

The Order for Worship and Celebration

Christmas Eve

December 24, 2011

6:30 p.m.

Preparing for God's Word

A THOUGHT BEFORE WORSHIP

On this night, Mary finds supreme favor in God's sight. Filled with God's Spirit, conceives and bears a Son. He will be called holy, and his reign will be everlasting. He will call people to obedience, to a life of witness on behalf of God's will. In him the fullness of God's revelation will reach culmination, as he teaches his followers the extent of God's love. Mary thus carries within her the embodiment of God's promise and is blessed with the living presence of God's grace.

PRE-SERVICE MUSIC

“Joy to the World” by Maurice C. Whitney
Miah Han-organ

“It Came upon the Midnight Clear” by Richard S. Willis, arr. Tedd Smith and Don Hustad
Taemin and Miah Han-piano and organ duet

“In the Bleak Midwinter” GRANTHAM, arr. by Gustav Holst
Alixandra Wimberley-cello, Taemin Han, piano

“Gesù Bambino” by Pietro A. Yon
Grace Han, flute, Miah Han, organ

“Winds through the Olive Trees” by Dale Wood
Valeria Kishkumis-vocal solo, Celebration Ringers
Taemin and Miah Han-piano and organ

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

“Joyfully Sing”
Sanctuary Choir, Celebration Ringers

Hal H. Hopson

Gathering Around God's Word

*OPENING PRAYER

Leader: O Jesus, light of the world, in you God broke the hold of darkness on the world of Caesar. We pray that today, as in those days, you will illumine us with the vision of a new world—a world in which hate yields to love, weapons are turned into tools, and enemies become allies. Give us the grace not only to see that vision, but to put flesh on it as did Jesus in Nazareth of Galilee.

*CALL TO WORSHIP (Responsive)

Leader: At Christmas we celebrate the coming of God to earth in human form.

People: *The shepherds listen to the songs of angels,*

Leader: And the sages follow the stars,

People: *But the glory of God shines in a manger.*

Leader: “Go, tell it on the mountain,

People: *Over the hills and everywhere,*

Leader: Go, tell it on the mountain

People: *That Jesus Christ is born.”*

All: *Let us worship God!*

*OPENING HYMN

“O Come, All Ye Faithful”

#41, Hymnal

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (Unison)

We celebrate this evening the coming of the Light of the world; we have prayed for that light to enter our lives and our world. Yet we confess that there have been times when we have obscured the light for others through our own insensitivity and prejudice, through the use of careless and hurtful words or selfish and destructive actions. (Silent Confession) Come Lord Jesus, be the light for our darkness and empower us with your Spirit to be faithful bearers of your light into all the shadowy and clouded areas of people's lives. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE (Responsive)

Leader: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined. Let the heavens be glad and let the earth rejoice; let the seas roar, and all that fills it. Let all the birds in the bush sing for joy before the Lord; for he is coming, he is coming, he is coming to judge the earth. He will judge the world with righteousness and the peoples with his truth. And he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, the Prince of Peace. Know now that in him you are forgiven.

People: *Thanks be to God!*

*RESPONSE

“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” (Refrain)
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee o Israel!

#9, Hymnal

CHORAL ANTHEM

“Rejoice and Sing This Christmas Morn”
Sanctuary Choir

Eleanor Daley

LIGHTING THE FIFTH ADVENT CANDLE: The Christ Candle

David and Mary Kabel and Family

Sing to the Lord a new song, for God has done marvelous things; God’s right hand and the holy arm have worked salvation.

1ST Reader:

All: *Today in the city of David a Savior has been born to you.*

2ND Reader: The Lord has made salvation known and revealed righteousness to the nations.

All: *Today in the city of David a Savior has been born to you.*

1ST Reader: God has remembered his love and faithfulness to the people; all the ends of the Earth have seen the salvation of God.

All: *Today in the city of David a Savior has been born to you.*

2ND Reader: Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth, bursting into jubilant song with music; make music to the Lord with the harp, with the harp and the sound of singing.

