



THE DOWNTOWN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

CHRISTMAS EVE 2017

(*) indicates the congregation will stand if able

We Gather in God's Name

OPENING VOLUNTARY Infant Lowly, Infant Holy Polish Carol
Bob Burroughs, arr.
Handbell Choir
Prelude on *In the Bleak Midwinter* Gustav Holst
Marshall McDonald, arr.
Tom Ashley, piano

WELCOME

LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLES Ruling Elder Vicki Coffin (class of 2020)
Ruling Elder-elect Dave Coleman (Class of 2020)

L: We have watched, we have waited
in hope, for peace, in joy, with love.
Now our redemption draws near!
The angel said, "Don't be afraid! Look! I bring good news to you –
wonderful, joyous news for all people.
Your savior is born today in David's city.
He is Christ the Lord. (Luke 2:10-11)
Glory to God in the highest!

P: Alleluia! Amen

*CALL TO WORSHIP "The Candle of Hope" *see insert*
verse 5

*HYMN #143 "Angels, from the Realms of Glory"

PRAYER OF ANTICIPATION (*unison*) based on Psalm 96:1-3; Isaiah 9:6

Glorious God,
on this Christmas Eve, we sing beloved carols of Bethlehem,
of shepherds and angels, of Mary and Joseph,
and the infant Jesus, our Savior.

Is there yet a new song we can sing to you?

continued

A song to be learned from the heavens and the earth:
 where the roar of the sea, the exultation of the fields,
 and the joy of the trees
 are already raised in a chorus of glad rejoicing, ready to welcome you.
 Even if no ear may hear your coming,
 help us hear the music of creation.
 Then, with the whole cosmos,
 we will sing of your salvation, declare your glory,
 and in a crescendo of praise, bless your name:
 Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace!
 Amen.

(Time for silent prayer)

PASSING THE PEACE

L: On this night of rejoicing, renewal and reconciliation,
 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 #583

Glo - ri - a, glo - ri - a, in ex - cel - sis De - o!
 Glo - ri - a, glo - ri - a, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

Sung 3 times – first by the choir then by the whole congregation

God's Word Is Proclaimed

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION (*unison*)

We would make room for you this night of all nights, dear Lord:
 room in our minds and hearts; room also in our life together.
 Let your word be born in us anew so that, by the power of the Holy Spirit,
 your splendor shines in us and through us.
 In Jesus's name we pray. Amen.

WORD FOR OUR YOUNGEST DISCIPLES

BLESSING

based on 1 John 4:4, 7

Little children, you are from God...

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God.

(Infants and small children are dismissed to the care of the nursery staff.

Older children are invited to remain and worship.)

FIRST LESSON

Isaiah 9:2-7

(OT p. 638)

L: The Word of the Lord. P: Thanks be to God.

SECOND LESSON

Luke 2:1-20

(NT p.58)

L: The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ P: Glory to you, O Lord.

SERMON

Rev. Mike Wilson

We Respond to God's Word

*HYMN #123

"It Came Upon the Midnight Clear"

THE CHRISTMAS PRAYER

OPPORTUNITY FOR GENEROUS GIVING

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

He Is Born

French Carol
Robert Wetzler, arr.

He is born, see the Child divine! Sound the oboe, play the bagpipes.

He is born, for the Child divine, sing we all our sweetest song.

O'er the ages, passing slow, did the prophets give us promise?

O'er the ages, passing slow, all the earth awaited this.

In a stable He was born, in a manger was His cradle;

In a stable He was born, humble Babe of Bethlehem

Come away, ye Orient Kings! Come and join us in our singing.

Come away, ye Orient Kings! Come and worship Christ the Lord!

*DOXOLOGY #113 “Angels We Have Heard On High”

*PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AND DEDICATION (*unison*)

based on Isaiah 9:2-7; Titus 2:13

Great God, accept these gifts we offer as we wait in hope for your coming again. Use all that we have and all that we are as you bring light in every darkness, ease heavy burdens, and turn our endless warring into your endless peace. In Christ’s name, we ask it. Amen.

We Seal God’s Word Upon Our Hearts

THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD’S SUPPER

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

PRAYER OF GREAT THANKSGIVING

In the beginning the Word called all things into being.
And in the Word was life, a light that cannot be extinguished.

