



PARISH
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

MORNING WORSHIP SERVICE

Advent
December 21st, 2025

Quotes for reflection:

In the presence of God, we are both profoundly attracted and profoundly unsettled. We are drawn to him because of his beauty, yet we are also terrified because of our impurity. His holiness exposes us, and that exposure is deeply uncomfortable. —Tim Keller

By calling it great joy, he shows us, not only that we ought, above all things, to rejoice in the salvation brought us by Christ, but that this blessing is so great and boundless, as fully to compensate for all the pains, distresses, and anxieties of the present life. Let us learn to be so delighted with Christ alone, that the perception of his grace may overcome, and at length remove from us, all the distresses of the flesh. —John Calvin

GOD CALLS HIS PEOPLE TO WORSHIP

It is God Himself who calls His people to worship. We do not call ourselves: the King opens His gates and welcomes us into His courts.

Gospel Invitation—John 3:16

Good news. Glad tidings. Great joy. “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.”

Sung Response—Hark! The Herald Angels Sing, Vs. 1

The musical score is written for a four-part setting (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) in 4/4 time, with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody is simple and hymn-like, with lyrics printed below the notes. The score consists of six systems of two staves each. The lyrics are: "Hark! the her - ald an - gels sing, 'Glo-ry to the new-born King; Peace on earth, and mer-cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on-ciled!' Joy-ful, all ye na - tions, rise, join the tri - umph of the skies; With th'an - gel - ic host pro-claim, 'Christ is born in Beth-le-hem!' Hark! the he - rald an - gels sing, 'Glo-ry to the new-born King.'" The score ends with a double bar line.

Hark! the her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo-ry to the new-born King;
Peace on earth, and mer-cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on-ciled!"
Joy-ful, all ye na - tions, rise, join the tri - umph of the skies;
With th'an - gel - ic host pro-claim, "Christ is born in Beth-le-hem!"
Hark! the he - rald an - gels sing, "Glo-ry to the new-born King."

Text: Charles Wesley, 1739; Music: MENDELSSOHN, Felix Mendelssohn, 1840.

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Call to Worship—Psalm 96:1-4, 7-9

Pastor: Oh sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the earth!

All: Sing to the Lord, bless His name; tell of His salvation from day to day.

Reader 1: Declare His glory among the nations, His marvelous works among all the peoples!

Reader 2: For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; He is to be feared above all gods.

Pastor: Ascribe to the Lord, O families of the peoples, ascribe to the Lord glory and strength!

All: Ascribe to the Lord the glory due His name; bring an offering, and come into His courts!

Pastor: Worship the Lord in the splendor of holiness; tremble before Him, all the earth!

Congregational Hymn—Once In Royal David's City

The musical score is written for a four-part setting (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) in 4/4 time, with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody is primarily in the Soprano and Alto parts, with the Tenor and Bass parts providing harmonic support. The lyrics are arranged in four systems, each corresponding to a line of the hymn. The first system covers the first four lines of the hymn, the second system covers the next four lines, and the third system covers the final four lines. The fourth system contains the final line of the hymn. The music features various musical notations, including eighth and sixteenth notes, rests, and dynamic markings. The lyrics are printed in a serif font, with hyphens used for syllables that span across measures.

Once in roy - al Da - vid's cit - y stood a low - ly cat - tle shed,
He came down to Earth from Heav - en who is God and Lord of all,
And our eyes at last shall see Him, through His own re - deem - ing love,
Not in that poor low - ly sta - ble, with the ox - en stand - ing by,

Where a moth - er laid her ba - by in a man - ger for His bed:
And His shel - ter was a sta - ble, and His cra - dle was a stall:
For that Child so dear and gen - tle is our Lord in Heav'n a - bove;
We shall see Him, but in Heav - en, set at God's right hand on high;

