



A progressive, radically inclusive, anti-racist community

201 West 13th Street, New York, NY, 10011 • (212) 243-5470
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office@churchofthevillage.org

December 24, 2023 • Fourth Sunday of Advent Christmas Eve

**Black Lives Matter / Welcome the Stranger, including Migrants and Refugees
Stop Hate Against Muslims, Jews, Asian Americans, and Pacific Islanders**



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The Light of Love is Constant

WE GATHER

“The land upon which we gather is part of the traditional territory of the Lenne-Lenape, called ‘Lenapehoking.’ The Lenape People lived in harmony with one another upon this territory for thousands of years. During the colonial era and early federal period, many were removed west and north, but some also remain among the continuing historical tribal communities of the region: The Nanticoke Lenne-Lenape Tribal Nation; the Ramapough Lenape Nation; and the Powhatan Lenape Nation, The Nanticoke of Millsboro Delaware, and the Lenape of Cheswold Delaware. We acknowledge the Lenne-Lenape as the original people of this land and their continuing relationship with their territory. In our acknowledgment of the continued presence of Lenape people in their homeland, we affirm the aspiration of the great Lenape Chief Tamanend, that there be harmony between the indigenous people of this land and the descendants of the immigrants to this land, “as long as the rivers and creeks flow, and the sun, moon, and stars shine.”

PRELUDE

*Schafe Können Sicher Weiden
(Sheep May Safely Graze)
from Bach’s “Hunt” Cantata
Soloist: María Brea*

Schafe können sicher weiden,
Wo ein guter Hirte wacht.
Wo Regenten wohl regieren,
Kann man Ruh und Friede spüren
Und was Länder glücklich macht.

Sheep may safely graze
where a good shepherd watches.
Where rulers are governing well,
one may feel rest and peace
and what makes countries happy.

WELCOME

OPENING CAROL

It Came Upon the Midnight Clear

**It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth, to touch their harps of gold:
“Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heaven’s all-gracious King.”
The world in solemn stillness lay, to hear the angels sing.**

**Still through the cloven skies they come with peaceful wings unfurled,
and still their heavenly music floats o’er all the weary world;
above its sad and lowly plains, they bend on hovering wing,
and ever o’er its Babel sounds the blessed angels sing.**

**For lo! the days are hastening on, by prophet seen of old,
when with the ever-circling years shall come the time foretold
when peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling,
and the whole world send back the song which now the angels sing.**

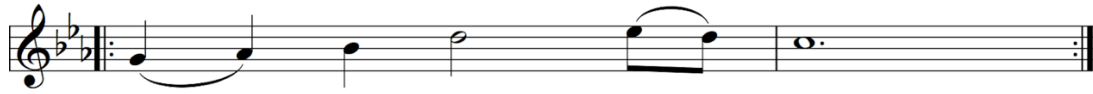
LIGHTING THE CANDLE OF LOVE

Jyothi do Prabhu (Give Us Light)

call and response



Jyo - thi dho, jyo - thi dho, jyo - thi dho Pra - bhu.
Give us Light, give us Light, give us Light, O God.



Jyo - thi dho Pra - bhu,
Give us Light, O God,



jyo - thi dho jyo - thi dho, jyo - thi dho Pra - bhu.
give us Light, give us Light, give us Light, O God.

Walk in the Light



We'll walk in the light, beau - ti - ful light.



Come where the dew-drops of mer - cy are bright.



Shine all a - round us by day and by night.



Je - sus, the light of the world.

WE PROCLAIM

LESSONS AND CAROLS

Awaiting Dawn:

The Light of Love Is Constant

FIRST LESSON

Isaiah 9:2-7

The people walking in darkness are seeing a brilliant light –
upon those who dwell in a land of deep shadows
light is shining! God, you have made the nation greater –
you have brought them abundant joy!
They celebrate in your presence as with the harvest celebrations,
or as warriors celebrate when dividing spoils.
For the yoke that burdened them,
the weight on their shoulders, the rod of their oppressors –
you have shattered it, as you did at the defeat of Midian.
For every boot that tramped in battle,
every cloak that was dragged through blood,
is now used as fuel for the fire.

For a child is born to us,
an heir is given us, upon whose shoulders dominion will rest.
This One shall be called Wonderful Counselor, the Strength of God,
Eternal Protector, Champion of Peace.
This dominion, and this peace, will grow without end,
with David's throne and realm
sustained with justice and fairness, now and forever.
The zeal of YHWH, all-loving, will accomplish it!"

