



MIDTOWN
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Evening Worship

First Sunday in Advent
12.03.2023

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

Fairy tales, then, are not responsible for producing fear in children, or any of the shapes of fear; fairy tales do not give the child the idea of the evil or the ugly; that is in the child already, because it is in the world already. Fairy tales do not give a child his first idea of bogey. What fairy tales give the child is his first clear idea of the possible defeat of bogey. The baby has known the dragon intimately ever since he had an imagination. What the fairy tales provide for him is a St. George to kill the dragon. Exactly what the fairy tales does is this: it accustoms him for a series of clear pictures to the idea that these limitless terrors have a limit, that these shapeless enemies have enemies, that these strong enemies of man have enemies in the knights of God, that there is something in the universe more mystical than darkness, and stronger than strong fear.

— G.K. Chesterton

The Word

Call to Worship—

[Colin & Melissa McRae]

Lighting of the Prophet's Candle

Today is the first Sunday of Advent, the Sunday in which we recall the hope we have in Christ.

The first candle reminds us of the prophets' hope for God's salvation to come, as Isaiah prophesied: "The Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the Virgin is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel!"

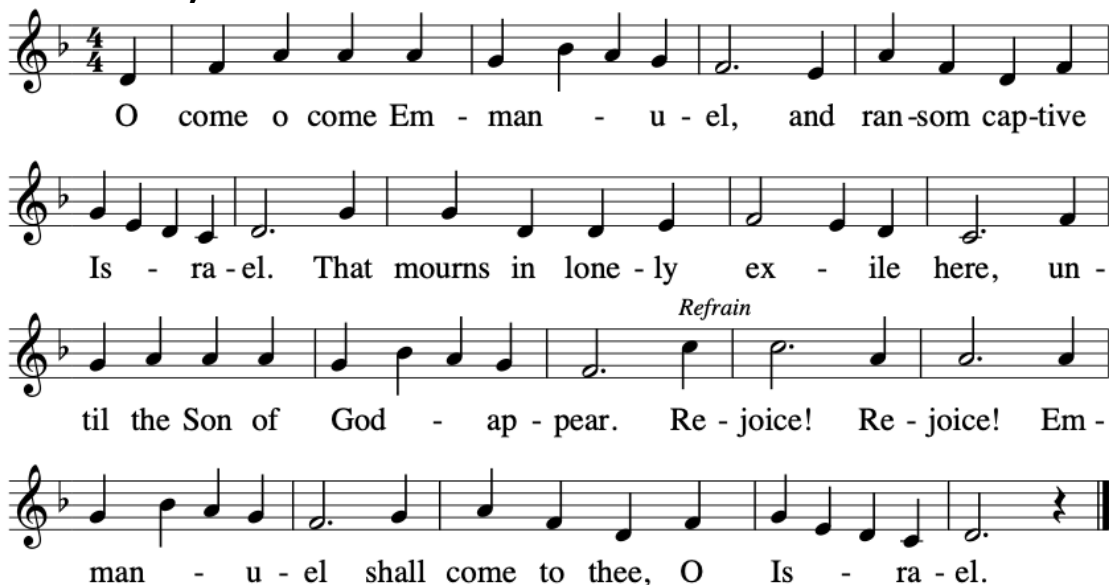
On Christmas day the Christ of our hope was born. On Good Friday the Christ of our hope died. On Easter day the Christ of our hope rose from the dead. He then ascended into heaven. On the last day, the Christ of our hope will come again to establish his kingdom over all things on earth.

As followers of Christ, we await his return. We light this candle to remember that as he came to us humbly in the manger at Bethlehem and gave light to the world, so he is coming again in power to deliver his people.

We light this candle to remind us to be alert and to watch for his return.

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

O Come, O Come Emmanuel



O come o come Em - man - u - el, and ran-som cap-tive
Is - ra - el. That mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here, un -
Refrain
til the Son of God - ap - pear. Re - joice! Re - joice! Em -
man - u - el shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el.

O come, thou Rod of Jesse free,
Thine own from Satan's tyranny;
From depths of hell thy people save,
And give them victory o'er the grave. [Refrain]

O come, thou Key of David, come
And open wide our heavenly home;
Make safe for us the way that leads on high,
And close the path to misery. [Refrain]

Prayer of Invocation

Call to Confession of Sin

[Led by Matt Esswein]

John 3:17

For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

Confession of Sin

Lord Jesus Christ,

We confess our readiness to accept your forgiving love but also our refusal to forgive and love others. We confess our eagerness to grasp your offer of redeeming love but also our resistance to follow you without question.