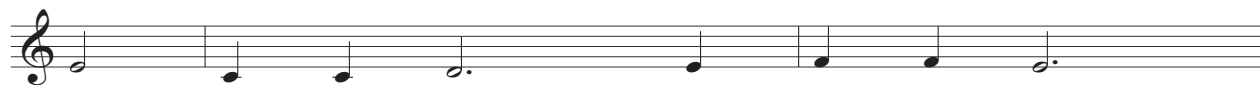
Mar - y was that moth - er mild, — Je - sus Christ her lit - tle child.
With the poor, and mean, and low - ly, lived on Earth our Sav - ior ho - ly.
And He leads His child - ren on — to the place where He is gone.
When like stars His chil - dren crowned — all in white shall wait a - round.

Text: C.F. Alexander, 1848; Music: Irby, H.J. Gauntlett, 1849.

GOD SPEAKS TO HIS PEOPLE THROUGH HIS WORD

The Bible is the means by which God graciously reveals Himself to His people—so we listen, read, and study with expectant hearts.

Congregational Hymn—O Savior Dear, Thy Manger Here



O Sav - ior dear, Thy man - ger here
The wind and sea are calmed by Thee,
What though our foe would bring us low?
Thou prince of hell, thy plans so fell
Let oth - ers hold their wealth of gold,



my soul shall call a par - a - dise of___ glo - ry.
Thou art en - throned as King in high - est___ heav - en;
His dead - ly an - ger can no more ap - pall us.
do not a - vail thee for our con - dem - na - tion;
thou tru - ly has a more a - bid - ing___ trea - sure;



Here Thou, O Lord, In - car - nate Word,
And yet Thy dress is low - li - ness,
Though Ad - am's fall has taint - ed all,
Thy vaunt - ed gain is all in vain,
Re - joice and sing, thy prais - es bring



dost lie as proph - ets told in sa - cred sto - ry.
Thou as an in - fant small to us art___ giv - en.
Thy sav - ing grace to glo - ry doth re - call us.
for Je - sus is the fount of our sal - va - tion.
to Him who bless - eth thee in full - est___ mea - sure.

Text: Paul Gerhardt, 1653, tr. Paul Kretzmann, 1930, alt. 2021;

Music: O JESU CHRIST, DEIN KRIPPLEIN IST, Johann Crüger, 1656; arr. Henry C. Haffner, 2021.

Scripture Reading—Isaiah 43:1-7

But now thus says the Lord,
He who created you, O Jacob,
He who formed you, O Israel:
“Fear not, for I have redeemed you;
I have called you by name, you are Mine.
When you pass through the waters, I will be with you;
and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you;
when you walk through fire you shall not be burned,
and the flame shall not consume you.
For I am the Lord your God,
the Holy One of Israel, your Savior.
I give Egypt as your ransom,
Cush and Seba in exchange for you.
Because you are precious in My eyes,
and honored, and I love you,
I give men in return for you,
peoples in exchange for your life.
Fear not, for I am with you;
I will bring your offspring from the east,
and from the west I will gather you.
I will say to the north, Give up,
and to the south, do not withhold;
bring My sons from afar
and My daughters from the end of the earth,
everyone who is called by My name,
whom I created for My glory,
whom I formed and made.”

Elder: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Congregational Hymn—From Heaven On High



From Heav'n on high I come to you, I bring you ti - dings good and new;

"To you, this night, is born a Child of Mar - y, chos - en vir - gin mild;

"This is the Christ, our God and Lord, who in all need shall aid af - ford;

Wel - come to Earth, Thou no - ble guest, thro' whom the sin - ful world is blest!



Glad ti - dings of great joy I bring, where - of I now will say and sing.

This lit - tle Child, of low - ly birth, shall be the joy of all your Earth."

Him - self will your Sal - va - tion be, Him - self from sin will make you free."

In my dis - tress Thou came to me, what can we ren - der, Lord, to Thee!

Text: Martin Luther, 1535, tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1855;

Music: VOM HIMMEL HOCH, *Geistliche Lieder*, 1539.

