfast in hope and faithful in service, that we may receive the coming of his kingdom, through Jesus Christ, the ruler of all, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God now and forever. Amen.

Litany for Advent:

O Emmanuel, our Sovereign and lawgiver, desire of the nations and Savior of all: Come and save us, O Lord our God.

Come, Lord Jesus.

God of all generations, though signs and seasons change, your promise is faithful and your word will never pass away.

Give us courage and strength as we watch and wait for Jesus Christ, our redeemer, who is coming in glory to reign.

Amen.

Lighting of the Advent Candles

Leader: On this fourth Sunday in Advent, we light the candle of love. The Lord will give you a sign.

Look, the young woman is with child.

People: She shall bear a son and name him Emmanuel: “God is with us.”

***Hymn 143**

Angels from the Realms of Glory

Call to Prayer

There is a voice crying out in the wilderness of sin. God is calling to us with love. Let us confess our sin, trusting in God’s saving grace.

Prayer of Confession

God of the future, you are coming in power to bring all things under your rule. We confess that we have not expected your kingdom of justice and peace, for we lead casual lives, ignoring your presence and your promise. We accept lies as truth, exploit neighbors, abuse the earth, and refuse your love for us and for others. In your mercy, forgive us. Grant us the wisdom to

welcome your way, and to seek the things that will endure when Christ comes to reign in every heart. Amen. [Silent prayers]

Words of Assurance

The wilderness will rejoice; the dry land will blossom. The people of God will return with joy and singing. Friends, hear and believe the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ: in him we are forgiven. Amen.

***The Gloria**

Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!

***The Peace**

Leader: The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

People: And also with you.

Leader: Let us greet one another with the peace of Christ.

Prayer of Illumination

Holy God, our hope and strength, by the power of your Spirit, prepare a way in our hearts for the coming of your Word, so that we may recognize the glorious signs of your promise fulfilled in us and for us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

First Scripture Reading

Isaiah 7:10-16

Pew Bible Page 636

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

***Hymn 100**

My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout

Mary's Song

Second Scripture Reading

Matthew 1:18-25

Pew Bible Page 1

Anthem

Cold December Flies Away

Jantz A. Black

Sermon

“Joseph’s Dream”

Rev. Dr. Brian Snyder

Response 601

Amen

***Affirmation of Faith**

“Credo for Christians”

**I worship and adore God, source, essence, and aim of all things,
Spirit that enlivens all beings.**

**I follow the way of Jesus, who found God in himself
and shared a way for others to find God in themselves.**

He was born through love,

He lived for love,

He suffered for love,

He died for love,

But love never dies.

**I submit myself to the leading of the love that is God,
that I may be compassionate toward all beings,
that I may live and serve in community with others,
that I may ask for and offer forgiveness,
that I may praise and enjoy God forever. Amen.**

Pastoral Prayer and the 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.
*Or “Mother” or “Parent”

Welcome and Next Steps

Minute for Mission

Offerings and Gifts of Self

Offertory Greensleeves Bower Hill ‘Phil

***The Doxology: Hymn 606, 607** Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow* Old Hundredth
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.
*For a gender-neutral version, use hymn 607.

***Prayer of Dedication**

***Closing Hymn 113** Angels We Have Heard on High

***Charge and Benediction**

Postlude We Wish You a Merry Christmas Bower Hill ‘Phil
Feel free to exit during the postlude, mindful of those who wish to stay and listen.

Many thanks to members of the Bower Hill Phil -

Addie Ivey, clarinet
Bea Watterson, violin
Leah Smith, violin
Josiah Slaybaugh, viola
Ella Belardi, cello

*If you have a prayer request, please write it on the white prayer request card located in your pew.
You may place it in the offering plate located in the narthex to be printed next week.
Prayer concerns will remain in the bulletin for three weeks unless otherwise requested.*

Prayers are requested for:
Matt Arner, Faye Cunningham, Jennifer Dunn, Joseph Duchene
Family of Bob Ferrero, Nancy Green, Family of Sam Levine, Alex Lorber, McQuade Family
Family of Robert Olinger, Barb Oram, Mike Riemer, Antoinette Shanahan, Resa Walsh