REFLECTION

Pastor Jeff Wells

CAROL

Rejoice Greatly, O Daughter of Zion
María Brea, Soprano

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Sion,
shout, O daughter of Jerusalem:
behold, thy King cometh unto thee.
He is the righteous Saviour,
and He shall speak peace unto the heathen.

SECOND LESSON

Luke 2:1-7

In those days, Caesar Augustus published a decree ordering a census of the whole Roman world. This first census took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All the people were instructed to go back to the towns of their birth to register.

And so Joseph went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to “the city of David” – Bethlehem, in Judea, because Joseph was of the house and lineage of David;
he went to register with Mary, his espoused wife, who was pregnant.
While they were there, the time came for her delivery.

She gave birth to her firstborn, a son;
she put him in a simple cloth wrapped like a receiving blanket,
and laid him in a feeding trough for cattle,
because there was no room for them at the inn.

REFLECTION

Pastor Jeff Wells

CAROL

Gesú Bambino
María Brea, Soprano

Nell'umile capanna nel freddo e povertà
è nato il Santo pargolo che il mondo □ dorer.

*Osanna, osanna cantano con giubilante cor
I tuoi pastori ed angeli o re di luce e amor.
Venite adoremus, venite adoremus
venite adoremus Dominum.*

O bel bambin non piangere non piangere, Redentor!
La mamma tua cullandoti ti bacia, O Salvator.

In the humble hut, in cold and poverty
The Holy infant is born, who the world will adore.

*Hosanna, hosanna, sing with a joyous heart,
your shepherds and angels, O King of light and love.
Come let us adore, come let us adore,
Come let us adore the Lord.*

O beautiful boy do not cry do not cry, Redeemer!
Your mother cradles you, kisses you, O Savior.

THIRD LESSON

Luke 2:8-20

There were shepherds in the area living in the fields
and keeping night watch by turns over their flock.

The angel of God appeared to them,
and the glory of God shone around them;
they were very much afraid.

The angel said to them,
“You have nothing to fear!

I come to proclaim good news to you –
news of a great joy to be shared by the whole people.
Today in David’s city, a savior – the Messiah – has been born to you.

Let this be a sign to you:
you'll find an infant wrapped in a simple cloth, lying in a manger."
Suddenly, there was a multitude of the heavenly host with the angel,
praising God and saying, "Glory to God in high heaven!
And on earth, peace to those on whom God's favor rests."

When the angels had returned to heaven, the shepherds said to one another,
"Let's go straight to Bethlehem and see this event that God has made known to us." They hurried and found
Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger;
once they saw this, they reported what they had been told concerning the child.
All who heard about it were astonished at the report given by the shepherds.
Mary treasured all these things and reflected on them in her heart.
The shepherds went away glorifying and praising God
for all they had heard and seen, just as they had been told.

REFLECTION

Pastor Jeff Wells

CAROL

Love Came Down at Christmas

**Love came down at Christmas, Love all lovely, Love divine;
Love was born at Christmas; star and angels gave the sign.**

**Worship we the Godhead, Love incarnate, Love divine;
worship we our Jesus, but wherewith for sacred sign?**

**Love shall be our token; love be yours and love be mine;
love to God and neighbor, love for plea and gift and sign.**

WE RESPOND

A TIME OF OFFERING

4 WAYS TO GIVE:

- The Vanco giving app, using the link on our website <https://www.churchofthevillage.org> or the Vanco mobile app or secure Vanco web link.
Visit <https://secure.myvanco.com/L-YQX3>.
- Setting up a direct bank transfer from your bank to COTV's bank
- Mailing a check to COTV's address: 201 West 13th St., NY, NY, 10011
- For those in the church building: Placing your gift in the offering basket in the sanctuary

For help with any of these, send an email to giving@churchofthevillage.org
OR call the church office: 212-243-5470



OFFERTORY

O Holy Night
María Brea, Soprano

O holy night! The stars are brightly shining,
it is the night of our dear Saviour's birth.
Long lay the world in sin and error pining,
till Christ appear'd and the soul felt its worth.
A thrill of hope, the weary world rejoices,
for yonder breaks a new and glorious morn.

Fall on your knees! O hear the angel voices!
O night divine, O night when Christ was born;
O night divine, O night, O night Divine.

Truly He taught us to love one another;
his law is love and his gospel is peace.
Chains shall he break for the slave is our brother;
And in his name all oppression shall cease.
Sweet hymns of joy in grateful chorus raise we,
Let all within us praise his holy name.

