

ADVENT



2019

The Christmas War

MIDTOWN
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Evening Worship

Fourth Sunday in Advent
12.22.2019

Welcome to Worship at Midtown!

We are really glad to have you with us for worship today. Whether you have been a Christian for many years, or are trying to sort out what the Christian faith is all about, or are just here as a favor to your friend, we're happy to have you.

We have a nursery provided for little ones. You are welcome to keep them in the service with you if you prefer.

Reflection

When in the course of human events
The darker side takes precedence
And wise men fall and fools take charge
And feign a naive innocence
The blood runs cold at our own expense
And we tend to ignore our ignorance
I know it will not be like this forever

When righteousness almost prevails
But loses out to what sells well
And life goes on and numbness
Takes the bitterness from the taste of hell
When years of error leave a trail
And still we walk it meaning well
I know it will not be like this forever

Oh, oh, oh, it will not always be this way
Oh, oh, oh, this curtain will be torn away

--Mark Heard

The Word

Call to Worship—

Lighting of the Angel's Candle

The first candle in the Advent wreath, the Prophecy Candle, reminds us of the prophets' hope for God's salvation to come.

The second candle, the Bethlehem Candle, reminds us of Jesus' humility in coming to earth and being born in a stall.

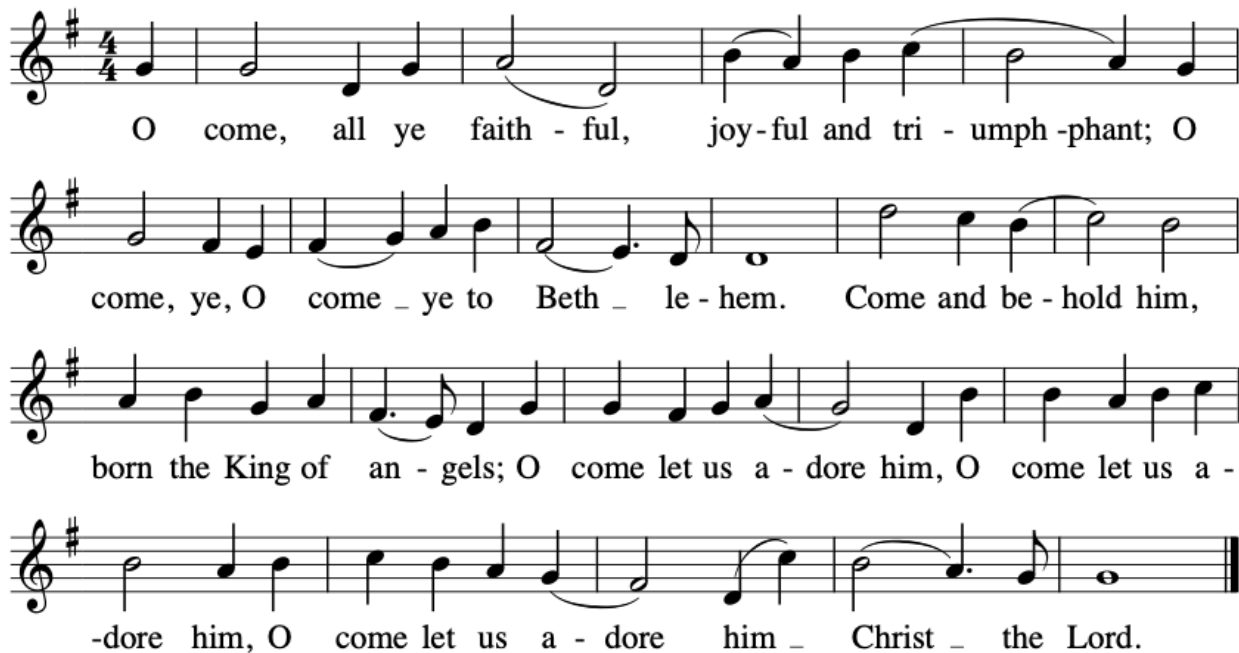
The third candle, the Shepherd's Candle, reminds us of the joy of the shepherds as they heard the good news of Jesus' arrival.

The fourth candle is the Angels' candle. It reminds us of the angels' song of peace for all the earth, as we find in Luke's gospel: "And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests.'"

Let us stand and sing as we celebrate the coming of God to the world.

O Come All Ye Faithful

Music & Lyrics: John F. Wade



O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - umph - phant; O
come, ye, O come - ye to Beth - le - hem. Come and be - hold him,
born the King of an - gels; O come let us a - dore him, O come let us a -
dore him, O come let us a - dore 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]

God of God, Light of Light;
Lo, he abhors not the Virgin's womb.
Very God, begotten not created; [Refrain]

Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, born this happy morning;
Jesus, to Thee be all glory given!
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing! [Refrain]

Prayer of Invocation

Call to Confession of Sin

Isaiah 9:2

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;
Those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined.

