



THE ORDER OF WORSHIP

December 27, 2020

The First Sunday of Christmas

Welcome and Announcements

Prelude

Arr. Wendy Stevens

“The First Noel”

Call to Worship (Responsive)

Here on the heels of Christmas,

We speak of love.

We speak of joy.

We speak of candlelight and fireside.

We speak of dreams being fulfilled.

We speak of “Glorias” and angel choruses.

We speak the words, “Do not be afraid.”

Here on the heels of Christmas, we are called to speak, for the world needs a light.

A light shines in the darkness, and the darkness does not overcome it.

Let us worship and listen. Then, let us speak.

Prayer of Invocation

God of grace, we come to celebrate. This day, built of our hopes and dreams for a better world, is a day of joy. This day, built of dreams of a reign of grace and peace, is a day to sing. We come, O God, to the place you have built, not out of bricks and mortar, but out of hope. We sing with you today and we hope with you. Amen.

Hymn 119

119 Hark! The Herald Angels Sing



1 Hark! The her - ald an-gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born king.
2 Christ, by high - est heaven a-dored, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord,
3 Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the sun of righ-teous-ness!



Peace on earth and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled!"
late in time be-hold him come, off-spring of the vir-gin's womb.
Light and life to all he brings, risen with heal - ing in his wings.



Joy - ful, all ye na - tions, rise; join the tri-umph of the skies;
Veiled in flesh the God-head see; hail the in-car - nate de - i - ty,
Mild he lavs his glo - ry by, born that we no more may die,



with the an-gel - ic host pro-claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"
pleased in flesh with us to dwell, Je - sus, our Em-man - u - el.
born to raise us from the earth, born to give us sec - ond birth.



Hark! The her - ald an-gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born king!"

Brought together in the mid-19th century, the text and tune of this familiar carol began in quite different forms. The text had ten stanzas and began, "Hark, how all the welkin rings." The tune was created for a festival celebrating Gutenberg's introduction of moveable type.

TEXT: Charles Wesley, 1739, alt.

MUSIC: Felix Mendelssohn, 1840; arr. William Hayman Cummings, 1855

MENDELSSOHN

7.7.7.7.D with refrain

Children's Moment The Rev. Ashley Drake Mertz

Call to Confession

Where have you seen God today? Sounds like a trick question. But in reality, if we think about it, we see God everywhere. Seeing God in your midst is one thing. Speaking it out loud for all to hear, that's entirely different. The world needs this good news. We are not called to be silent. So, family of faith, let us join together in the prayer of confession followed by our own silent time.

Prayer of Confession (Unison)

God of today and tomorrow, we know that your fingerprints are all over this world. And we know that those who dream cannot keep silent. So today we pray, give us eyes to see you. Give us courage to trust you. And give us lips to speak of you in our midst.

Silent Confession

Assurance of Pardon

The joy of God is your joy to share. Never forget that you are children of God, and that Christ, your brother in creation, is your partner in the work of the kingdom. You are God's creation, and you are God's hope.

Prayer of Illumination

Gracious God, in the beginning, it was you who spoke over the water and brought forth creation. And then it was you who asked, "Cain, where is your brother?" It was you who spoke to Elijah in a still, small, voice.

And it was you, through angels, who spoke to Mary and Joseph and the shepherds. You have always been speaking in words, in memories, in songs, and in dreams. So, today, as we prepare to hear your word read aloud, we ask that you speak to us once again – as only you can – so that we might speak this same good news to others. Amen.

First Reading

Isaiah 61:10-62:3

The word of God for the people of God
Thanks be to God

Music Ministry

Appalachian Carol
Arr. John Jacob Niles
& Lew Henry Horton

“I Wonder as I Wander”
Sanctuary Choir 2000
Linda Young, Soloist

*I wonder as I wander, out under the sky,
how Jesus the Savior did come for to die,
For poor on’ry people like you and like I,
I wonder as I wander, out under the sky.*

When Mary birthed Jesus, ‘twas in a cow’s stall,
with wise men and farmers and shepherds and all.
But high from God’s heaven a star’s light did fall,
and the promise of ages it then did recall.

If Jesus had wanted for any wee thing,
a star in the sky, or a bird on the wing,
Of all of God’s angels in heaven for to sing,
He surely could have it, ‘cause He was the King.