**Christ is our God! O praise his name forever,
His power and glory evermore proclaim.
His power and glory evermore proclaim.**

WE ARE SENT INTO THE WORLD

BLESSING THE WORLD

Silent Night

**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!**

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

BLESSING

CLOSING CAROL

Hark! the Herald Angels Sing

**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 a 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!”**

POSTLUDE

Ding Dong Merrily on High

WORSHIP HOSTS

Worship Design: Pastor Jeff Wells, Pastor Alexis Lillie, Jorge Lockward, Alfida Figueroa, Katie Reimer & Dwight Campbell

Advent Candle Lighting: TBD

Lectors/Readers: Dwight Campbell, Becca Love, John C. Flake

Dance Ministry: Aliyah Miller

Call to Offering: Sarah Witman

Altar Design: John C. Flake

Visuals Design: Bailey Roach

Guest Soloist: María Brea

Keyboard: Jorge Lockward

Flutes: Matthew Willis & Saeki Mayu

Double Bass: Dave Ephros

Zoom Host: Martha Chapman

Minister of Care: Monica Quintero (online), Virginia Riker (onsite)

CREDITS

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*Schafe Können Sicher Weiden
(Sheep May Safely Graze)*

W: Salomon Franck

M: J. S. Bach

It Came Upon the Midnight Clear

W: Verse 1-3: E. H. Sears

M: Richard Storrs Willis

God Is Present in this Place (The Song of the Angels)

W: Katie Reimer & Jorge Lockward

M: French carol melody

Words © 2017 Katie Reimer & Jorge Lockward

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Jyothi do Prabhu (Give Us Light)

W&M: Charles Vas

© 1990 Asian Institute for Liturgy and Music and the Christian Conference of Asia, Manila, Philippines.

Walk in the Light

W & M: George D. Elderkin

Rejoice Greatly, O Daughter of Zion

W: Zechariah 9:9-10

M. G. F. Handel

Gesú Bambino

W & M: Pietro A. Yon

O Holy Night

W: Placide Cappeau, Eng. trans. John S. Dwight

M: Adolphe Adam

Hark the Herald Angel Sing

W: Charles Wesley

M: Felix Mendelssohn

Ding Dong Merrily on High

W: George Ratcliff Woodward

M: Traditional English Carol

WE ARE THE CHURCH OF THE VILLAGE

The Church of the Village is a progressive and radically inclusive community that is committed to dismantling racism, sexism, and all forms of oppression. The foundation for all of our theology and practice is Jesus’ instruction to “love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength and love your neighbor as yourself.”

We seek to build a world overflowing with justice, mercy, kindness, and compassion.

Our church building stands on ancestral lands of the Lenape people. The colonizers who stripped Indigenous peoples of their lands used Christianity to justify their actions. We are beneficiaries of a history of appropriation, slavery, and forced migration. We repent and commit to being a community that seeks to repair the harm done to Indigenous peoples and build new pathways to love and justice.

We celebrate human diversity – welcoming people of every color, nationality, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, physical and cognitive ability, and economic status. We strongly support environmental justice and stewardship of the Earth. We believe many roads lead to God and are respectful of a diversity of spiritual paths. We believe our community flourishes with many points of view, opportunities for creative expression, and participatory worship.

To learn more about The Church of the Village, please complete our [Virtual Welcome Card](#).

You can also submit a prayer request on the Welcome Card form.

We will gladly send you our weekly email newsletter and Daily Inspiration emails.

If you have questions, please contact PastorAlexis@churchofthevillage.org.

Please follow us on Facebook ([Facebook.com/ChurchoftheVillage](https://www.facebook.com/ChurchoftheVillage)), Twitter (@umcofthevillage), and Instagram (churchofthevillage). Check out our [YouTube channel](#) for videos of music, worship, Finding Center, and more.

You can also learn more on our website at churchofthevillage.org.

THIS WEEK AT A GLANCE

December 24– Sunday	10:10am 10:30am 12:00pm 12:30pm	Pre-service fellowship (via Zoom) Christmas Eve service (via Zoom or FB Live) Community Closet Healing Conversations
December 26 – Tuesday	2:00pm – 5:00pm	The Red Door Place: Food Pantry
December 27 – Wednesday	9:00am 6:30 pm	Together in Prayer (via Zoom) Bible Study
December 30 – Saturday	11:30am – 2:00pm	The Red Door Place: Community Meal
December 31– Sunday	10:10am 10:30am 12:00pm	Pre-service fellowship (via Zoom) Sunday worship and Christmas Pageant (via Zoom or FB Live) Community Closet

2023 Stewardship Campaign

Together in Commitment, Strength, and Mission

Thank you for the many ways your presence enhances our community and work together.
Thank you for pledging financial support to the life and ministry of our beloved community.

