

December 24, 2020 + Christmas Eve
First Presbyterian Church +++ Mason, Michigan

PRELUDE

O Come, All Ye Faithful

de Jong

Variations on "Away in a Manger" (CRADLE SONG)

Correll

Variations on "Away in a Manger" (MUELLER)

Giamanco

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Great God, as you came at night when all was still,
so enter our lives this night.
Illumine our paths with the light of Christ's presence,
that we may clearly see the way, the truth,
and the life of our Lord Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES

Kathleen and Dale Mühlbach

We light this candle as a sign of the coming light of Christ.

As the Lord promised, in days to come
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.**

Isaiah 9:2

Let us walk in the light of the Lord. **Amen.**

CALL TO WORSHIP

Luke 2:10-11; Titus 2:11; Luke 2:14

There is good news of great joy for all!
Our Savior is born: the Messiah, the Lord.
The grace of God has come to us;
Jesus Christ brings salvation to all.
Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to God's people on earth.
Let us worship God!

HYMN #173

"O Come, All Ye Faithful"

ADESTE FIDELES

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, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

True God of true God, Light from Light eternal,
lo, he shuns not the virgin's womb;
Son of the Father, begotten, not created;
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

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

PRAYER OF ADORATION

Maggie Knust

Glory to you, almighty God,
for you sent your only-begotten Son,
that we might have new life.
Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ,
for you became flesh and lived among us
that we might become your people.
Glory to you, Holy Spirit,
for you direct and rule our lives.
Glory to you, almighty God,
and to your Son, Jesus Christ,
and to the Holy Spirit,
now and forever. **Amen.**

ANTHEM

"Still a Bach Christmas"

arr. Althouse

*A Christmas Duet on "Still, Still, Still" and
J. S. Bach's "Air from Orchestral Suite in D"*

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ,
let us pray for the life of the world,
saying: O Christ, our light, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for the church . . .
With Mary, help us to treasure and ponder
the gift that has been given to us,

a gift of good news and great joy for all.
O Christ, our light, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for the world . . .
With the prophets, help us to proclaim
the promise of your peace for all nations
and your justice for all people.
O Christ, our light, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for this community . . .
With the shepherds, help us to keep watch
over those entrusted to our care
and all who need protection this night.
O Christ, our light, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for loved ones . . .
With the angels, help us to offer
signs of hope, comfort, and joy
for all who live in fear.
O Christ, our light, **hear our prayer.**

Lord Jesus Christ, hope of the world,
help us to bear witness to your light
so that all may believe and have life in you;
in your holy name we pray. **Amen.**

HYMN #170

“It Came upon the Midnight Clear”

CAROL

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, goodwill to men, 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 the 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 prophets 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 all the world give back the song which now the angels sing.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Gracious God,

by the gift of your Holy Spirit
show us the Word made flesh—
good news of great joy for all—
so that we may sing with the angels:
glory in the highest and peace on earth;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON

Isaiah 52:7-10

Brandon Leffew

How beautiful upon the mountains
are the feet of the messenger who announces peace,
who brings good news,
who announces salvation,
who says to Zion, “Your God reigns.”
Listen! Your sentinels lift up their voices,
together they sing for joy;
for in plain sight they see
the return of the LORD to Zion.
Break forth together into singing,
you ruins of Jerusalem;
for the LORD has comforted his people,
he has redeemed Jerusalem.
The LORD has bared his holy arm
before the eyes of all the nations;
and all the ends of the earth shall see
the salvation of our God.

PSALM

Psalm 96

Ginnie Gibson

O sing to the LORD a new song;
sing to the LORD, all the earth.
Sing to the LORD, bless his name;
tell of his salvation from day to day.
Declare his glory among the nations,
his marvelous works among all the peoples.
For great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised;
he is to be revered above all gods.
For all the gods of the peoples are idols,
but the LORD made the heavens.
Honor and majesty are before him;
strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.

