

ADVENT



2019

The Christmas War

MIDTOWN
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Evening Worship

Third Sunday in Advent

12.15.2019

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

Arnold Lustig [Auschwitz survivor] wished that somehow all men and women on earth could be sent to visit Auschwitz "for a day, an hour, or even a single second" during the time when the death camp was actually operating. Such a visit, Lustig explained, would provide "a test of maturity before they received a drivers license or be allowed to vote or get married... I believe that this peek into hell would ripen their image of the world, for only those who have seen how little is needed to peel what is human from us – to turn us again into animals – can understand the world into which we are born."

—Os Guinness

The Word

Call to Worship—

Lighting of the Shepherd's Candle

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

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

The third candle reminds us of the joy of the shepherds as they heard the good news of Jesus' arrival, for: "The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them" (Luke 2:20).

As we light the Shepherd's Candle we remember that it wasn't the rich and famous who came to worship Jesus that first Christmas Eve, but poor shepherds. Through Jesus Christ, God invites us, as his children, those who are "poor in spirit," to come into His presence and worship Him.

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

Joy to the World

Music & Lyrics: Issac Watts



Joy to the world! The Lord is come; let earth re - cieve her King!



Let ev - 'ry - heart - pre - pare - Him - room - and



heav'n and na - ture - sing. and - heav'n and na - ture -



sing, and - heav'n - and heav'n - and na - ture sing.

Joy to the earth! The Savior reigns; let men 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.

Prayer of Invocation

Call to Confession of Sin

Luke 1:51-54

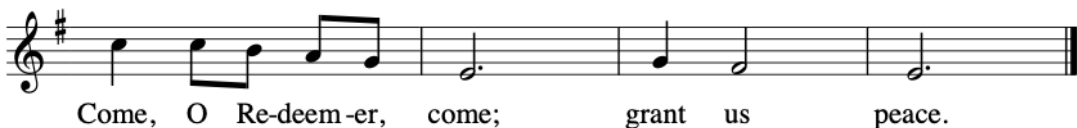
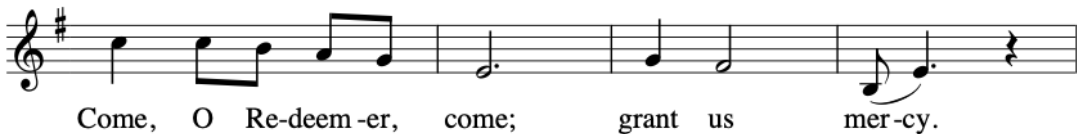
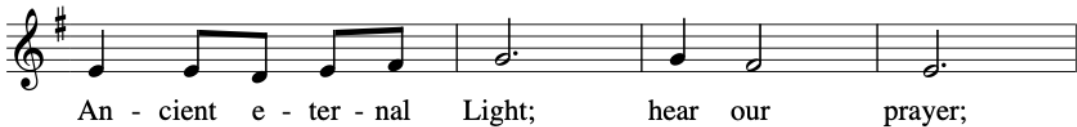
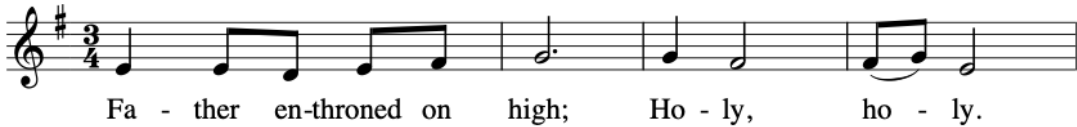
He has shown strength with his arm;
he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts;
he has brought down the mighty from their thrones
and exalted those of humble estate;
he has filled the hungry with good things,
and the rich he has sent empty away.
He has helped his servant Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy.

Confession of Sin

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

Come, O Redeemer, Come

Music & Lyrics: Fernando Ortega



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

Luke 1:68-69

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has visited and redeemed his people and has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David.

Minister: May the peace of Christ be with you!