As you prayerfully discern your pledge for 2023, we invite you to be bold in your generosity as we continue this adventure together.

Submit your pledge: <https://www.churchofthevillage.org/2023-stewardship-campaign>

Questions: Email giving@churchofthevillage.org

We all work together as members and supporters of our spiritual community to foster the ministries and mission of the Church of the Village. Here are ways you can offer your gifts:

- **ELECTRONIC FUNDS TRANSFER/DIRECT PAYMENT** from your bank account to COTV. This option includes no fees for the giver or the church. You can set this up directly through your bank for one-time gifts/payments or recurring gifts/payments to COTV. For assistance with this process, please contact giving@churchofthevillage.org.
- **VANCO:** [Vanco](#)'s simple online payment processing services and giving app make it easy to give when and where you want.
- **CHECK:** you can send a check payable to "The Church of the Village," and mail it to:
Church of the Village
PO Box 167
New York, NY 10113

For assistance with using any of these methods or to talk about remembering Church of the Village in your will, email giving@churchofthevillage.org. *Please note - emails to this address should be about how we can help you set up your giving process but should NOT include any specific information about pledge amounts, gift amounts, or any other confidential information from the individual sending the message.*

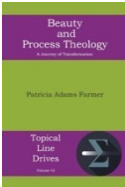
*Thank you for being a part of the family of The Church of the Village
and supporting the work and ministry of this community!*



AGAIN AND AGAIN: The Cycle of Grace a new worship series

January 7 – February 11

The new year invites us to ponder new ways of being – and brings into focus the ways we may repeatedly strive to grow over the course of our lives. Sometimes we seem to take two steps forward and one step back which can feel discouraging. Instead of viewing it as a disappointment or failure, what if we saw our continued efforts at growth as part of a cycle of grace, where the Divine continually beckons us to new life. This holy cycle is in operation in all aspects of our life and in all of creation. Like children learning to walk and forests renewing themselves after a fire, God’s grace meets us, again and again.



WEDNESDAY NIGHT BIBLE STUDY: *BEAUTY AND PROCESS THEOLOGY*

Wednesdays; 6:30pm

In this book, theologian and pastor Patricia Adams Farmer invites us to move beyond limiting ways we have of speaking of God. She sees God as both beautiful and the ongoing author of beauty. God invites us in living a vision, and that vision is not just “good” in some abstract sense. Learn to think about and experience God in a new way as you bring process and beauty together. Join us via Zoom! <http://zoom.us/j/713063594> or by phone: 646-876-9923; **Meeting ID:** 713 063 594 **Passcode:** 10011



CLOTHING DRIVE

December- January

For the month of December and January, we will be collecting clothing donations for several organizations where Church of the Village members work or have ties. We are seeking: - Donations of *new* socks and underwear for men in all sizes - Donations of *new* winter clothing items for men, women, and children - Donations of *new* winter coats for men, women, and children You can bring these donations to worship on Sundays through December and January. (If you have gently used and / or additional items in all sizes, we are happy to take those donations for our community closet on an ongoing basis as well.)

COMMUNITY CLOSET

Sundays, Noon to 1pm.



Community Closet is seeking donations!

Ready to let go of some of your gently used clothing and accessories? Make space in your closet by helping to stock our free, inclusive, and identity-affirming community closet. Contributions can be brought to COTV on Sundays or email Pastor Alexis to arrange a possible pick-up!

Spread the word! Church of the Village's Community Closet will be available every Sunday for 1 hour after service in the narthex. All are welcome to browse the racks and shop for free! If you know of someone who may be desiring a new style or a wardrobe change, please invite them to check us out! We have a variety of styles and sizes but are especially looking for donations of womenswear in sizes 10 and above as well as menswear in good condition. Interested in hosting the Community Closet after service one Sunday? Sign up here or e-mail Beccalove123@gmail.com for more info!