A life-light so persistent that it
shines in the deepest, darkest depths of the sea,
is tenacious in scorching deserts under blinding sun,
persistent at the freezing poles,
thrives in tundra and rain forest,
on alpine slopes, savannahs and swamps.

Human beings spread to every habitable corner of the earth,
hunting, gathering, tilling and tending, baking and fermenting.

We gathered in clans and tribes, villages and cities.

We created tools and art, stories and songs.

But we forgot that we are children of the light that binds all creation.

We descended into the darkness of suspicion, envy, war and death.

We learned the sins of slavery and exploitation.

We discovered how to benefit from the toil and misery of others.

So the Word returned to us, to call us back to the light.

The word came

as covenant with Abraham and Sarah,
through Moses the liberator,
in the cries of prophets of justice.

continued

And just when it seemed we had perfected the art of domination,
the Word became flesh, and lived among us as Jesus of Nazareth.
He entered the world as a refugee in Bethelhem,
and wandered Roman occupied Palestine as one without a home.
The life-light flowed through him, healing and casting out demons.
The wisdom of the Word became sermons and parables.
He reminded us that we are all daughters and sons of the living God.
He gave his life to the poor, the marginalized and the oppressed,
but his life was claimed by the rich and powerful.

And knowing that his temporal body was to be handed over for execution,
he gathered with his friends, his disciples,
and gave them the gift of his eternal flesh and blood.
He took bread, blessed it, broke it, and gave it to them saying these words,
“Take and eat. This is my body, broken, for you.”
And he took a cup, gave thanks for it and said,
“Drink, for this is the covenant sealed in my blood.
Do this in remembrance of me.”

Later, those in power came to claim what was not theirs.
By surrendering to those with a monopoly on violence,
he exposed the bankruptcy of that monopoly.
And in a dark tomb, the Word of life was spoken again,
the chaos and darkness of death defeated by the light of resurrection.

So we pray that on this night of light,
that the Word as Spirit would transform this simple meal
into a feast of life - good and abundant and eternal.
And may we give thanks for it, joining the angel chorus saying,
“Glory to God in heaven, and on earth peace among all people.”

And now as children of light,
let us boldly pray these words of life,

**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.**

THE COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE

Christ is host of this table.

Everyone, without exception, is invited to receive the Sacrament.

We will come forward to receive communion by intinction, taking a piece of bread and dipping it into the cup. You may eat as you are served.

MUSIC DURING COMMUNION What Child is This English Ballad
Johnie Dean, arr.
Handbell Choir

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION (*unison*)

Loving God, we are grateful that this first meal of Christmas is a heavenly banquet, served by our Savior. Send us out nourished by his grace and truth, and help us to bring your light and life to all the world. Amen.

We Bear God's Word Into the World

SCRIPTURE John 1:1-14

*HYMN #122 "Silent Night, Holy Night"

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| 1. 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. | 2. Silent Night, holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight,
Glories stream from heaven afar,
Heavenly hosts sing "Alleluia:
Christ the savior is born,
Christ the savior is born." |
| 3. 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. | 4. Silent Night, holy night!
Wondrous start, lend thy light;
With the angels, let us sing,
Alleluia to our king;
Christ the Savior is born,
Christ the Savior is born. |

L: Jesus Christ, the Light of the World!

P: Jesus Christ, the Light of the World!

***CHARGE AND BENEDICTION**

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

***CONGREGATIONAL BENEDICTION**

HYMN

“Joy to the World” *see insert*
You are invited leave the sanctuary singing.

CLOSING VOLUNTARY

Fanfare on *Adeste Fideles* Gordon Young
Tune and text from Hymn #133

Tonight's bulletin cover is by DPC artist-in-residence Hans Schmitt-Matzen. He takes his inspiration from Psalm 96:10-12:

- ¹⁰ Say among the nations, “The Lord is king!
The world is firmly established; it shall never be moved.
He will judge the peoples with equity.”
- ¹¹ Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice;
let the sea roar, and all that fills it;
- ¹² let the field exult, and everything in it.

Join us for worship tomorrow, Christmas Day,
at 10:00 a.m. in The Chapel.