

Order of Public Worship of God

The Twenty-Fourth Day of December, Two Thousand Twenty-Three

Fourth Sunday of Advent

PRELUDE

Signs are taken for wonders. “We would see a sign”:
The word within a word, unable to speak a word,
Swaddled with darkness. In the juvenescence of the year
Came Christ the tiger.

- T. S. Eliot, “Gerontion”

“They were given one hour of the millennium, and they didn’t even know it.”

- Isak Dinesen, *Babette’s Feast*



OPENING PRAYER

Almighty God,
Give us grace to cast away the works of darkness,
and put on the armor of light,
Now in the time of this mortal life
in which your Son Jesus Christ
came to visit us in great humility;
That in the last day,
when he shall come again in his glorious majesty
to judge both the living and the dead,
we may rise to the life immortal;
Through him who lives and reigns with you
and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.
Amen.

† HYMN OF WORSHIP | “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, goodwill to men from heavens 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.

And ye beneath life’s crushing load, whose forms are bending low,
Who toil along the climbing way with painful steps and slow;
Look now, for glad and golden hours come swiftly on the wing;
Oh rest beside the weary road and hear the angels sing.

For lo! the days are hastening on by prophet bards foretold,
When with the ever-circling years comes round the age of gold,
When peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling
And the whole world give back the song which now the angels sing.

† ADVENT LESSON AND LIGHTING OF THE CANDLE OF LOVE

† CALL TO WORSHIP | Psalm 8: 1-6, 9

O Lord, our Lord,
how majestic is your name in all the earth!
You have set your glory above the heavens.
Out of the mouth of babies and infants,
you have established strength because of your foes,
to still the enemy and the avenger.



† *Congregation Stands*
Bold - Congregational Response

When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers,
the moon and the stars, which you have set in place,

what is man that you are mindful of him,
and the son of man that you care for him?

Yet you have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings
and crowned him with glory and honor.

You have given him dominion over the works of your hands;
you have put all things under his feet,

O Lord, our Lord,
how majestic is your name in all the earth!

† HYMNS OF THANKSGIVING | “O Come O Come Emmanuel”

O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!

O come, O come, thou Lord of might, who to thy tribes, on Sinai’s height,
In ancient times didst give the law, in cloud and majesty and awe.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!

O come, thou Dayspring, come and cheer our spirits by thine advent here;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night and death’s dark shadows put to flight.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!

O come, thou Key of David, come and open wide our heavenly home.
Make safe the way that leads on high, and close the path to misery.
Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!

“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:

Refrain:

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;
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above:
“Glory to God, all glory in the highest!” *(refrain)*

Yea, Lord we greet thee, born that happy morning;
Jesus, to thee be all glory giv’n.
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing: *(refrain)*

INVOCATION AND THE LORD’S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come,
thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our debts
as we forgive our debtors,
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory forever.
Amen.

GIVING OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS

MUSICAL OFFERING

† CORPORATE PROFESSION OF FAITH | The Athanasian Creed, On the Incarnation

It is necessary for eternal salvation that one also
faithfully believe that our Lord Jesus Christ became flesh.
For this is the true faith that we believe and confess:

That our Lord Jesus Christ, God’s Son,
is both God and man.
He is God, begotten before all worlds from the being of the Father,
And he is man, born in the world from the being of his mother:
existing fully as God, and fully as man
with a rational soul and a human body;
equal to the Father in divinity, subordinate to the Father in humanity.
Although he is God and man, he is not divided, but is one Christ.
He is united because God has taken humanity into himself;
he does not transform deity into humanity.
He is completely one in the unity of his person,
without confusing his natures.
For as the rational soul and body are one person,
so the one Christ is God and man.
He suffered death for our salvation.
He descended into hell and rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

† DOXOLOGY

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heav’nly host:
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

† GREETING

*Junior Worship begins for children age four through first grade. Please escort children to the following classrooms.
Preschool - Room 10; Kindergarten and First Grade - Room 9. Children will return to sit with their families
before communion.*

READING OF GOD’S WORD | Luke 1: 57-80

This is the Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

SERMON | Series - The Last Prophet

Sermon - “The Benedictus”
- Rev. James M. Holland

PRAYER FOR GRACE AND INVITATION TO THE TABLE

SILENT CONFESSION

CORPORATE CONFESSION OF SIN | Book of Cerne, 9th century

We come before your sight, O Lord,
as those accused with our conscience as witness.
We pray, not daring to ask what we are not worthy to receive.
But Lord, you know everything that drives us to confess to you;
what we are ashamed of,
and the sins we were not afraid to commit.
With these words we yield to you our hearts and minds,
and commend to you what we say,
but not what we have done.