DANCE PRAYER

Every third Thursday of the month, 6:30pm-7:30pm



Join us in the sanctuary every third Thursday of the month for Dance Prayer! We will come together with an opening prayer and moment of reflection and then spend 45 minutes moving our bodies and dancing together to a diverse playlist. There will be no designated choreography and no final performance, just a joyful space to connect with your own rhythm while rejoicing in the gift of dance and community. Each gathering will then close with a moment of prayer and reflection before we part ways

HEALING CONVERSATIONS

(Every 4th Sunday of the month); 12:30pm

Healing Conversations is a place to share your feelings about the losses in your life in a safe, supportive, and friendly atmosphere. Your feelings of loss may be caused by events that are recent or in the distant past. You are invited to join our small group on site or online via Zoom (**Meeting ID:** 838 5366 1938 **Passcode:** 690827).

TOGETHER IN PRAYER

Wednesday mornings; 9:00am

Our weekly prayer group includes an inspirational reading, time to support one another, and prayers for ourselves, others, and events in the world. We gather via Zoom conference call Friday mornings from 9:00 to 10:00am (**Meeting ID:** 850 0514 7319 **Passcode:** 594909). For more information, contact Deaconess Sarah Capers at smcapers99@gmail.com.



THE ALLIANCE: A YOUNG ADULT GROUP

1st Sundays after worship

The Alliance will meet the first Sunday of the month, starting October 1 after worship. Outings will include sharing meals together, exploring the city, museum visits, and more. Open to anyone who is young adult(ish), college age - mid-thirties. Bring a dish to share.

THE RED DOOR PLACE



Donations, in person, to the program can be made Mondays, Tuesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays, from 9am to 3pm. Ring the bell on the red door on 13th street or call the number posted at the door.

Food Pantry: Tuesdays; 2pm - 5pm - **BY APPOINTMENT ONLY**

Appointments are available via the [Plentiful App](#) (download from the play/app store). You can search for us, in the app, by name "The Red Door Place" or scroll through the list (towards the bottom) and our pantry will show. After registering on the app, you will receive a QR code - **BRING the QR code with you to your appointment.** Arrive within 5 minutes of your scheduled appointment and present your QR code for scanning.

If you do not have a QR code, you will not receive pantry. Note: Missed appointments can be rescheduled to a later open slot or the following Tuesday. If you have any questions call (347) 687-5321 or visit www.thereddoorplace.org.

Community Meal: We will continue to hand out bags of food on Saturdays beginning around 11:30am. Guests may arrive earlier to get a place in line; we have chalk marks on the sidewalk at 6-foot intervals to indicate where people should stand at a safe distance.

THE RED DOOR PLACE – NEEDS MONEY FOR FOOD!

IF YOU WANT TO HELP, ask your employer, your family, your friends to GIVE! Put out an appeal on your Facebook page. Email people you think would be able to donate.

TO MAKE A DONATION TO THE RED DOOR PLACE, you can donate online using [VANCO](#)'s simple online payment processing services and giving app. Or send checks made payable to Church of the Village and write The Red Door Place (TRDP) in the memo line.

Mail to: Church of the Village, PO Box 167, New York, NY 10113.

GIVE TO THE CHURCH OF THE VILLAGE ON VANCO

The Church of the Village is now accessible via Vanco. [VANCO](#)'s simple online payment processing services and giving app make it easy to give when and where you want. Visit <https://secure.myvanco.com/L-YQX3>.

BECOME A CHURCH OF THE VILLAGE PRAYER PARTNER

Each week, we receive many prayers through our website, the Red Door Place empowerment ministry, on prayer cards during worship, and from our Ministers of Care team. These prayers are distributed via email to our large team of **Prayer Partners** who lift them up to God. If you would like to pray for others, please email Deaconess Sarah Capers (smcapers99@gmail.com) with your interest. You can submit a prayer online at ChurchoftheVillage.org/prayer.

COTV WORSHIP VIDEOS ON FACEBOOK

It is always a deeper experience to be present with the worshipping community, but when you can't join us for Sunday worship, you can view the worship recording anytime at Facebook.com/ChurchoftheVillage/videos.

SERMON ARCHIVE

If you missed worship or want to read the sermon again, we post many of our past Sunday sermon manuscripts and worship bulletins on our website at ChurchoftheVillage.org/sermons. We encourage you to read and share them with others.



How to Contact Key COTV Leaders

Pastor Jeff Wells

Email: PastorJeff@churchofthevillage.org

Phone: (212) 243-5470 ext. 9;
(917) 604-5227

Pastor Alexis Lillie,

Minister for Leadership & Congregational
Development

Email: PastorAlexis@churchofthevillage.org

Phone: (212) 243-5470 ext. 8;
(719) 201-6535

Jorge Lockward,

Minister of Worship Arts

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Alfida Figueroa, Chair,

Worship Committee

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