Ascribe to the LORD, O families of the peoples,
ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.
Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name;
bring an offering, and come into his courts.

Worship the LORD in holy splendor;
tremble before him, all the earth.

Say among the nations, "The LORD is king!
The world is firmly established; it shall never be moved.
He will judge the peoples with equity."
Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice;
let the sea roar, and all that fills it;
let the field exult, and everything in it.
Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy
before the LORD; for he is coming,
for he is coming to judge the earth.
He will judge the world with righteousness,
and the peoples with his truth.

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON

Titus 3:4-7

Eva Schlenner

But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of any works of righteousness that 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.

GOSPEL LESSON

Luke 2:1-20

Tom Seely

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.

HYMN #171

"Hark! the Herald Angels Sing"

MENDELSSOHN

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 the Virgin's womb:
veiled in flesh the Godhead see; hail th' incarnate Deity,
pleased as man with us to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel.
Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King."

Hail the heavenborn 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."

INVITATION TO OFFERING

From the fullness of God
we have all received grace upon grace.

John 1:16

Let us offer our lives to the Lord.

*It is our custom on Christmas Eve
to collect a special offering
for Capital Area Community Services,
to bring a Christmas blessing
to needy families in our community.
We invite you to participate in this offering
by sending a check to the church
with the words "Christmas Eve"
on the memo line.*

OFFERTORY

Once in Royal David's City

Held

RESPONSE #152

“Angels We Have Heard on High” (refrain)

GLORIA

Gloria in excelsis Deo,
Gloria in excelsis Deo!

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Steve VanDyke

God of mystery and might,
we praise and worship you,
for you came in silence, while all lay sleeping,
to enter our world as a child of humble birth.
We thank you for your Son, Jesus Christ,
born of your handmaid Mary.
In his face we behold your glory,
for in his life as in his death
is your gift of salvation.
By your Spirit,
make our hearts burn with thanksgiving,
that we may give as we have received.
Let our whole lives be gifts of praise to you,
God of love and peace,
in the gracious name of Jesus Christ, your Son,
by the power of your Holy Spirit,
now and forever. **Amen.**

ANTHEM

Lullaby to a Rose

Martin

MEDITATION

“Emmanuel”

Rev. Bill Pinches

HYMN #164

“Silent Night”

STILLE NACHT

(Light your candle during the singing of this song.)

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, Lord, at thy birth,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

SILENCE

*May the light of Jesus Christ
fill your heart with joy and gladness
this year and forevermore.*

HYMN #146

“Joy to the World”

ANTIOCH

(Extinguish your candle during the singing of this song.)

Joy to the world! the Lord is come;
let earth receive her King;
let every heart prepare him room,
and heaven and nature sing,
and heaven and nature sing,
and heaven, and heaven and nature sing.

Joy to the earth! the Savior reigns;
let all their songs employ;
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

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,
far as the curse is found,
far as, far as the curse is found.

He rules the world with truth and grace,
and makes the nations prove
the glories of his righteousness,
and wonders of his love,
and wonders of his love,
and wonders, wonders of his love.

BLESSING

Titus 3:4-7

The loving kindness of the Lord our God,

the grace of Jesus Christ our Savior,
and the renewing power of the Holy Spirit
be with you all.

Alleluia!

Go and tell this good news of great joy:
to us a Savior is born.

Luke 2:10-11

Amen!

POSTLUDE

ANTIOCH "Joy to the World"

arr. te Velde



Adoration of the Shepherds by Matthias Stomer (c. 1650)

CREDITS

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Organist: Darlene Ross

Vocalists: Travis Archer, Lisa Castle, and Deb Melse

Choral Accompanist: Hrant Bagrazyan

Sound: Marty Subject

Readers: Maggie Knust, Brandon Leffew, Ginnie Gibson, Eva Schlenner, Tom Seely, and Steve VanDyke

Pastor: Rev. Bill Pinches

Ministers: All Church Members