

ADVENT
2019



The Christmas War

MIDTOWN
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Evening Worship

First Sunday in Advent

12.01.2019

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

But it has not been natural for us to see Christmas and the birth of the Messiah as the thunderous salvo of a terrible battle that would decide the great war that is itself the story of this world and of every human life ever lived in this world.

—Rob Rayburn

The Word

Call to Worship—

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 - joi-ce! Re - joi-ce! Em -
man - u - el shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el.

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

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

[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 3:16

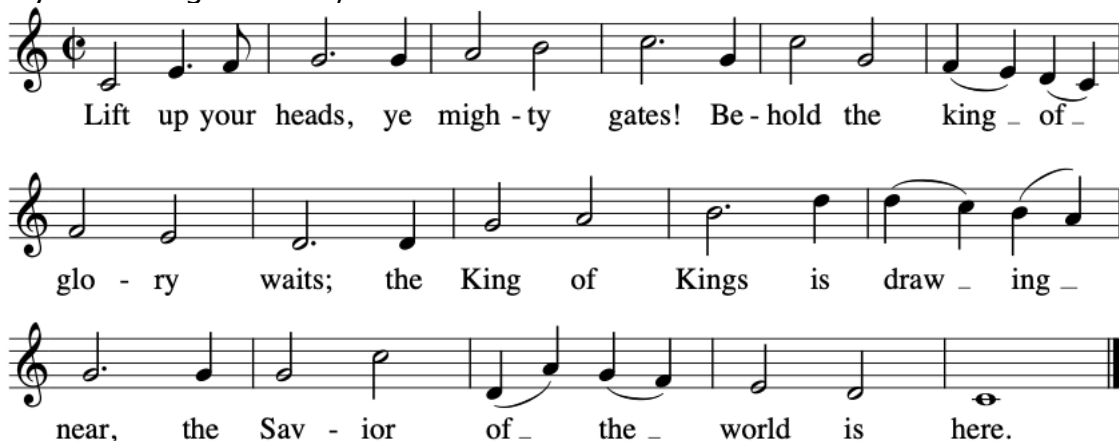
For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

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

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.**

Old Testament Reading

Genesis 3:14-15

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Reading

Matthew 4:1-11

Reader: The Gospel of Jesus Christ.

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

Hail to the Lord's Anointed

Lyrics: James Montgomery; Music: Sandra McCracken

Chorus



Hail to the Lord's an - oint - ed, great Da - vid's great - er Son!



Hail in - the time ap - point - ed, his reign on earth be - gun!

Verse



His reign on earth be - gun! He comes to break



op - pres - sion, to set the cap - tive - free; to take a - way



trans - gres - sion and rule in eq - ui - ty.

He comes with comfort speedy to those who suffer wrong;
To help the poor and needy, and bid the weak be strong.

To give them songs for sighing, their darkness turn to light,
Whose souls, condemned and dying, were precious in his sight.
[Chorus]

He shall come down like showers upon the fruitful earth;
Love, joy, and hope, like flowers, spring in his path to birth.

The tide of time shall never his covenant remove.
His name shall stand forever, that name to us is Love. [Chorus]

New Testament Reading

1 John 3:8

Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil.

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 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.]

Come Light Our Hearts

Music & Lyrics: Sandra McCracken

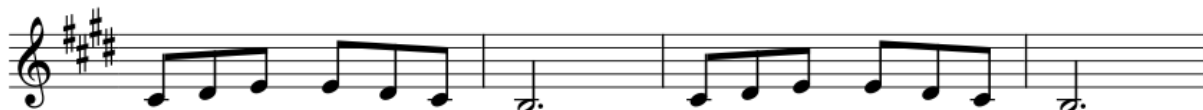
Chorus



For You, O Lord, our souls in still - ness wait.



For You, O Lord, our souls in still - ness wait.



Tru-ly our hope is in You, Tru-ly our hope is in You.

Verse



O Lord of life, our on - ly hope, Your ra-dience shines on all who



look to You in the dark, E-mman - u-el come, come light our hearts.

O Joy above all other loves
In You we find more than enough
We come as we are, O heal and restore
Come light our hearts.

O Little Town of Bethlehem

Music: Lewis Redner; Lyrics: Phillip Brooks

O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, how still we see thee lie; a -
bove thy deep and dream - less sleep the si - lent stars go by. Yet
in thy dark streets shin - eth the ev - er - last - ing light; the
hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee to - night.

Christ is born of Mary and, gathered all above,
While mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wond'ring love.
O morning stars, together proclaim the holy birth,
And praises sing to God the King, and peace to men on earth.

How silently, how silently the wondrous gift is giv'n!
So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of His heav'n.
No ear may hear His coming, but in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive Him still the dear Christ enters in.

O holy child of Bethlehem, descend to us we pray;
Cast out our sin and enter in; be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel.

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.

TableTalks Tonight: Dinner and conversation about the sermon after church in a home or restaurant. Tell Charles or Sara Edgar if you haven't signed up but would like to participate==it's not too late!

Book Groups: Men's book club will meet Tuesday, December 10th at 7 PM at Matt McReynold's house to discuss Beowulf. Women's book club will meet Friday, January 10th at Alicia Moriss's house to discuss The Book Thief by Markus Zusak.

Church Christmas Party: Friday night, December 13, at William and Nancy Price's home (6280 N Placita De Luis). Details to follow

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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