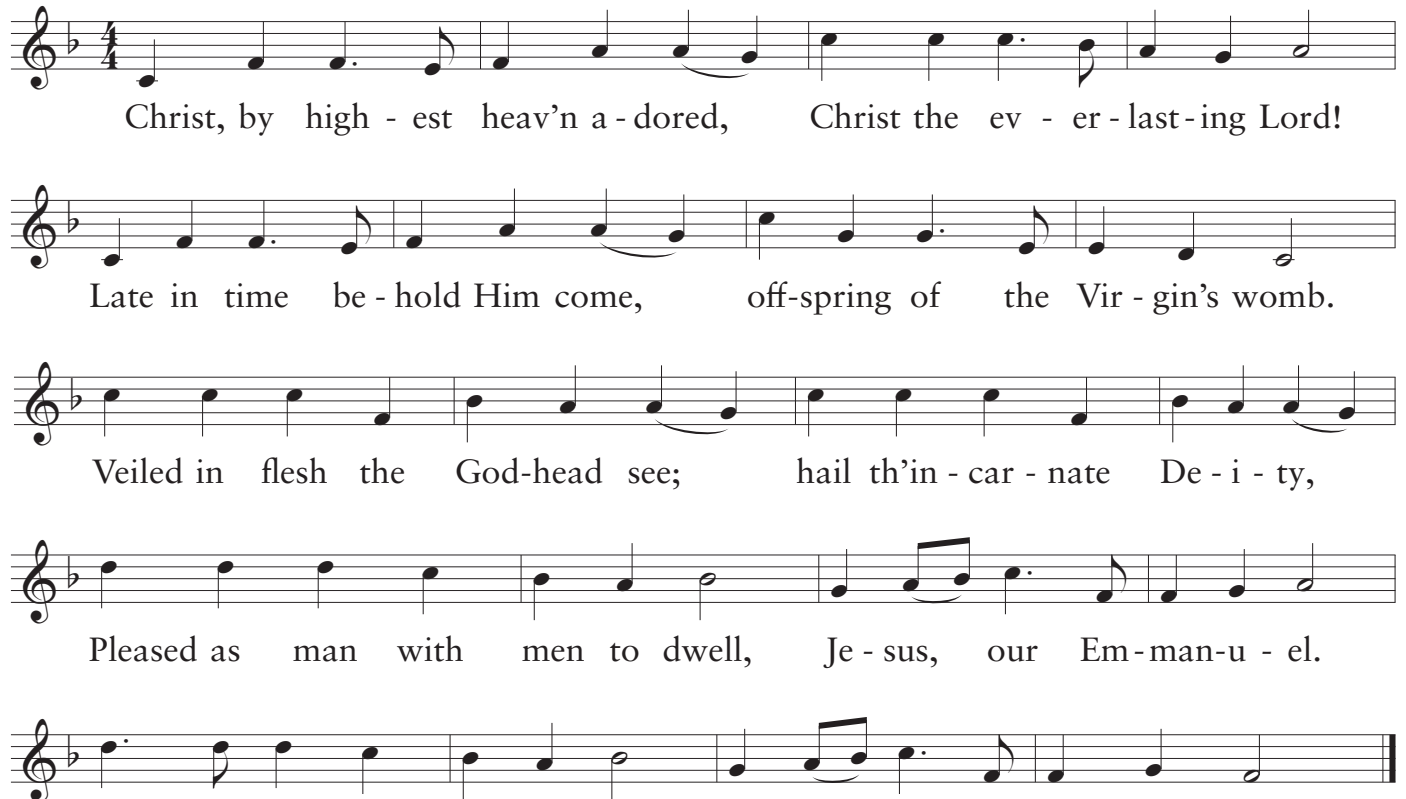
Sermon Text—Luke 2:8-14

⁸ And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. ¹⁰ And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. ¹¹ For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹² And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." ¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, ¹⁴ Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom He is pleased!"