Spare us, O Lord, and forgive the sins we confess.
 Have mercy on those who call to you.
 And because our senses are weak
 in comprehending your mysteries,
 grant, Lord, the things we do not ask
 because of the hardness of our hearts,
 and grant us pardon;
 Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON | Richard Rolle, d. 1349

O Holy God, in you is all goodness, your pity and mercy made you to descend
 from the high throne down into this world, the valley of woe and weeping,
 and here you took our nature, and in that nature, you suffered pain and death
 to bring our souls to your Kingdom.
 In the name of Christ, we are forgiven.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION AND PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

BREAKING OF THE BREAD AND SHARING OF THE CUP

How do we take communion at St. Patrick?

When directed, please come forward to receive the bread and the cup. The white chalices contain wine; the darker ones on the tables have grape juice. The crackers on the tables are gluten-free. The elder will distribute the bread and then follow with the wine chalice. We will practice intinction, where you will dip the bread in the wine. If you prefer grape juice or need gluten-free bread, indicate your preference when the elder comes to you, then go to the table for your elements. After receiving communion, you will proceed to the outside aisle to return to your seats.

Who comes to the Table?

Communion is open to all baptized believers who have made a profession of faith in Jesus. If you have children who have not made a profession of faith, they are not ready to partake of the elements, but please bring them forward to be blessed by one of our elders. If you are not a believer but want to know more about Jesus, you are invited to come forward and simply bypass the table, letting one of the leaders know that you would like to learn more about what it means to know and belong to Jesus.

† HYMN OF ASSURANCE | “Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee”

Joyful, joyful, we adore thee, God of glory, Lord of love;
 Hearts unfold like flowers before thee, opening to the sun above.
 Melt the clouds of sin and sadness, drive the dark of doubt away;
 Giver of immortal gladness, fill us with the light of day!

All thy works with joy surround thee, earth and heaven reflect thy rays;
 Stars and angels sing around thee, center of unbroken praise.
 Field and forest, vale and mountain, flowery meadow, flashing sea,
 Singing bird and flowing fountain call us to rejoice in thee.

Thou art giving and forgiving, ever blessing, ever blessed;
 Wellspring of the joy of living, ocean depth of happy rest!
 Thou our Father, Christ our Brother, all who live in love are thine;
 Teach us how to love each other, lift us to the joy divine.

Mortals, join the happy chorus, which the morning stars began;
 Father love is reigning over us, brother love binds man to man.
 Ever singing, march we onward, victors in the midst of strife;
 Joyful music leads us Sunward in the triumph song of life.

† BENEDICTION | 1 Timothy 1:17

To the King of ages, immortal, invisible, the only God,
 be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

*Scripture tells us to make our needs known to God, and to call others to pray with and for us.
 If you would like prayer, elders will be standing in the front of the sanctuary (pulpit side)
 immediately following the service to pray with you.*



ST. PATRICK

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH EPC



Helpful Links:



*If you are new to St. Patrick or have a prayer request, please fill out the portion below.
 You may place your liturgy in the offering plate or in the designated basket in the Narthex as you leave.*

| | |
|---|-------|
| NEW HERE? | |
| Name | _____ |
| Phone | _____ |
| Email | _____ |
| NEED PRAYER? | |
| _____ | |
| _____ | |
| _____ | |
| _____ | |
| _____ | |
| _____ | |
| <p>Mailing address: P.O. Box 1087, Collierville, TN 38027 Church Location: 710 West White Road, Collierville, TN 38017 Phone: 901-861-3803 Website: www.StPatrickPres.com Facebook.com/stpatrickpres Twitter: @StPatrickPres</p> | |

LOVING GOD. LOVING PEOPLE. LOVING LIFE.