All: **And also with you!**

The First Noel



The first no - el, the an - gel did say, was to cer - tain poor
shep - herds in fields as they lay. In fields where they lay -
keep - ing their sheep on a cold win - ter's night that was so deep. No -
el, no - el, no - el.
Born is the King of Is - - ra - el.

They looked up and saw a star, shining in the east beyond them far,
And to the earth it gave great light,
and so it continued both day and night. [Refrain]

And by the light of that same star,
Three wise men came from country far;
To seek for a King was their intent,
and to follow the star wherever it went. [Refrain]

Then let us all with one accord sing praises to our heavenly Lord;
That hath made Heaven and earth of naught,
And with His blood mankind hath bought. [Refrain]

The Prayers of the People

Leader: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

Leader: Let us pray.

Our Lord Jesus Christ,

You came into the world to destroy the works of the devil:

We ask you to restrain the wickedness in our city by your Law.

We ask you to destroy the wickedness in our own hearts by your Spirit.

We pray that you would protect us from the temptations, deceit and accusations of the devil.

(Pray silently that God would deliver you from evil.)

Our Lord Jesus Christ,

You came into the world to bring us peace with God:

We pray for peace between nations in Your world; We pray that this congregation might live in your peace together; We ask you to come again soon to fully establish your peace on earth.

(Pray silently for God to bring peace to the earth.)

Our Lord Jesus Christ,

You came into the world to seek and save that which was lost:

We pray for our friends who do not yet know you; We pray for the deepening of our faith in the gospel of grace.

(Pray silently for the spread of the good news.)

Our Lord Jesus Christ,

You came into the world to destroy death

and to bring life and immortality to light through the gospel:

We pray for comfort for those who are suffering in grief, in poverty, in sickness, in injustice.

(Pray silently for those who are suffering.)

Our Lord Jesus Christ,

We pray now in the words you 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

Micah 5:1-5a

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

New Testament Reading

1 Peter 5:6-11

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God!**

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

Gospel Reading

Matthew 2:13-18

¹³ Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." ¹⁴ And he rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed to Egypt ¹⁵ and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, "Out of Egypt I called my son."

¹⁶ Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, became furious, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had ascertained from the wise men. ¹⁷ Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah:

¹⁸ "A voice was heard in Ramah,
weeping and loud lamentation,
Rachel weeping for her children;
she refused to be comforted, because they are no more."

Minister: The Gospel of Jesus Christ.

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

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 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.]

Once In David's Royal City

Lyrics & Music: Cecil Frances Alexander



Once in roy - al Da-vid's cit - y stood a low - ly cat - tle shed,



Where a moth - er laid her ba - by In a man - ger for his bed:



Ma-ry was that moth - er mild, Je - sus Christ her lit - tle child.

He came down to earth from heaven, who is God and Lord of all,
And his shelter was a stable, and his cradle was a stall:
With the poor, and mean, and lowly, lived on earth our Savior holy.

And our eyes at last shall see him, through his own redeeming love;
For that child so dear and gentle, is our Lord in heav'n above,
And he leads his children on, to the place where he is gone.

Not in that poor lowly stable, with the oxen standing by,
We shall see him, but in heaven, set at God's right hand on high;
When like stars his children crowned, all in white shall wait around.

Go Tell It On The Mountain

Traditional

Refrain



Go, tell it on the moun-tain, o-ver the hills and ev-'ry - where; -



Go, tell it on the moun - tain, that Je - sus Christ is born.

Verse



While shep-hers kept their watch-ing o'er si-lent flocks by night, be-



hold, through -out the heav-ens there shone a ho - ly light -

The shepherds feared and trembled, when, lo! above the earth
Rang out the angel chorus that hailed our Savior's birth. [Refrain]

Down in a lowly manger our humble Christ was born,
And God sent us salvation that blessed Christmas morn. [Refrain]

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 14th 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

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A congregation of the Presbyterian Church in America

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