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Sung Response—Hark! The Herald Angels Sing, Vs. 2



Christ, by high - est heav'n a - dored, Christ the ev - er - last - ing Lord!

Late in time be - hold Him come, off-spring of the Vir - gin's womb.

Veiled in flesh the God-head see; hail th'in - car - nate De - i - ty,

Pleased as man with men to dwell, Je - sus, our Em-man-u - el.

Hark! the he - rald an - gels sing, "Glo-ry to the new-born King."

The image shows five staves of musical notation in 4/4 time, key of B-flat major. The melody is simple and hymn-like, with lyrics written below each staff. The lyrics are: 'Christ, by high - est heav'n a - dored, Christ the ev - er - last - ing Lord!', 'Late in time be - hold Him come, off-spring of the Vir - gin's womb.', 'Veiled in flesh the God-head see; hail th'in - car - nate De - i - ty,', 'Pleased as man with men to dwell, Je - sus, our Em-man-u - el.', and 'Hark! the he - rald an - gels sing, "Glo-ry to the new-born King."'. The music consists of eighth and quarter notes, with some phrases ending in a double bar line.

Text: Charles Wesley, 1739; Music: MENDELSSOHN, Felix Mendelssohn, 1840.

Sermon—*Fear Not: Good News of Great Joy for All People*

—Assistant Pastor, Mike Fennema

GOD CALLS HIS PEOPLE TO CONFESSION, REPENTANCE, AND RECONCILIATION

The people of God respond to His Word by confessing their sins, repenting of their sinful ways, and seeking God's favor through the reconciling work of Jesus, the Son of God.

Confession of Sin—based on Isaiah 6:1-5, Psalm 51:1-2

Pastor: You are the Lord, sitting upon Your throne, high and lifted up; and the train of Your robe fills the temple.

All: Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory!

Pastor: We are lost; for we are people of unclean lips. We dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips.

All: Have mercy on us, O God, according to Your steadfast love.

Pastor: According to Your abundant mercy, blot out our transgressions.

All: Wash us thoroughly from our iniquity, and cleanse us from our sin!

(Silent prayers of confession)

Sung Response—Agnus Dei

UNISON



O Lamb of God, that takes a - way the sins of the world, have mer-cy on us. ____



O Lamb of__ God, that takes a - way the sins of the world, have mer-cy on us. ____



O Lamb of__ God, that takes a - way the sins of the world,



Grant us Thy peace, Grant us Thy, Grant us Thy peace.



Grant us Thy peace, Grant us Thy peace, Grant us Thy_ peace.

Text: Traditional, based on John 1:29; Music: CLOVERCROFT AGNUS DEI,
Henry C. Haffner, 2019.

Assurance of Pardon—Isaiah 6:6-7; Revelation 15:3-4

Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a burning coal that he had taken with tongs from the altar. And he touched my mouth and said: “Behold, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away, and your sin atoned for.”

Pastor: This is the promise of God.

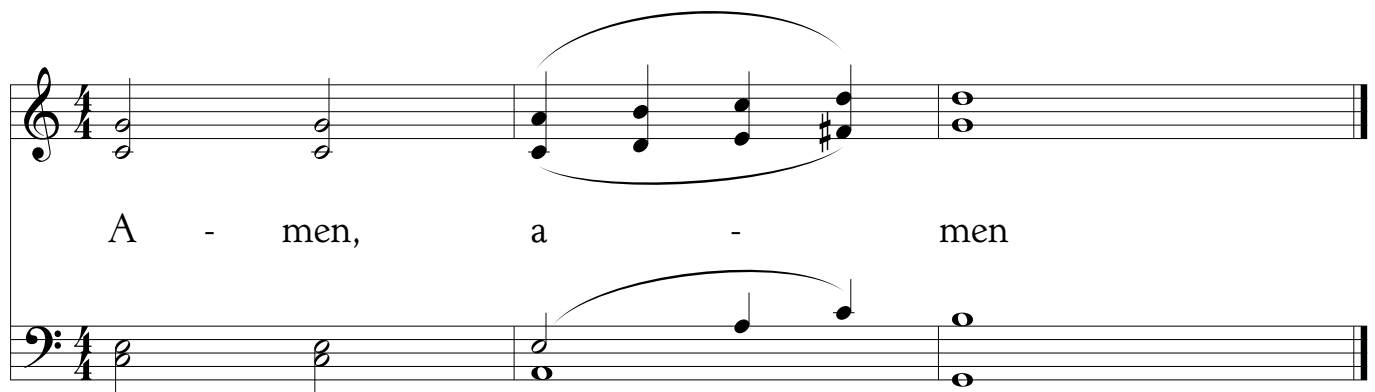
All: This is the Word of the Lord.

