



MIDTOWN
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Evening Worship

First Sunday After Christmas

12.27.2020

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.

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

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.

Reflection

Lucky: Me, I don't go to church, church goes with me, I'm worshipping when I'm drinking a beer, diggin' a hole, or fishin' for trout.

Hank: I happen to know that that is asinine.
--from King of the Hill

Christianity entered history as a new world order, or rather a new social dimension. From the very beginning Christianity was not primarily a "doctrine," but exactly a "community." There was not only a "Message" to be proclaimed and delivered, and "Good News" to be declared. There was precisely a New Community, distinct and peculiar, in the process of growth and formation, to which members were called and recruited. Indeed, "fellowship" was the basic category of Christian existence.

—Georges Florovsky

Home is the place where, when you have to go there,
They have to take you in.

--Robert Frost

The Word

Call to Worship

Psalm 95:1-3

Oh come, let us sing to the Lord;
let us make a joyful noise to the rock of
our salvation! Let us come into his
presence with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to him
with songs of praise! For the Lord is a great God, and a great
King above all gods.

Worship begins with God's call to us to worship him. As always, God initiates with us, such as we are, and invites us to be with him out of sheer mercy.

Prayer of Invocation

Angels from the Realms of Glory

Music & Lyrics: James Montgomery & Henry Smart



Angels from the realms of glo-ry, wing your flight o'er all the earth;



Ye who sang cre - a - tion's sto-ry, now pro-claim Mes - si - ah's birth:



Come and wor-ship, come and wor-ship, wor-ship Christ the new-born King.

Shepherds in the fields abiding, watching o'er your flocks by night,
God with man is now residing, yonder shines the infant Light: [Refrain]

Sages, leave your contemplations, brighter visions beam afar;
Seek the great Desire of nations; ye have seen his natal star: [Refrain]

Saints before the altar bending, watching long in hope and fear,
Suddenly the Lord, descending, in his temple shall appear: [Refrain]

All creation, join in praising God the Father, Spirit, Son;
Evermore your voices raising to the eternal Three in One: [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.

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.

Confession of Sin

[Pray aloud together]

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!

Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing

Lyrics & Music: Robert Robinson

The musical score is written on five staves in 3/4 time. The melody is simple and hymn-like, with lyrics written below the notes. The lyrics are: 'Come, thou fount of ev' - ry bles - sing, tune my heart to sing thy grace; streams of mer - cy, ne - ver ceas - ing, call for songs of loud - est praise. Teach me _ some me - lo - dious - son _ net sung by _ fla - ming tounge a - bove. Praise the mount, I'm fixed up - on it, mount of God's un - chang - ing love.'

Here I raise my Ebenezer; hither by thy help I'm come;
And I hope, by thy good pleasure, safely to arrive at home.
Jesus sought me when a stranger, wand'ring from the fold of God:
He, to rescue me from danger, interposed his precious blood.

O to grace how great a debtor daily I'm constrained to be;
Let that grace now, like a fetter, bind my wand'ring heart to thee.
Prone to wander – Lord, I feel it – prone to leave the God I love;
Here's my heart, O take and seal it, seal it for thy courts above.

The Prayers of the People

[Pray the bold portions aloud together]

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.)

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.

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 ask you to deepen 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.

New Testament Reading

Ephesians 2:17-22

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Reading

John 14:18-23

Reader: The Gospel of Jesus Christ.

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

God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen

Traditional



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]

Old Testament Reading

Psalm 84

How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord of hosts! ² My soul longs, yes, faints for the courts of the Lord; my heart and flesh sing for joy to the living God. ³ Even the sparrow finds a home, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young at your altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God. ⁴ Blessed are those who dwell in your house, ever singing your praise!

⁵ Blessed are those whose strength is in you, in whose heart are the highways to Zion. ⁶ As they go through the Valley of Baca they make it a place of springs; the early rain also covers it with pools. ⁷ They go from strength to strength; each one appears before God in Zion. ⁸ O Lord God of hosts, hear my prayer; give ear, O God of Jacob!

⁹ Behold our shield, O God; look on the face of your anointed! ¹⁰ For a day in your courts is better than a thousand elsewhere. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of wickedness. ¹¹ For the Lord God is a sun and shield; the Lord bestows favor and honor. No good thing does he withhold from those who walk uprightly. ¹² O Lord of hosts, blessed is the one who trusts in you!

Reader: 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.]

We use the ancient creeds and confessions to reinforce our confidence in God's grace, and to highlight our connection to his people around the world who worship him with these same words every Lord's Day.

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.]

The Love of God

Music & Lyrics: Fredrick Martin Lehman



The love of God is great-er far - than tongue or pen can ev-er



tell. It goes be - yond the high-est star, - and reach-es to the low-est



hell. The guilt-y pair, bowed down with care. - God gave his Son - to



win. His err-ing child, he re-con - ciled, - and par-doned from - his

Refrain



sin. O love of God, how rich and pure - how mea-sure - less - and



strong. It shall for-ev - er-more en - dure the saints' and an - gels' song.

When years of time shall pass away,
And earthly thrones and kingdoms fall;
When men, who here, refuse to pray,
On rocks and hills and mountains call;
God's love, so sure, shall still endure,
All measureless and strong;
Redeeming grace to Adam's race,
The saints' and angels' song. [Refrain]

Could we with ink the ocean fill,
And were the skies of parchment made;
Were ev'ry stalk on earth a quill,
And ev'ry man a scribe by trade;
To write the love of God above
Would drain the ocean dry;
Nor could the scroll contain the whole
Tho' stretched from sky to sky. [Refrain]

All Hail The Power of Jesus' Name

Lyrics: Edward Perronet; Music: Oliver Holden



All hail the pow'r of Jes-us' name! Let an-gels pros-trate fall; Bring



forth the roy-al di - a - dem, and crown him Lord of _ all! Bring



forth the roy-al di - a - dem and crown Him, Lord _ of all.

Ye seed of Israel's chosen race, ye ransomed of the fall,
Hail him who saves you by his grace, and crown him Lord of all;
Hail him who saves you by his grace, and crown him Lord of all.

Let ev'ry kindred, ev'ry tribe, on this terrestrial ball,
To him all majesty ascribe, and crown him Lord of all;
To him all majesty ascribe, and crown him Lord of all.

O that with yonder sacred throng we at his feet may fall!
We'll join the everlasting song, and crown him Lord of all;
We'll join the everlasting song, and crown him Lord of all.

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.

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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