



Evening Worship

First Sunday After Christmas
12.31.2023

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.

This New Year's Eve service is for the whole family so we won't have the nursery available.

Reflection

It is a startling paradox that often the sinner's desire for righteous reputation drives him to commit even more aggravated sins . . . most people desire to appear straight and honorable.

—Andrew Siegenthaller

[The Scriptures] look without blinking at the presence and potency of radical evil in order to register the worst about human nature.

—Fleming Rutledge

The Word

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.

Call to Worship

Isaiah 55:1-3

Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters;
and he who has no money, come, buy and eat!
Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.
Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread,
and your labor for that which does not satisfy?
Listen diligently to me, and eat what is good,
and delight yourselves in rich food.
Incline your ear, and come to me; hear, that your soul may live.

Angels We Have Heard on High

Music & Lyrics: Traditional French Carol



An-gels we have heard on high, sweet-ly sing-ing o'er the plain;



and the moun-tains in re-ply, ech-o back their joy-ous strains.



Glo - - - - - ri-a. In ex-cel-sis De - o,



Glo - - - - - ri-a. In ex-cel-sis De - o.

Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
Say what may the tidings be, Which inspire your heav'nly song?
Come to Bethlehem and see Him whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee Christ the Lord, the new-born King.

Prayer of Invocation

Call to Confession of Sin

1 John 1:6

If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.

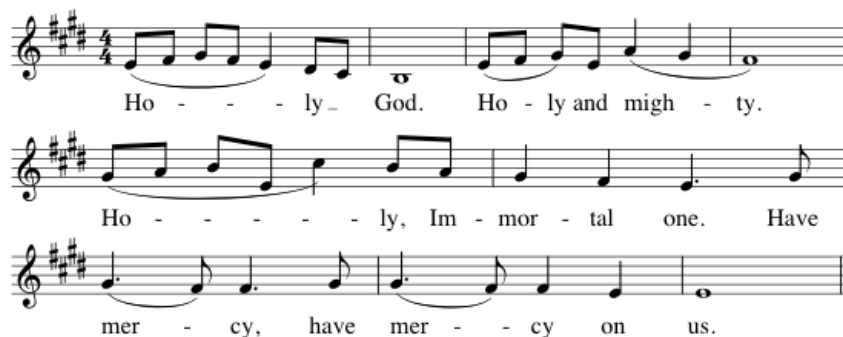
Confession of Sin

[Pray aloud together] **Almighty and most merciful Father, we have erred and strayed from your ways like lost sheep. We have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts. We have offended against your holy laws. We have left undone those things which we ought to have done; and we have done those things which we ought not to have done; and there is no health in us. O Lord, have mercy upon us, miserable offenders. Spare those, O God, who confess their faults. Restore those who are penitent; according to your promises declared unto mankind in Christ Jesus our Lord. Grant that we may hereafter live a godly, righteous, and sober life; to the glory of His holy name. 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

1 John 1:9

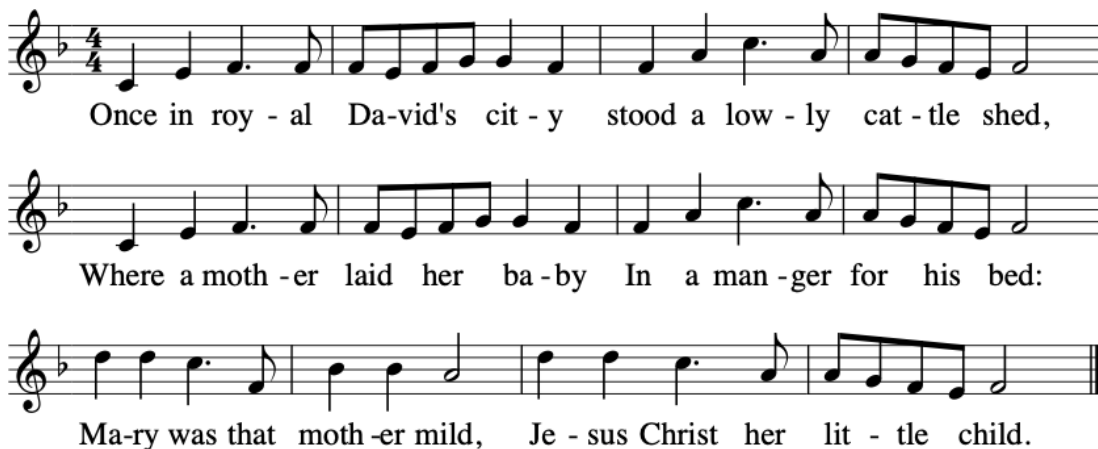
If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Minister: May the peace of Christ be with you!

All: And also with you!

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.

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.

Almighty God and Heavenly Father,
since You have promised to grant our requests, we
make our supplications to You in the name of Your
Son, Jesus Christ.

**We pray for our world leaders,
that they will rule with wisdom and peace,
especially in administering justice in troubled lands.**

Let us pray for the world (silence). Amen.

We pray to You also, dear Father, for Your church, the body of Christ,
**that guided by Your Holy Spirit, we would be found to
be wise, zealous, and faithful worshippers.**

Let us pray for the church (silence). Amen.

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.

Moreover, we pray for all men and women throughout the world,
**that they would come to a knowledge of Your saving
grace through the spread of Your gospel.**

Let us pray for those in need of God's grace (silence). Amen.

Finally, we commend to You all who suffer tribulation,
**that it would please You to make them feel
Your Fatherly affection toward them,
so they would find refreshment and healing in You.**

Let us pray for all who suffer (silence). Amen.

And now as our Savior taught us, we pray:

**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

[Reader: Stephanie Bowyer]

Hebrews 2:10-11

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Reading

Matthew 1:1-7

Reader: The Gospel of Jesus Christ.

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

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.

Old Testament Reading

2 Samuel 11:1-6

In the spring of the year, the time when kings go out to battle, David sent Joab, and his servants with him, and all Israel. And they ravaged the Ammonites and besieged Rabbah. But David remained at Jerusalem.

²It happened, late one afternoon, when David arose from his couch and was walking on the roof of the king's house, that he saw from the roof a woman bathing; and the woman was very beautiful. ³And David sent and inquired about the woman. And one said, "Is not this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?" ⁴So David sent messengers and took her, and she came to him, and he lay with her. (Now she had been purifying herself from her uncleanness.) Then she returned to her house. ⁵And the woman conceived, and she sent and told David, "I am pregnant."

Minister: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

Rev. Charles Garland

The Table

Confession of Faith

The Apostles' Creed

We use the ancient creeds 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.

**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 down the center aisle.. 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. Please return down the outside aisles.]

This Is The Christ

Lyrics: Martin Luther; Music: Sandra McCracken

Good news from heav-en the an-gels bring. Glad tid-ings to the
earth they sing: "To us _ this day _ a child is
giv'n. to crown _ us with _ the joy of heav'n."
CHORUS
This is the Christ, our God _ and Lord _ Who _ in all
need shall aid _ af - ford; He will him - self our
Sav - ior be, _ and from our _ sins will set _ us _ free.

All hail, thou noble guest this morn,
Whose love did not the sinner scorn.
In my distress thou come'st to me,
What thanks shall I return to thee? [Chorus]

Were earth a thousand times as fair, Beset with gold and jewels rare.
She yet were far too poor to be, A narrow cradle, Lord, for thee.

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. 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.

Men's Book Group: The next book is Surprised By Joy by C.S. Lewis. We'll meet Tuesday, January 9th at 7pm at the McReynolds' (1241 E. Sobre Lomas).

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

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