Confession of Sin

[You are invited to confess your sins silently at this time.]

Come, O Redeemer, Come

Music & Lyrics: Fernando Ortega



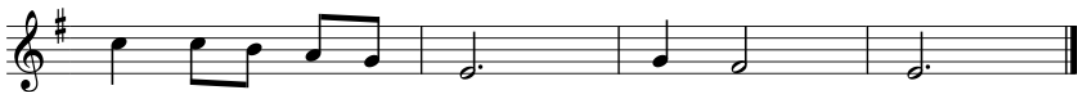
Fa - ther en-throned on high; Ho - ly, ho - ly.



An - cient e - ter - nal Light; hear our prayer;



Come, O Re-deem-er, come; grant us mer-cy.



Come, O Re-deem-er, come; grant us peace.

Lord, save us from the dark, of our striving,
Faithless and troubled hearts, weighed down.
Come, oh Redeemer, come, grant us mercy.
Come, oh Redeemer, come, grant us peace.

Look now upon our need, Lord be with us.
Heal us and make us free, from our sin.
Come, oh Redeemer, come, grant us mercy.
Come, oh Redeemer, come, grant us peace.

Assurance of Forgiveness

John 1:11-12

He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.

Minister: May the peace of Christ be with you!

All: And also with you!

God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen



God rest ye mer - ry gen - tle - men let no - thing you dis - may.



Re - mem - ber Christ the Sa - vior was born on Christ - mas day.



To save us all from Sa - tan's pow'r when we were gone as - tray. O _



_ ti - dings of com - fort and joy. Com - fort



and joy. O - ti - dings of com - fort and joy.

From God our heav'nly Father, a blessed angel came;
And unto certain shepherds brought tidings of the same:
How that in Bethlehem was born the son of God by name. [Refrain]

"Fear not, then," said the angel, "let nothing you affright;
This day is born a Savior of a pure virgin bright,
To free all those who trust in him from Satan's pow'r and might." [Refrain]

The shepherds at those tidings rejoiced much in mind,
And left their flocks a-feeding, in tempest, storm, and wind:
And went to Bethlehem straightway, the Son of God to find. [Refrain]

The Prayers of the People

Leader: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

Leader: Let us pray.

Jesus, remember us when you come in your kingdom,
Have mercy upon us and hear our prayers.

For all who carry out your ministries within your church,
We ask for grace and wisdom.
(Pray for those who minister the gospel.)

For those who don't yet believe the gospel,
We ask for your faithful love.
(Pray for the unbelieving.)

For governors and rulers in every land,

We ask for your guidance.

(Pray for our leaders.)

For people who suffer and grieve,

We ask for your healing peace.

(Pray for the suffering.)

Holy God, your Son, Jesus Christ has spoken to us the word of reconciliation. We come to you now in the words He taught us, saying:

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.

New Testament Reading

2 Peter 3:1-9

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God!**

Psalter Reading

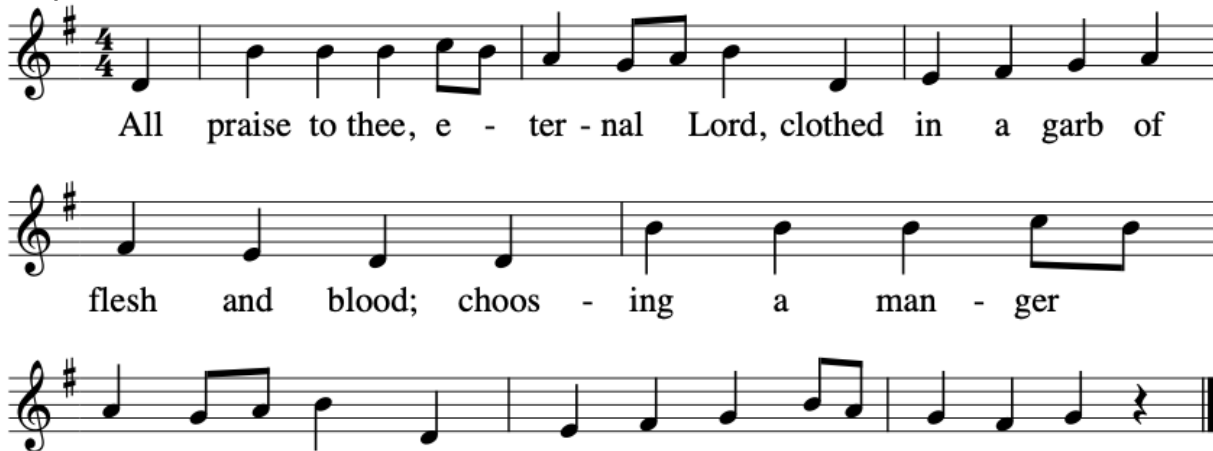
Psalm 146:5-10

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God!**

All Praise To Thee Eternal Lord

Lyrics: Martin Luther; Music: American folk tune



The image shows three staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The melody is simple and folk-like. The lyrics are written below the notes.