All: *Today in the city of David a Savior has been born to you.*

1ST Reader: Let the rivers clap their hands, let the mountains sing together for joy; let them sing before the Lord, for God comes to judge the earth. The Lord will judge the world with righteousness and the people with equity.

All: *Today in the city of David a Savior has been born to you.*

2ND Reader: We light the four outside candles of the Advent wreath one last time. The first candle reminds us of our hope. The second candle is the candle of peace. The third candle represents our joy. The fourth candle is for love, our love of God, and God’s love for us. We now light the center candle, the Christ candle. Jesus Christ is our hope. Jesus Christ gives us peace. We can have joy because Jesus has come to us. Jesus is God’s greatest gift of love. And because of God’s loving gift of Jesus Christ, we can have life now and forever.

All: *Today in the city of David a Savior has been born to you.*

(All the Advent candles are lit including the Christ Candle)

1st Reader & All: *Loving God, we are thankful that the waiting of Advent is over. We rejoice that today in the city of David a Savior is born. We rejoice that our hope is fulfilled, and God’s peace has come to earth. We rejoice that we can fully know God’s love in Jesus Christ. Help us to celebrate today and always that a Savior has been born to us. Amen.*

CANDLE LIGHT SONG

“Light One Candle”
Sanctuary Choir

Natalie Sleeth

CHILDREN’S SERMON

“The Christmas Story”

Jan Schwab

Hearing God’s Word

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON

Luke 1:26-38

SERMON

“Mary’s Dilemma”

Dr. David K. Wood

*HYMN OF MEDITATION

“O Little Town of Bethlehem”

#44, Hymnal

Responding to God’s Word

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD’S PRAYER (Debtis)

BRINGING OUR GIFTS TO THE LORD

Offertory

“O Holy Night”

Juan Ahumada, vocal solo; Taemin Han, piano

Adolphe Adam

*DOXOLOGY AND PRAYER OF DEDICATION

#592, Hymnal

Going Out to Live God’s Word

*HYMN

“Lo, How a Rose E’er Blooming”

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INTRODUCTION OF “SILENT NIGHT”

F. Gruber, arr. by Clarence Kohlmann

Taemin Han, piano

(The lights will be dimmed. Ushers will light the candles of the first person in each pew representing the sending of Christ’s Light into the world. As individual candles are lit, you are cautioned not to tip a lighted candle! Please hold all burning candles upright. Tip the unlit candles to receive the flame from your neighbor. Thank you.)

*HYMN

“Silent Night, Holy Night”

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*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

“Joy to the World”

Michael Bedford

Miah Han, organ

**All those who are able may stand*

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

Lo, how a rose e'er blooming from tender stem hath sprung,
Of Jesse's lineage coming, By faithful prophets sung.

It came a flower bright, Amid the cold of winter
When half spent was the night.

Isaiah 'twas foretold it, The rose I have in mind,
With Mary we behold it, The virgin mother kind.
To show God's love aright She bore for us a Savior,
When half spent was the night.

Silent Night, Holy Night

Silent Night, holy night! All is calm, all is bright,
Round yon virgin mother and child! Holy Infant, so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace, Sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night! Shepherds quake at the sight,
Glories steam from heaven afar, heavenly hosts sing "Alleluia:
Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born."

Silent night, holy night! Son of God, love's pure light
Radiant beams from Thy holy face,
With the dawn of redeeming grace
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.

Silent night, holy night! Wondrous star, lend thy light;
With the angels let us sing, Alleluia to our King;
Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born.

*First Presbyterian Church is dedicated to serving
Christ in new ways as we respond to a changing
neighborhood, community and world.*

David K. Wood, Ph.D., Pastor/Head of Staff
Jan Schwab, Minister of Christian Nurture
Taemin Han, Interim Music Director/Organist
Jackie Bass, Administrative Assistant
Marie Fernau, Financial Secretary