

First Presbyterian Church

Service of Lessons and Carols

Christmas Eve

December 24, 2020

8:00 p.m.

ASSEMBLE IN GOD'S NAME

Prelude Music (7:35 pm)

"Away in a Manger"	arr. Kelley
"Angels We Have Heard on High"	arr. Kelley
"O Little Town of Bethlehem"	arr. Kelley
"A Christmas Prelude"	arr. Callahan
"Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"	arr. Kelley
"Break Forth, O Beauteous Morning Light"	Bach
"Pastorale"	Vivaldi
"Coventry Carol"	arr. Kelley
"Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus"	arr. Powell
"People Look East"	arr. Powell

Call to Worship

The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all.

Glory to God in the highest!

To us is born in the city of David a Savior, the Messiah, the Lord.

Glory to God in the highest!

Carol: "O Come, All Ye Faithful"

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant; O come ye; O come ye to Bethlehem!
Come, and behold him, born the King of angels! O come, let us adore him...

True God from true God, Light from light eternal, born of a virgin, a mortal he comes;
very God, begotten, not created! O come, let us adore him...Christ, the Lord!

Sing, choirs of angels; sing in exultation; sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God, all glory in the highest! O come, let us adore him...Christ, the Lord!

Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning; Jesus, to thee be all glory given;
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing! O come, let us adore him...Christ, the Lord!

Prayer of Adoration

All glory to you, great God,

who brought the nations to your light

and kings to the brightness of your rising:

As we celebrate the birth of Jesus among us,

fill the world with your glory and show yourself to all nations;

through him who is the true light and the bright morning star,

Jesus Christ your Son, our Lord,

who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,

one God, now and forever. Amen.

Lighting of the Christ Candle

Light one candle for Christ.

Because the world is broken and the wait is long
but Christ is with us through it all.

In humble manger in a back water town - a baby.

On a convict's cross - a king.

***In every heart and every home where hope, peace, joy, and love endure -
Christ with us.***

“Glory to God in the Highest heaven,” she whispers,

“and peace to all on earth.”

So we light one candle, because it only takes one: Christ with us.

Response

PROCLAIM GOD'S WORD

Words of Welcome

Prayer for Illumination

Lesson: Isaiah 9:2-7

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness— on them light has shined. You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

Carol: "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"

- 1 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 the angelic host proclaim, “Christ is born in Bethlehem!”
Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn king!”
- 2 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 the incarnate deity,
pleased in flesh with us to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel.
Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn king!”
- 3 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!”

Lesson: Isaiah 60:1-6

Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. For darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the Lord will arise upon you, and his glory will appear over you. Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn. Lift up your eyes and look around; they all gather together, they come to you; your sons shall come from far away, and your daughters shall be carried on their nurses' arms. Then you shall see and be radiant; your heart shall thrill and rejoice, because the abundance of the sea shall be brought to you, the wealth of the nations shall come to you. A multitude of camels shall cover you, the young camels of Midian and Ephah; all those from Sheba shall come. They shall bring gold and frankincense, and shall proclaim the praise of the Lord.

Carol: "We Three Kings of Orient Are"

- 1 We three kings of Orient are; bearing gifts we traverse afar,
field and fountain, moor and mountain, following yonder star.

Refrain:

O star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright,
westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light!

- 2 Born a King on Bethlehem's plain, gold I bring to crown him again,
King forever, ceasing never over us all to reign. **(Refrain)**
- 3 Frankincense to offer have I; incense owns a deity nigh;
prayer and praising gladly raising, worshiping God Most High. **(Refrain)**
- 4 Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume breathes a life of gathering gloom;
sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying, sealed in the stone-cold tomb. **(Refrain)**
- 5 Glorious now behold him arise, King and God and Sacrifice:
Alleluia! Alleluia! sounds through the earth and skies. **(Refrain)**

Lesson: Luke 2:1-7

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

Carol: "Away in a Manger"

- 1 Away in a manger, no crib for his bed, the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.
The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay, the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.
- 2 The cattle are lowing; the poor baby wakes, but little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes.
I love thee, Lord Jesus; look down from the sky, and stay by my side until morning is nigh.
- 3 Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask thee to stay close by me forever and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in thy tender care, and fit us for heaven to live with thee there.

Lesson: Luke 2:8-20

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!" When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

Carol: "Angels We Have Heard on High"

- 1 Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o'er the plains,
and the mountains in reply echoing their joyous strains.
Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!
- 2 Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be which inspire your heavenly song?
Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!
- 3 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 Deo!

Lesson: John 1:1-14

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people.

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

Sermon: "A Defiant Light"

Rev. Carter

RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

* Carol: "Joy to the World"

- 1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her king;
let every heart prepare him room, and heaven and nature sing...
- 2 Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns! Let all their songs employ,
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains repeat the sounding joy...
- 3 No more let sins and sorrows grow, nor thorns infest the ground;
he comes to make his blessings flow far as the curse is found...
- 4 He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the nations prove
the glories of his righteousness and wonders of his love...

* Affirmation of Faith

A Declaration of Faith (PCUS) 4.5

We are certain that Jesus lives.

***He lives as God with us, touching all of human life with the presence of God.
He lives as one of us with God.***

***Because he shares our humanity and has bound us to himself in love,
we have an advocate in the innermost life of God.***

We declare that Jesus is Lord.

***His resurrection is a decisive victory
over the powers that deform and destroy human life.***

His lordship is hidden.

***The world appears to be dominated by people and systems
that do not acknowledge his rule.***

But his lordship is real.

***It demands our loyalty and sets us free
from the fear of all lesser lords who threaten us.***

***We maintain that ultimate sovereignty now belongs to Jesus Christ
in every sphere of life.***

Jesus is Lord

***He has been Lord from the beginning. He will be Lord at the end.
Even now he is Lord.***

Offering

Offertory

"Infant Holy, Infant Lowly"

arr. McKay Crockett

Prayer of Dedication and the Lord's Prayer

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Let us pray . . .

GO IN GOD'S NAME

Carol: "Silent Night, Holy Night!"

1. 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!

- 2 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!
- 3 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!
- 4 Silent night! Holy night! Wondrous star, lend thy light;
with the angels let us sing Alleluia to our king:
Christ the Savior is born! Christ the Savior is born!

Charge and Benediction

Postlude

“Angels From the Realms of Glory”

arr. David Lasky

Interested in discovering more about our church? Visit our website at www.fpccs.org.

On Sunday, December 27 we will worship virtually at **10:00 a.m.**

As the year concludes, we want you to know of our gratitude for your support for our church's ministry and mission. Thank you for your consistent support and generosity. It helps you bring the Gospel alive in our faith community.

PARTICIPANTS IN TONIGHT'S SERVICE

Pastor	Rev. William Carter
Liturgists	Richard and Marie Cochrane
Director of Music	Frank Jones
Organist	Kay Ten Eyck
Flutist	Catherine Huhn
Oboist	Connie Weiss
Cellist	John Weiss
Vocalists	Alan Baker and Susan Kelly

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