All praise to thee, e - ter - nal Lord, clothed in a garb of
flesh and blood; choos - ing a man - ger
for thy throne, while worlds on worlds are thine a-lone.

Once did the skies before Thee bow; A virgin's arms contain Thee now,
While angels, who in Thee rejoice, Now listen for Thine infant voice.

A little Child, Thou art our Guest, That weary ones in Thee may rest;
Forlorn and lowly is Thy birth; That we may rise to heaven from earth.

Thou comest in the darksome night To make us children of the light;
To make us, in the realms divine, Like Thine own angels round Thee shine.

All this for us Thy love hath done; By this to Thee our love is won;
For this we tune our cheerful lays, And sing our thanks in ceaseless praise.

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 9:2-7

The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned. You have enlarged the nation and increased their joy; they rejoice before you as people rejoice at the harvest, as men rejoice when dividing the plunder. For as in the day of Midian's defeat, you have shattered the yoke that burdens them, the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor. Every warrior's boot used in battle and every garment rolled in blood will be destined for burning, will be fuel for the fire. For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.

Minister: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

Rev. Charles Garland

The Table

Confession of Faith Receiving New Members

Tim & Kim Davis
Seth Grimes
Nathan Lewis
Matt & Dana McReynolds
Tony & Jeanette Mendoza
Brent & Erika Miller

Invitation and Prayer

[Communion, also called The Lord's Supper or the Eucharist, is the family meal of Christians. We invite all committed followers of Jesus Christ to partake of this sacrament—those who are baptized members of a church which proclaims the gospel. If you are not a Christian, or if you are not prepared to share in this meal, we encourage you to spend this time in prayer.]

The Sursum Corda (Lift Up Your Hearts)

Minister: Lift up your hearts.

All: **We lift them up to the Lord.**

Minister: Let us give thanks to our Lord God.

All: **It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**

The Words of Institution

The Mystery of Faith

Minister: Therefore, let us proclaim the mystery of faith.

All: **Christ has died. Christ is risen.
Christ will come again!**

Minister: Alleluia! Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.

All: **Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia!**

Minister: The gifts of God for the people of God.

The Giving of the Bread and Cup

[As you are ready please come forward to receive the bread and the cup. We provide individual cups of grape juice and gluten-free wafers in the tray at the front. We partake in the Supper by intinction, that is, we dip the bread into the cup. Children who have not yet professed their faith in Christ nor been admitted to the Table are encouraged to come forward for a prayer of blessing.]

It Came Upon A Midnight Clear

Lyrics: Edmund Sears; Music: Richard Willis



It came up-on _ the mid - night clear, that glo - rious song _of old,



from an - gels bend - ing near the earth to touch their harps _of gold: _



"Peace on the earth good will to men from heav'n's _ gra - cious King";



The world in sol - emn still - ness lay to hear the an - gels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come, with peaceful wings unfurled,
And still their heav'nly music floats o'er all the weary world:
Above its sad and lowly plains they bend on hov'ring 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:
O rest beside the weary road, and hear the angels sing.

For lo, the days are hast'ning 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.

Angels We Have Heard on High

Music & Lyrics: Traditional French Carol



An-gels we have heard on high, sweet-ly sing-ing o'er the plain;



and the moun-tains in re-ply, ech-o back their joy-ous strains.



Glo - - - - - ri-a. In ex-cel-sis De - o,



Glo - - - - - ri-a. In ex-cel-sis De - o.

Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
Say what may the tidings be,
Which inspire your heav'nly song?

Come to Bethlehem and see
Him whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee
Christ the Lord, the new-born King.

Benediction

Notes

Offering: We have placed an offering box at the back of the sanctuary that you can use as you enter or leave. You can also give online at our website www.mpctucson.org.

Email List: Please sign up for our email list on the table in the back. We send out the bulletin and announcements every week before worship and would love to include you.

Christmas Eve Service: We will have our Lessons and Carols service on Christmas Eve at 6:30 in the chapel. This will be a whole family service, i.e., no nursery. The service lasts about 45 minutes.

Book Groups: Men's book club will meet Tuesday, January 7th at 7 PM at Matt McReynold's house to discuss *Animal Farm* by George Orwell. Women's book club will meet Friday, January 10th at Alicia Morris's house to discuss *The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak.

Pastor: Charles Garland
Music Director: Sarah Lewis
RUF Ministers: Dan & Brittany Smith

Midtown Presbyterian Church
www.mpctucson.org
P.O. Box 40517, Tucson, AZ 85717
678.849.7918

A congregation of the Presbyterian Church in America

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