Pastor: Great and marvelous are Your deeds, Lord God Almighty. Just and true are Your ways, King of the nations.

All: Who will not fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your name?

Pastor: For You alone are holy. Amen.

Sung Response—Twofold Amen



Text: Traditional; Music: DRESDEN, Johann Naumann, 18th century.

GOD INVITES HIS PEOPLE TO FELLOWSHIP WITH HIM

God feeds the faith of His people by giving them a meal. As God fellowships with them in faith, His people pledge their obedience to God and their love for one another.

Profession of Faith—The Apostles' Creed

We believe in God:

The Father Almighty, the Creator of Heaven and Earth;

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord: who was conceived of the Holy Spirit,
Born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate,
Was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into Hell.

On the third day He rose again from the dead.

He ascended into Heaven and now sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty,
From whence He shall come to judge the living and the dead.

We believe in the Holy Spirit; the one holy church—both visible and invisible;
The communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins;
The resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting.

Amen.

Sursum Corda

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

People: **We lift them up to the Lord.**

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: **It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**

Pastor: It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to You, Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and Earth. Therefore, we praise You, Triune God, and we join our voices with the angels, the archangels, and the whole company of Heaven in this hymn of eternal praise:

UNISON



Glo-ry to God in the high - est, and peace to His peo-ple on earth.____

WOMEN

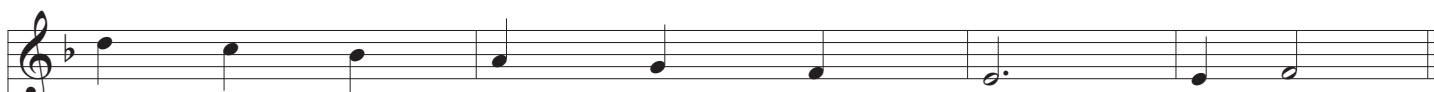


We praise You, we bless You, we wor-ship You, we glo-ri-fy You,

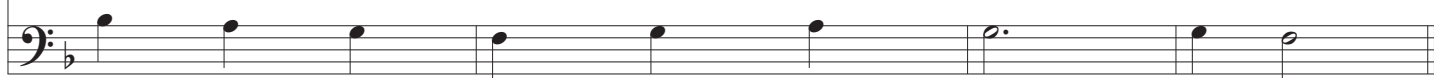
MEN



We praise You, we bless_ You, we wor-ship You, we glo-ri-fy You,



We give You thanks for Your great glo - ry.



We give You thanks for Your great glo - ry.

Text: Traditional, based on Luke 2:14; Music: CLOVERCROFT GLORIA,
Henry C. Haffner, 2019.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION AND THE LORD'S TABLE

This table is open to all baptized Christians who have made a profession of faith. You may come forward to receive the bread and wine or grape juice.

Congregational Hymn—For What Did Christ The Babe Appear



For what did Christ, the babe, ap - pear, fash - ioned in an earth - ly style?
For what did Christ, the babe, ap - pear, and His Fa - ther's will o - bey?
For what did Christ, the babe, ap - pear, of - fering His most pre - cious blood?



