

The United Methodist Church at Absecon

100 Pitney Rd // Absecon, NJ 08201

609.641.1265 // abseconumc.com

abseconumc@comcast.net

The Reverend David L. Ledford III, Pastor

ReverendDaveLedford@gmail.com

**Priscilla Cunningham,
Director of Music and Organist**



Persia – A Place of Return

December 28, 2025

Today's Lay Reader: Sharon Wilson

Welcome

Prelude

Call to Worship

Leader: Come! Come from our sanctuary or from your home. Come at 10 AM on Sunday or any time during the week. Come whenever and wherever you are. Come! Worship is called in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit!


People: **We come, ready to celebrate Christmas together!**

Leader: Jesus' story doesn't end at his birth, and neither does our celebrating.


People: **Jesus had a mission to fulfill. So do we. In the new year, let's move closer and closer to fulfilling God's call in our lives.**

Hymn


It Came upon the Midnight Clear




1. It came up-on the mid-night clear, that glo-rious song of old,
 2. Still through the clo-ven skies they come with peace-ful wings un-furled,
 3. And ye, be-neath life's crush-ing load, whose forms are bend-ing low,
 4. For lo! the days are has-tening on, by proph-et seen of old,



from an-gels bend-ing near the earth, to touch their harps of gold;
 and still their heaven-ly mu-sic floats o'er all the wea-ry world;
 who toil a-long the climb-ing way with pain-ful steps and slow,
 when with the ev-er-cir-cling years shall come the time fore-told



"Peace on the earth, good will to men,* from heaven's all-gra-cious King."
 a-bove its sad and low-ly plains, they bend on hov-ering wing,
 look now! for glad and gold-en hours come swift-ly on the wing.
 when peace shall o-ver all the earth its an-cient splen-dors fling,



The world in sol-emn still-ness lay, to hear the an-gels sing.
 and ev-er o'er its Ba-bel sounds the bless-ed an-gels sing.
 O rest be-side the wea-ry road, and hear the an-gels sing!
 and the whole world send back the song which now the an-gels sing.

Opening Prayer

Lord, you used the light of a star to lead magi to Bethlehem. There, they would worship your Son. Today, we worship him all the way across the Atlantic Ocean in Absecon, NJ. The light of that star, which began two thousand years ago, lives in us now. We're going to let it shine. Amen.

Pastoral Prayer

The Lord's Prayer

Young Disciples Chatting with the Rev

Carol Sing!

Scripture Lesson

Matthew 2:7-15

Then Herod secretly called for the magi and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage." When they had heard the king, they set out, and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen in the east, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, "Out of Egypt I have called my son."

Leader: The Word of God for the people of God

People: **Thanks be to God**

Message

Persia – A Place of Return

Offering Ourselves and Our Gifts to God

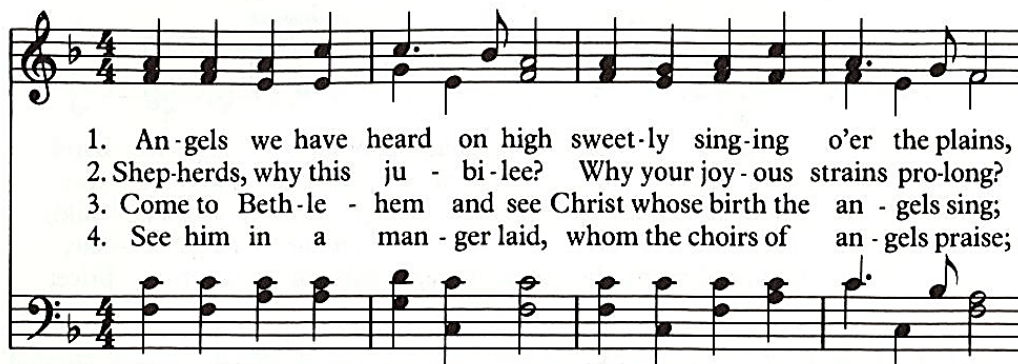
Offertory

Go Tell It

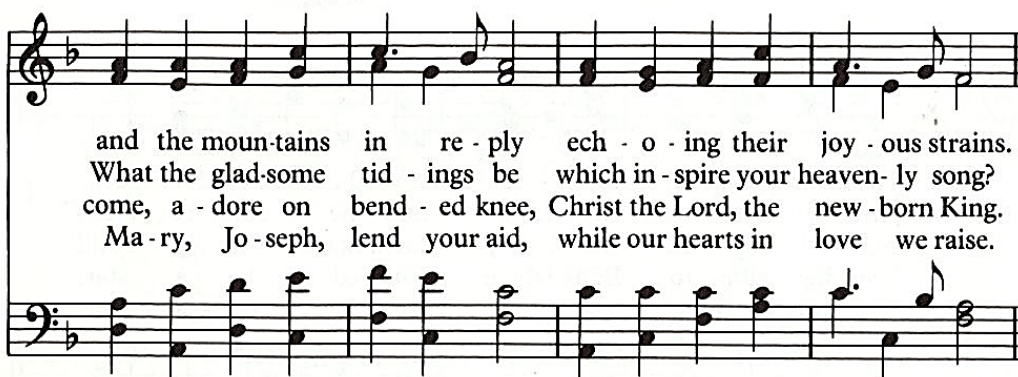
arr. Albin C. Whitworth

Doxology

Praise God, from Whom all blessings flow;
 Praise Him, all creatures here below: Alleluia! Alleluia!
 Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;
 Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost: Alleluia! Alleluia!
 Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Hymn**Angels We Have Heard on High**


1. An-gels we have heard on high sweet-ly sing-ing o'er the plains,
 2. Shep-herds, why this ju - bi-lee? Why your joy-ous strains pro-long?
 3. Come to Beth-le - hem and see Christ whose birth the an - gels sing;
 4. See him in a man - ger laid, whom the choirs of an - gels praise;



and the moun-tains in re - ply ech - o - ing their joy - ous strains.
 What the glad-some tid - ings be which in - spire your heav-en - ly song?
 come, a - dore on bend - ed knee, Christ the Lord, the new - born King.
 Ma - ry, Jo - seph, lend your aid, while our hearts in love we raise.



Refrain

Glo - - - - - ri - a,

The image displays a musical score for a hymn, likely 'Joy to the World'. It consists of two systems of music, each with a treble and bass staff. The key signature is one flat (B-flat). The lyrics are written below the notes. The first system shows the beginning of the hymn, and the second system continues it. The lyrics are: 'in ex-cel-sis De-o! Glo-ri-a, in ex-cel-sis De-o!'.

in ex-cel-sis De-o! Glo-ri-a, in ex-cel-sis De-o!

Benediction

Postlude

Joy to the World

arr. Albin C. Whitworth

- > **Next Sunday** – Regular worship schedule: 9 AM, 11 AM, and Sunday School at 9:45 AM.
- > **January Communion Sunday** – January 11
- > **Coats and Cocoa** – Saturday, January 3, 10 AM
- > **Church Office** – will reopen on Monday, January 5.