

First Presbyterian Church

Christmas Eve Jazz Service

December 24, 2020

11:00 p.m.

ALL ARE WELCOMED

Music to Gather the Shepherds

"God Rest Ye, Merry Jazzmen"

"Rise Up, Shepherd, and Follow"

arr. Carter

arr. Carter

Words of Welcome

Call to Worship

Tonight is when heaven kisses the earth.

Here is the manger where God takes on flesh.

The shepherds come to see this mystery,

even though official temples would not welcome them.

Wise sages from the East come to worship and offer gifts,

They are strangers, yet greeted as God's Beloved.

In a place that seems off the beaten path,

there God draws near to bring Light and Life to all; there God sends his Son.

Hymn

"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...Christ, the Lord!

The musicians will play a brief interlude between the verses.

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!

Opening Prayer

Creator of all the faithful and the unfaithful, some of us are struggling tonight.

This is not the Christmas we planned nor expected.

The threat of illness separates us from loved ones.

A demanding season bears heavily on our spirits.

Yet tonight you meet each one of us: right here, right now.

You come, not with burning Holy Fire, but in the simplicity of a Child.

Come down low and reach us, we pray,

that we would experience your love and your mercy. Amen.



Word of Assurance and Passing the Peace

*The peace of Christ be with you . . . **and also with you.***

Lighting 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

LISTEN TO THE BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENT

Prayer for Light

First Lesson: Luke 2:1-20

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.

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.

Special Music

“Away in a Manger”

arr. Carter

Second 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

GIVING AND RECEIVING GIFTS

Hymn

"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

Titus 3:4-7

***When the goodness and kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us,
not because of any works of righteousness we had done,
but according to his mercy,
through the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.
This Spirit he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior,
so that, having been justified by his grace,
we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.***

Offering Our Gifts

"I Wonder As I Wander"

arr. Carter

RETURNING HOME BY ANOTHER WAY

Hymn

"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

Music to Warm the Soul

"Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming" *and a couple more*

arr. Carter

* All who are able shall stand.

A warm welcome to all!

PARTICIPANTS IN TONIGHT'S SERVICE



Pastor/Pianist: The Rev. Bill Carter

Worship Leader: Wayne Wolfe

Christ Candle: Judy Cutler

Cantor: Susan Kelly

Bass: Tony Marino

Saxophone: Mike Carbone

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