



**THE DOWNTOWN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**  
**SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY**  
**December 31, 2017**

(\*) indicates the congregation will stand if able

**We Gather in God's Name**

OPENING VOLUNTARY

Noël

Louis-Claude Daquin

WELCOME

\*CALL TO WORSHIP

based on Luke 2:11; Romans 8:38-39; Philippians 4:4

L: Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy, for all people.  
To you is born this day, in the city of David,  
a savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord.

**P: There is nothing in death or life,  
in things present or things to come,  
nothing in all creation,  
that can separate us from the love of God,  
in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen!**

L: Rejoice in the Lord always,  
and again I say, Rejoice!

**P: Thanks be to God! Amen!**

\*CAROL #56

“The First Nowell”  
verses 1, 2 and 6

GATHERING PRAYER (unison)

God of peace, you hold the nations in your hand,  
yet know and love us all.

By your Spirit you gather us;  
in Christ, you make us one.

As we come together,  
show us who we are, what we can be, and where we should go,  
through Jesus Christ, our partner and friend. Amen.

**\*PASSING THE PEACE**

L: In this season of hope and peace, joy and love, let us respond to the light of Christ that glows within each of us, embracing one another in his name.  
May the peace of Christ be with you.

P: **And also with you.**

**\*GLORIA #23**      “Angels We Have Heard on High” (verse 1)

**PARISH LIFE & CONGREGATIONAL ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**God’s Word Is Proclaimed**

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION (unison)

By the light of the Holy Spirit shining in our midst,  
open our hearts and minds, O God, to your Word,  
present now and always for the sake of your holy name. Amen.

SCRIPTURE & SONG

**Who Is This Child?**

FIRST READING	<i>Glory Revealed to All</i>	Isaiah 40:1-5
Carol #3	“Comfort, Comfort, You My People” verses 1,3	
SECOND READING	<i>A Servant With Gentle Strength</i>	Isaiah 42:1-4
Carol #22	“Angles From the Realms of Glory” verses 1,4	
THIRD READING	<i>Equal, Beloved and United</i>	Galatians 4:4-7; 3:27-28
Carol #53	“What Child Is This?” verses 1,2	

**Why Lies He in Such Low Estate?**

FOURTH READING

*A Servant of Peace is Born*

Luke 2:1-7

“Born in the Night, Mary’s Child”  
Dione Russell, Mike Wilson

FIFTH READING

*Adored by Outsiders*

Luke 2:15-21

Carol

“Her Baby Newly Breathing”  
to the tune of “Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing”

1. Her baby, newly breathing,  
with wailing, needful cry,  
by Mary kissed and cradled,  
is lulled in lullaby.  
Long months of hope and waiting,  
the thrill and fear of birth,  
are crowned with exultation,  
and God is on the earth.

3. The milk of life is flowing  
as Mary guides and feeds  
her wordless Word, embodied  
in infant joys and needs.  
Enormous, formless strivings,  
and yearnings deep and wide,  
be-cradled in communion  
are fed and satisfied.

2. The eyes that gaze at Mary  
have yet to name or trace  
the world of shape and color,  
or recognize a face;  
yet holiness eternal  
is perfectly expressed  
in hands that clutch unthinking,  
and lips that tug the breast.

4. How mother-like the Wisdom  
that carried and gave birth  
to all things, seen and unseen,  
and nurtured infant earth -  
unstinting, unprotected,  
prepared for nail and thorn,  
constricted into maleness,  
and of a woman born.

SIXTH READING

*Taking the Form of a Slave*

Philippians 2:5-11

Carol #41

“O Come, All Ye Faithful”  
verses 1,2

**Let Loving Hearts Enthroned Him**

*The Reign of Christ: An Affirmation of Faith*

L: Christ is born, not to reign by conquest, domination and manipulation,  
But by gracious love, gladly given and willingly received.  
Christ comes near wherever people say,

P: **We are your body: live in our hearts.**  
**We are your people: govern our lives.**  
**We are your witnesses: send us out and empower us.**

SEVENTH READING     *Royal Robes for a Rescued People*  
Colossians 2:6; 3:12-15

Carol #31             “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”  
verses 1,3

EIGHTH READING             *A Messiah for All People*             Luke 2:25-32

Carol #603             “Song of Simeon”

NINTH READING             *Love’s Living Word*             John 1:1-13, 18

Carol #60             “Silent Night, Holy Night”  
verses 1,4

## **We Respond to God’s Word**

PRAYER OF INTERCESSION, PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE  
& THE LORD’S PRAYER (people read bold)