In this Advent time, forgive us our failure to respond as we should. Come to us anew, and by your grace, help us to receive you

with joy, as the shepherds;

with gratitude, as Simeon;

with obedience, as Mary;

with love, as you have loved us.

Even so: come, Lord Jesus. Amen.

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

Trisagion

Music: Fernando Ortega

Ho - - - ly_ God. Ho - ly and migh - ty.

Ho - - - - ly, Im - mor - tal one. Have

mer - cy, have mer - - cy on us.

Assurance of Forgiveness

John 3:16

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

Minister: May the peace of Christ be with you!

All: And also with you!

Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates

Lyrics: George Wiessel; Music: Thomas Williams

Lift up your heads, ye might - ty gates! Be - hold the king - of -
glo - ry waits; the King of Kings is draw - ing -
near, the Sav - ior of - the - world is here.

Fling wide the portals of your heart; make it a temple, set apart
From earthly use for heaven's employ, adorned with prayer and love and
joy.

Redeemer, come, with us abide; our hearts to thee we open wide;
Let us thy inner presence feel; thy grace and love in us reveal.

Thy Holy Spirit lead us on, until our glorious goal is won;
Eternal praise, eternal fame be offered, Savior, to thy name!

The Prayers of the People

[Led by Ryan Jankowski]

[Pray the bold portions aloud together]

Leader: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

Leader: Let us pray.

Father in heaven, you sent your son, the true Light, into our dark world.

We ask you to continue your work, bringing reconciliation, gospel light, and healing.

For this congregation and others in Tucson:

Bless our labors and spread the gospel through us.

(Pray for Midtown and other congregations in the city.)

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

For those who suffer illness, poverty, hunger, injustice, and loneliness:

Hear their cries and lift their burdens.

(Pray for the sick, the homeless, the mentally ill, and others who suffer.)

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

For those in positions of public trust:

Guide them and lead them to make wise and just decisions.

(Pray for President Biden, Mayor Romero, and others in power.)

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Let us join the church throughout the ages in praying as Jesus taught us:

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.

Old Testament Reading

[Reader: Cameron Ward]

Genesis 38:1-19

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Reading

Matthew 1:1-6

Reader: The Gospel of Jesus Christ.

People: **Praise be to you, O Christ.**

Come Thou Long Expected Jesus

Music: Rowland Pritchett; Lyrics: Charles Wesley



Come Thou long _ex - pect - ed Je - sus, born to set Thy peo - ple free.



From our fear _and sins re - lease _ us, let us find our rest _ in Thee.



Is - rael's strength _and con - so - la - tion, hope of all _the saints Thou art.



Dear _de - sire _ of ev - 'ry na - tion, joy of ev - 'ry long - ing heart.

Joy to those who long to see thee, Dayspring from on high, appear;
Come, thou promised Rod of Jesse, of thy birth we long to hear!
O'er the hills the angels singing news, glad tidings of a birth;
"Go to him, your praises bringing; Christ the Lord has come to earth."

Come to earth to taste our sadness, he whose glories knew no end;
By his life he brings us gladness, our Redeemer, Shepherd, Friend.
Leaving riches without number, born within a cattle stall;
This the everlasting wonder, Christ was born the Lord of all.

Born Thy people to deliver, born a child, and yet a King,
Born to reign in us forever, now Thy gracious kingdom bring.
By Thine own eternal Spirit rule in all our hearts alone;
By Thine own sufficient merit, raise us to Thy glorious throne

Old Testament Reading

Genesis 38:20-30

When Judah sent the young goat by his friend the Adullamite to take back the pledge from the woman's hand, he did not find her. ²¹And he asked the men of the place, "Where is the cult prostitute who was at Enaim at the roadside?" And they said, "No cult prostitute has been here." ²²So he returned to Judah and said, "I have not found her. Also, the men of the place said, 'No cult prostitute has been here.'" ²³And Judah replied, "Let her keep the things as her own, or we shall be laughed at. You see, I sent this young goat, and you did not find her."

²⁴About three months later Judah was told, "Tamar your daughter-in-law has been immoral. Moreover, she is pregnant by immorality." And Judah said, "Bring her out, and let her be burned." ²⁵As she was being brought out, she sent word to her father-in-law, "By the man to whom these belong, I am pregnant." And she said, "Please identify whose these are, the signet and the cord and the staff." ²⁶Then Judah identified them and said, "She is more righteous than I, since I did not give her to my son Shelah." And he did not know her again.

