



MIDTOWN
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Distancing & Safety Plan

So we can more safely meet together for worship we ask you to help us observe the following:

1. We will space out the chairs as much as we can.
2. Wear masks so we can sing.
3. Communion will involve coming forward without crowding, and picking up a cup and wafer from the altar rail in front of the pulpit. The separate table of cups will have grape juice if you prefer that. The wafers are gluten free.
4. Try to go outside for visiting with each other after the service.
5. We will disinfect surfaces in the sanctuary and bathrooms before the service.

Evening Worship

Fourth Sunday in Advent

12.20.2020

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.

Reflection

Advent Prayer

Lord Jesus,
Master of both the light and the darkness, send your Holy Spirit upon our preparations for Christmas. We who have so much to do seek quiet spaces to hear your voice each day. We who are anxious over many things look forward to your coming among us. We who are blessed in so many ways long for the complete joy of your kingdom. We whose hearts are heavy seek the joy of your presence. We are your people, walking in darkness, yet seeking the light. To you we say, "Come Lord Jesus!"
Amen.

—Henri J.M. Nouwen

The Word

Call to Worship—

[Chris & Nikki Smith]

Lighting of the Peace 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

1 John 1:8

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

Confession of Sin

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

We confess our sins as a group and individually because we need to. We come to worship God even though we are morally broken, in certain hope that he is merciful to people like us, and able to change us by his grace.

Come, O Redeemer, Come

Music & Lyrics: Fernando Ortega

The musical score is written on four staves in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 3/4 time signature. The melody consists of quarter and eighth notes, with some phrases ending in a fermata. The lyrics are printed below the notes.

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

1 John 1:9

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Minister: May the peace of Christ be with you!

All: And also with you!

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 written in treble clef. The lyrics are written below the notes, with hyphens indicating syllables that span across multiple notes. The first staff contains the first line of lyrics, the second staff the second line, and the third staff the third line. The music ends with a double bar line.

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.

The Prayers of the People

[Pray the bold portions aloud together]

[Led by Matt McReynolds]

Leader: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

Leader: Let us pray.

Father Eternal, God Almighty,
you have brought forth from the root of Jesse a
shoot, Jesus our Savior.

**He is your anointed one, the promised
Messiah; in him you are well pleased. We come to you
in his service,
To offer our prayers of intercession for the coming of
his kingdom.**

Father Eternal,
You have anointed Jesus to be both Lord and Christ.

**We pray for the Church of Christ that she might be
faithful to her Lord, bearing witness to his reign in every
land among every people.**

(Pray for the protection and expansion of the Church in the
world.)

The prayers of the people enable us to join our minds and hearts in one voice to God, like we do when we sing. Be careful about merely repeating the words without engaging your whole self in prayer.

Father Eternal,

You have anointed Jesus King of kings and Lord of lords.

We pray for the rulers of our nation that they might be wise, fearing the Lord to whom they must bow in the world to come.

(Pray for our political leaders.)

Father Eternal,

You have anointed Jesus a counselor and comforter of your people.

**We pray for those among us who suffer,
For those who are lonely,
For those without home or family,
For those who are depressed and discouraged,
For those who are seeking work,
For those who are sick,
For those who are grieving.**

(Pray for those who suffer.)

Praise, honor and glory belong to you, Eternal Father,

And to your Son, who taught us to pray 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.**

Old Testament Reading

Exodus 40:34-38

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

New Testament Reading

Revelation 21:1-3

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

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.

Gospel Reading

John 1:14

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen
his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and
truth.

Reader: The Gospel of Jesus Christ.

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

Sermon

Rev. Charles Garland

The Table

Confession of Faith

—From the Belgic Confession

Leader: Let us now proclaim our faith with the saints of the ages,

**All: We profess that God fulfilled the promise
that he had made to the early fathers
by the mouth of his holy prophets
when he sent his only and eternal Son into the world
at the time set by him.**

**The Son took the “form of a servant”
and was made in the “likeness of man,”
truly assuming a real human nature,
with all its weaknesses, except for sin;
being conceived in the womb of the blessed virgin Mary
by the power of the Holy Spirit,
without male participation.**

**And he not only assumed human nature
as far as the body is concerned
but also a real human soul,
in order that he might be a real human being.**

**For since the soul had been lost as well as the body,
he had to assume them both to save them both together.**

**In this way he is truly our Immanuel—
that is: “God with us.”**

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 Sursum Corda and the Mystery of Faith are used by Christians the world over to prepare their hearts and minds for Holy Communion.

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 are using individual cups and wafers as a concession to the virus. The red cups have wine and the grape juice is white/gold.]

Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence

Let all mor-tal flesh keep _ si - lence, and with fear and
trem - bling _ stand; pon-der noth-ing earth - ly _
mind -ed, for with bless-ing in his _ hand, Christ our God to
earth de - scend - eth, our full hom-age to de - mand.

The image shows a musical score for the hymn 'Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence'. It consists of four staves of music in 4/4 time, with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The lyrics are written below the notes, with hyphens indicating syllables that span across multiple notes. The music is written in a simple, clear style suitable for a hymn book.

King of kings, yet born of Mary, as of old on earth he stood,
Lord of lords, in human vesture in the body and the blood.
He will give to all the faithful his own self for heavenly food.

Rank on rank the host of heaven spreads its vanguard on the way,
As the Light of light descendeth from the realms of endless day,
That the pow'rs of hell may vanish as the darkness clears away.

At his feet the six-winged seraph, cherubim, with sleepless eye,
Veil their faces to the Presence, as with ceaseless voice they cry,
"Alleluia, alleluia! Alleluia, Lord most high!"

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, 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]

Benediction

Notes

Offering: We have placed an offering box at the back of the sanctuary that you can use as you enter or leave. (Note that the Midtown box is separate from the Vineyard ones—ours cleverly says “Midtown”!) You can also give online at our website www.mpctucson.org.

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.

No Monday Soccer in December

Christmas Eve Service: We will have our Lessons and Carols service at 4:00 pm on Thursday here at the church. This is a family service (no nursery), and usually lasts about an hour.

Pastor: Charles Garland
Music Director: Sarah Lewis
RUF Staff: Dan & Brittany Smith
RUF Interns: Noah Hamstra & Rebekah Taylor

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A congregation of the Presbyterian Church in America

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