And rest with - in___ a man - ger here, Im - man - u - el, a heaven - ly child?
From Jor - dan's wa - ters in ho - ly fear,___ to the cross___ what was gained?
And once or - dain that I should hear,___ plac - ing me with - in the flood?



This, fore - told in an - cient times! This th'an - ge - lic hosts now sing,
All is gained by Him a - lone. All the law is sat - is - fied.
In the flood of Gos - pel light, clear and pure as shin - ing star,



Glo - ry un - to God on high, the Child of Peace is born a King!
All o - bed - ience to the throne!___ He, the per - fect sac - ri - fice.
Fast I stand with end in sight;___ dis - tant yet, though not a - far.

Text & Music: Nathan George, 2009.

Congregational Hymn—Lovely Child, Holy Child

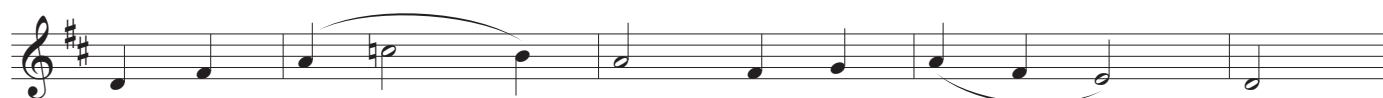


Love - ly child, ho - ly child, gen - tle, mild, un - de - filed;
Child of light, born to - night, our de - light, prom - ise bright;
Rest Your head, sweet - est head; gifts we'll spread at Your bed.
To this boy, our great joy, we em - ploy hymns of joy;



In - fant King, fair - est King, gifts we'll bring and an - thems sing;
Child so— fair, see Him there; now de - clare Him ev - 'ry where;
Je - sus— Lord, be a - dored, may this word now be out - poured:
Child so— fair: see Him there; now de - clare Him ev - 'ry where:

Refrain



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Text: Folk carol, adapted by David N. Johnson, 1968;
Music: BETHLEHEM, Folk carol.

GOD’S PEOPLE GRATEFULLY RESPOND WITH THEIR PETITIONS, TITHES & OFFERINGS, AND PRAISE

Praying, serving, and giving are essential aspects of worship, moving our faith from our heads and hearts into our lives and callings. Offering boxes for both tithes and alms are located in the foyer.

Pastoral Prayer

Corporate Prayer—*The Lord’s Prayer*

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.

Congregational Hymn—Angels We Have Heard On High

An - gels, we have heard on high, sweet - ly sing - ing o'er the plains,
Shep - herds, why this ju - bi - lee? Why your joy - ous strains pro - long?
Come to Beth - le - hem and see Him whose birth the an - gels sing;

And the moun - tains in re - ply ech - o back their joy - ous strains.
Say what may the tid - ings be, which in - spire your heav'n - ly song?
Come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ the Lord, the new - born King.

Glo - ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o,

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

Text: Traditional French Carol; Music: GLORIA, Traditional French Melody,
arr. Edward S. Barnes, 1937.

GOD SENDS HIS PEOPLE OUT

After calling His people into His presence, forgiving their sins, instructing them in His Word, and providing a foretaste of the marriage supper of the Lamb, God sends His people into the world to show His light in the darkness.

Benediction—Numbers 6:24-26

The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make His face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace. *Amen.*

Sung Response—Hark! The Herald Angels Sing, Vs. 3

The musical score is written for a four-part setting (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) in G major, 4/4 time. It consists of seven systems of staves, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment line. The lyrics are printed below the vocal lines.

Hail the Heav'n - born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of Right-teous-ness!

Light and life to all He brings, ris'n with heal - ing in His wings.

Mild He lays His glo-ry by, born that man no more may die,

Born to raise the sons of Earth, born to give them sec - ond birth.

Hark! the he - rald an - gels sing, "Glo-ry to the new-born King."

Text: Charles Wesley, 1739; Music: MENDELSSOHN, Felix Mendelssohn, 1840.