²⁷When the time of her labor came, there were twins in her womb. ²⁸And when she was in labor, one put out a hand, and the midwife took and tied a scarlet thread on his hand, saying, "This one came out first." ²⁹But as he drew back his hand, behold, his brother came out. And she said, "What a breach you have made for yourself!" Therefore his name was called Perez. ³⁰Afterward his brother came out with the scarlet thread on his hand, and his name was called Zerah.

Minister: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

Rev. Charles Garland

The Table

Confession of Faith

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried. He descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

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 congregation which proclaims the gospel, who are at peace with God and with their neighbor, and who seek strength to live more faithfully for Christ. 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. Take bread and eat it, then take a cup and drink. If you prefer grape juice and/or a gluten free wafer, they are available on the middle table.]

O Day of Peace

Lyrics & Music: Carl P. Daw, Jr & Josh Garrels



1. O day of peace that dim - ly shines through all our
2. Then shall the wolf dwell with the lamb, nor shall the



hopes and prayers and dreams, guide us to jus - tice, truth, and
fierce de - vour the small, as beasts and cat - tle calm - ly



love, de - liv - ered from our sel - fish schemes. May swords of
graze a lit - tle child shall lead them all. Then en - e -



hate fall from our hands; our hearts from en - vy find re -
mies shall learn to love, all crea - tures find their true ac -



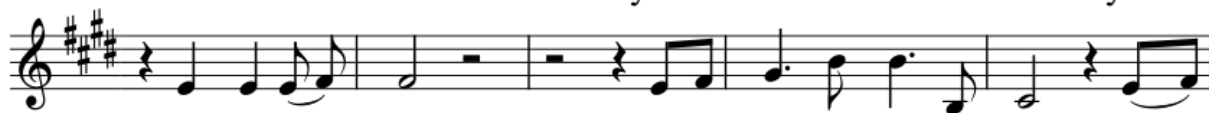
lease, 'til by God's grace our war - ring world shall see Christ's
cord; the hope of peace shall be ful - filled, for all the



prom - ised reign of peace.
earth shall know the Lord.



Come to Him with all your heart. Come and lay



your bur-dens down. For peace he came to give, and



joy shall be the crown, and joy shall be the crown.

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Music: Felix Mendelssohn; Lyrics: Charles Wesley



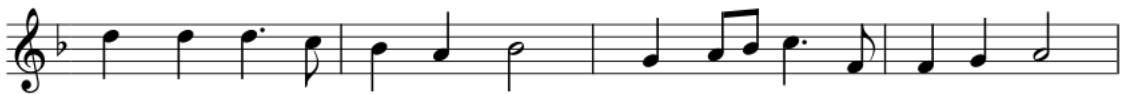
Hark! the her - ald an-gels sing, - "Glo-ry to the new-born King;



peace on earth and mer-cy mild, - God and sin - ners re-con-ciled!"



Joy-ful, all ye na-tions, rise, join the tri-umph of the skies; -



with th'an-gel - ic host pro-claim, "Christ is - born in Beth-le-ham!"

Refrain



Hark! the her-ald an-gels sing, "Glo-ry - to the new-born 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 men to dwell, Jesus, our Immanuel.

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.

Benediction

Notes

Offering: We have placed an offering box at the back of the sanctuary that you can use as you enter or leave. Online, you can give at (www.mpctucson.org/donate). —>>



Email List: We send out the bulletin and announcements every week before worship and would love to include you. You can email Charles (charles@mpctucson.org) to get on the list.

RUF Finals Survival Kits: Help us collect items to give to U of A students ahead of finals week. We are collecting individual chip bags, granola bars, mini water bottles, water flavorers (gatorade, crystal light, etc.), candy, gum, mints, highlighters, pens, and pencils. If you want to give money towards it you can write a check to RUF or give cash to Matt. We need all donations in by December 4th to give out on campus that week. Any questions, reach out to Matt Esswein (714.209.6345, matt.esswein@ruf.org).

Men's Book Group: The next book is The Puritan Dilemma: the story of John Winthrop by Edmund Morgan. We will meet on Tuesday, Dec. 12 at 7pm.

Women's White Elephant Ornament Exchange: December 8 @ 6:30pm at the Satterfield's home (7902 N Tuscany Dr).

Solstice Lament Service: Prayer service of lament for the brokenness we experience in the world. December 21st. Hannah Johnson has details (hjohnson2706@hotmail.com).

Pastor: Charles Garland
Music Director: Sarah Lewis
Nursery Director: Sami Skaare
RUF Staff: Matt & Sarah Esswein
RUF Intern: Paige Jackson

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