Second Reading

Luke 2:22-40

The word of God for the people of God
Thanks be to God

Sermon

The Rev. David Slyter

Hymn 113

113 Angels We Have Heard on High



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



and the moun-tains in re-ly ech-o-ing their joy-ous strains.
What the glad-some ti-dings be which in-spire your heaven-ly song?
come, a-dore on bend-ed knee Christ, the Lord, the new-born King.

Refrain



in ex - cel - sis De - o! Glo





This French carol probably dates from the 1700s, though it was not printed until the following century. Because it uses a vernacular language for the narrative stanzas and Latin for the refrain, it belongs to a special category called "macaronic" or mixed-language texts.

TEXT: French carol; trans. James Chadwick, 1860, alt.
MUSIC: French carol; arr. Edward Shippen Barnes, 1937

Music © 1937, ren. 1965 H. Augustine Smith Jr.
(admin. Fleming H. Revell Company, a div. of Baker Publishing Group)

GLORIA
7.7.7.7 with refrain

Affirmation of Faith

We believe in telling the story.

The story of a loving and merciful God, who will not let God's people go; the story of a baby who grew up and changed the world; the story of our faith.

We believe in speaking up.

For our neighbors, for the oppressed, for the overlooked and marginalized.

We believe in speaking out.

Against violence, greed, abuse, fear, scarcity mindset, and bigotry.

We believe in passing the mic.

So that we are not the only ones speaking, so that we can lift up the voices of those around us, so that we too might listen and learn.

We believe in the good news of the gospel.

We believe that this good news is too good to keep to ourselves. We believe that those who dream cannot keep silent.

Speak to us, Holy God.

Speak through us, Holy God. May it be so. Amen.

Prayers for the People and 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.

Call to Stewardship

As we toss out our old calendars and hang up new ones, we cannot help but think, “maybe this is the year things will get better.” As in Advent we wait, with eager anticipation, all the things that will befall us. But ours is not a passive faith we are not called to simply stand around and watch things happen around us. We are called to participate in this new creation, in this new year. Through the giving of our resources, we take an active role in helping to speak up and out.

Offertory

Arr. Lee Evans

“What Child is This?”

Congregational Response Hymn 606 Old Hundredth Doxology

Praise God from Whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

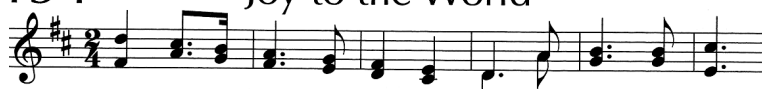
Offertory Prayer

Gracious God, thank you for the blessings from this past year and for the new year and opportunity to pursue peace and offer grace. Thank you for inspiring us to be generous with time, money, and resources. Bless all that we are and all that we will be in the days to come. Amen.

Hymn 134

134

Joy to the World



1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re - ceive
2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their songs
3 No more let sins and sor - rows grow, nor thorns in - fest
4 He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the na -



her king; let ev - ery heart pre - pare him room,
em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
the ground; he comes to make his bless - ings flow
tions prove the glo - ries of his righ - teous - ness



and heaven and na - ture sing, and heaven and na - ture
re - peat the sound - ing joy, re - peat the sound - ing
far as the curse is found, far as the curse is
and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his
and heaven and na - ture sing.



sing, and heaven, and heaven and na - ture sing.
joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
found, far as, far as the curse is found.
love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.



heaven and na - ture sing,

While Isaac Watts did not write this text strictly for Christmas use, he did purposely cast his paraphrase of Psalm 98:4-9 in Christian terms, titling it "The Messiah's coming and kingdom." So "the Lord" here is Jesus Christ, rather than the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

TEXT: Isaac Watts, 1719, alt.

MUSIC: Attr. George Frederick Handel, 1742; arr. Lowell Mason, 1836

ANTIOCH
CM with repeat
(alternate tune: RICHMOND, 266)

Benediction

Open our eyes, Lord, to see your face in every one we meet. Open our ears to hear your voice in the cry of the needy. Open our mouths to speak up for those who need a voice. Open our hearts to love and serve you as we love and serve our neighbor. Bless us as we go into this day with joy! Amen.

The Peace of Christ

The peace of Christ be with you
And also with you

Postlude

Arr. Mark Hayes

“God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen”



The Reverend Ashley Drake Mertz, Pastor
The Reverend David A. Slyter, Associate Pastor
Dr. Holly Hughes, Pianist

Liturgy taken from Sanctified Art Those Who Dream: for Advent – Epiphany Year B,
Adapted from a prayer by Sarah Are | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org.
The Journal of Worship Resources Vol. 13, No. 1 Year B