Announcements

Worship Notes:

Don't you love singing Advent and Christmas hymns at this time of year? There are so many rich pieces of poetry and music that we only sing during this season, we typically need to make a spreadsheet (beginning in November) to make sure that we don't miss any! We try to group the seasonal hymns around a central theme from week to week: for example, the past two Sundays have included hymns celebrating Jesus as a purifying priest and the coming King. This morning, the hymns will focus on the annunciation of Jesus' birth by angels. The three verses of Charles Wesley's magnificent *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing* form the backbone of the service, occurring several times throughout the morning. Martin Luther's *From Heaven On High* is drawn directly from this morning's sermon text from Luke 2, in which the angels bring the good news of Jesus' birth to shepherds out in the fields surrounding Bethlehem. This story is echoed by Nathan George's 2009 hymn *For What Did Christ The Babe Appear*, which mentions angelic choirs singing "glory unto God on high." Even the CLOVERCROFT GLORIA, which we sing throughout the Advent and Christmas seasons here at Parish, is taken from this very same passage: "Glory to God in the highest and peace to His people on earth." The service concludes with the beloved French carol *Angels We Have Heard On High*, in which we join the angels in an ecstatic melisma of "Gloria in excelsis Deo."

—Henry C. Haffner

Key Words: Shepherds, Glory, Angels, Fear, Good News, Great Joy, All People, Savior, Christ, Lord, Peace

Keystone Verses: And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people." (Luke 2:10)



PARISH

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Presbyterian Church in America
4156 Clovercroft Rd. Franklin, TN 37067
Mailing address: P.O. Box 1593, Franklin, TN 37065

Web: www.parishpres.org
Church Office: Sarah Dye, 574-1029, office@parishpres.org
Prayer requests: prayer@parishpres.org

Pastor: James Crampton, 943-1696, jamie@parishpres.org
Pastor Emeritus: George Grant, 574-1029 (office), george@parishpres.org
Associate Pastor: Brian Phillips, 429-8125, brian@parishpres.org
Assistant Pastor: Mike Fennema, 931-215-1057, mike@parishpres.org
Music Director: Henry C. Haffner, 497-6573, henry@parishpres.org
Staff Accompanist: Mirandi Herrenbruck, mirandi@parishpres.org
Music Intern: Caleb Groves, caleb@parishpres.org
Audio Coordinator: Jonathan George, jonathan@parishpres.org
Financial Administrator: Joanna Reategui, joanna@parishpres.org
Parish Nursery Coordinator: Chelsea Monroe, 495-0423, chelsea@parishpres.org
Women's Ministry Coordinator: Christian Barnes, 478-318-5521, christian@parishpres.org

Elders

Stephen Barnes (478-318-5513)	Keith Cannon (636-7137)	Caleb Faires (513-0659)
Miles Foltermann (281) 793-3280	Tom Goddard (218-3654)	Brandon Herrenbruck (339-5516)
Michael Mastroberti (973-879-1368)	Mike Miserocchi (594-3880)	Matt Morrison (482-5107)
Jason Parolini (497-3337)	Jonathan Thornton (703-801-1355)	

Deacons

Aaron Anderson (973-1797)	Brandon Blair (336-0274)	Kevin Cowherd (967-5099)
Ben Crist (509-3040)	Ryan Gregory (714-5446)	Elliot Huck (843-540-6529)
Piotr Lorenc (931-996-9226)	Connor Neville (410-430-0760)	Nolan Reategui (829-0412)
Joshua Scheenstra (818-653-1113)	Robert Simmons (850-532-1075)	Nae Soundara (519-3720)
Jim Soyster (585-5980)	Walt Yates (785-477-0990)	

Officers Emeritus

Steve Nelson, Elder Emeritus; Jimmy Allen, Tim Simmons, Deacons Emeritus

All Biblical quotes taken from the English Standard Version unless otherwise noted.