Let us pray for the world in which the Prince of Peace took flesh  
and form, saying,  
hear us, O God;  
**your mercy is great.**

We give you thanks, Holy One,  
for the light that has come into the darkness of our world,  
for the truth illuminated,  
for the pathway that has opened,  
for the rejoicing of your people.  
Hear us, O God;  
**your mercy is great.**

We give you thanks for the feet of those  
who bring good news, friendship, comfort,  
food, shelter, and medicine for healing.  
Hear us, O God;  
**your mercy is great.**

We give you thanks for the church of Christ Jesus  
and for all people of faith whose attention to the way of peace  
tears down walls that keep us apart.

Hear us, O God;  
**your mercy is great.**

We pray for the leaders of nations,  
that they would work for the well-being of the poor,  
so that no one is hungry or homeless,  
and every child is valued and nourished.

Hear us, O God;  
**your mercy is great.**

We pray for the knowledge and courage  
to be good stewards of all that you have given us:  
ourselves, our neighbors, the strangers among us,  
the oceans and rivers, the air and soil, creatures large and small,  
that we may continue to be blessed with health and life.

Hear us, O God;  
**your mercy is great.**

We pray for those whose flesh is harmed  
by poverty, sickness, and cruelty of any kind,  
that the Word-made-flesh may so fill your world with the power to heal  
that all people would be made strong and whole.

Hear us, O God;  
**your mercy is great.**

We pray for those concerns yet unnamed this day . . .

*[A time of silence is kept to allow for responses.]*

Hear us, O God;  
**your mercy is great.**

We commend all these things to you and offer our thanksgiving,  
trusting that what we have left unsaid, your holy wisdom can unearth;  
In the name of the One who came among us and who taught us to 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.**

## OPPORTUNITY FOR GENEROUS GIVING

### OFFERTORY ANTHEM

What Cheer

William Walton

What cheer? Good cheer! Be merry and glad this good New Year!

Lift up your hearts and be glad in Christ's birth, the angel bade,  
Say each to other, if any be sad: what cheer?

Now the King of heaven his birth hath take, joy and mirth we ought to make;  
Say each to other, for his sake: what cheer?

I tell you all with heart so free: right welcome, welcome, ye be to me;  
Be glad and merry, for charity!

What cheer? Good cheer!  
Be merry and glad this good New Year!

— Richard Hill

### DOXOLOGY #40

“Joy to the World”  
verse 1

### \*PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AND DEDICATION (*unison*)

We joyously give you thanks for all that we have and are  
and ask your blessing on our offerings. Turn our lives to your will as we  
receive and as we give, for the sake of your Son, in whose name we pray.  
Amen.

## **We Seal God's Word Upon Our Hearts and Bear It Into the World**

### \*CAROL #29

“Go, Tell It on the Mountain”  
verses 1, 3

### \*CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

L: Let all God's people say, P: Merry Christmas! Amen!

### CLOSING VOLUNTARY

Noël Angevin

César Franck

Today's bulletin cover is by DPC artist-in-residence Richard Feaster

## Our Mission

Gathering in the heart of Nashville, we are a community of disciples of Jesus Christ. We seek the welfare of the city as we seek the kingdom of God. We are an historic church working to be a welcoming and inclusive congregation. Together we actively share God's grace and love through worship, education and service, and through being an active voice in promoting justice and peace in our community and the world.

## Our Values and Ethos

We believe that *every* person is a beloved child of God.

Our welcome extends to everyone, whatever your economic circumstances, your faith background, your racial or ethnic identity, your sexual orientation or gender identity, or your political affiliations.

As a diverse community we seek to intentionally embody God's radically inclusive and transformative love for everyone. With love and grace, we are called as a community to grow together as a voice for justice and peace - each as we are, with our unique human stories of joy and struggle.

### SESSION 2017

Rev. Mike Wilson, Moderator

Betsy Bahn, Clerk

Jeff Koontz, Treasurer

#### Class of 2017

Tom Byl  
Michael Arwood  
Ridley Wills II  
Claire Armbruster

#### Class of 2018

Carey Gibson  
Michael Korak

#### Class of 2019

Chuck Cardona  
Jack Henderson  
Justin Near

### THE CHURCH STAFF

Rev. Mike Wilson, Pastor  
Dena Swoner, Office Manager  
Suzie Lane, Director of Children's Education

Paulino Jarquin, Facilities Manager  
Dr. William Taylor, Director of Music

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