

*Christmas Eve Worship*  
*Tuesday, December 24, 2019*



 **Grace First**  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
*Together – Worshipping, Witnessing, Working*

606 Mockingbird Lane, Weatherford, Texas 76086  
817-594-2744  
[www.gracefirstpc.org](http://www.gracefirstpc.org)



The Reverend Ashley Drake Mertz, Pastor  
The Reverend David A. Slyter, Associate Pastor  
Marialice Parish, M.M., Organist and Director of Music

## CHRISTMAS EVE 2019

*\*The congregation is invited to stand as music begins.*

Grace First welcomes you for the celebration of the birth of Christ into the world. May this service be a blessing to you as you bless others with your presence here.

### THE SERVICE OF WELCOMING

Opening Voluntary Sydney Howell, Harpist  
"Carols on the Harp"

Lighting of the Advent Wreath The Rev. Ashley Drake Mertz & Lance Mertz

\*Hymn 133 *Adeste Fideles*  
"O Come, All Ye Faithful"

Prayer of Invocation The Rev. David A. Slyter

Call to Confession

Prayer of Confession (Unison)

**Great and glorious God, through Jesus Christ you have shown us that the age of grace has appeared and the hoped-for time of salvation has come. Yet we cling to the glories of the present age—worldly passions and impious pursuits, self-indulgent, crooked, and ungodly ways. Redeem us from evil and cleanse us from sin, through Christ, who gave himself for us, so that we might be your people, holy and whole...**

Assurance of Forgiveness (Responsive)

Hear this good news of great joy: in Jesus Christ we are forgiven.

**Thanks be to God!**

Glory to God in the highest,  
**and peace to God's people on earth.**

## Merry Christmas!

**We welcome Sydney Howell to our worship.  
Sydney has offered beautiful carols on the harp for several years,  
and we are delighted to have her with us this evening.**

**Pastor Ashley Drake Mertz can be reached on the Pastor's cell phone  
(817-565-6756) if you need assistance throughout the Christmas Holiday.  
The church office is closed through January 1.**

**All are invited to take home a poinsettia from the front**

**On your way out please place extinguished candles in the basket in the Narthex**

### Grace First Presbyterian Church

Pastor—The Rev. Ashley Drake Mertz

Associate Pastor—The Rev. David A. Slyter

Ministers—The Congregation

Deacons—Mac Smith & Richard Varnon

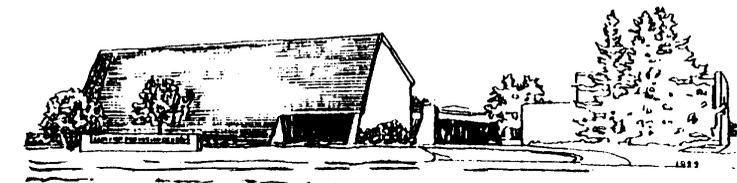
Greeters—Susie Bossert & Karen Lail

Nursery Attendants—Jan Messimer & Donna Thurston

Communion Elders—Joe Barnhart, Suzanne Rothrock, David Rothrock,  
Rebecca Williams, & Ed Zellers

Communion Set-up—Karen Lail and Sue Coody

Communion Clean-up—Leslie Goeldner & Dawn Kahlden



Today's Liturgy has been adapted from: Feasting on the Word:  
Worship Companion, Liturgies for Year A, Volume 1

## THE SERVICE OF LIGHT

\*Sharing the Light of Bethlehem

*We ask that each lit candle be held upright and the unlit candles tilted  
as the light is passed from person to person and keep them lit  
until you enter the Narthex.*

\*Hymn 122

“Silent Night, Holy Night”

*Stille Nacht*

**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 stream 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.**

\*Blessing and Benediction

\*Closing Voluntary

“Joy to the World”

Michael Bedford

\*Congregational Response

Hymn 113 v. 1

*Gloria*

**Angels we have heard on high,  
Sweetly singing o’er the plains,  
And the mountains in reply  
echoing their joyous strains.  
Gloria in excelsis Deo!  
Gloria in excelsis Deo!**

## THE SERVICE OF THE WORD

Prayer of Illumination

First Reading

Titus 2:11-14  
Pew Bible: Page 215

The Word of God for the People of God  
**Thanks be to God**

Music Ministry

“Bring A Torch Jeanette, Isabella”

French Traditional  
arr. John Rutter

Sanctuary Choir  
Linda Young, Soloist

Bring a torch, Jeanette, Isabella! Bring a torch to the cradle run!  
It is Jesus, good folk of the village, Christ is born and Mary’s calling,  
Ah! Ah! beautiful is the Mother! Ah! Ah! beautiful is her Son.

It is wrong when the Child is sleeping, it is wrong to talk so loud.  
Silence, all, as you gather around, lest your noise should waken Jesus:  
Hush! Hush! See how fast He slumbers; Hush! Hush! See how fast He sleeps!

Softly to the little stable, softly for a moment come!  
Look and see how charming is Jesus, how He is soft, His cheeks are rosy!  
Hush! Hush! See how the Child is sleeping;  
Hush! Hush! See how He smiles in dreams!

Second Reading

Luke 2:1-14  
Pew Bible: Page 58

The Word of God for the People of God  
**Thanks be to God**

Sermon

The Rev. Ashley Drake Mertz

\*Hymn 132

“Good Christian Friends, Rejoice!”

*In Dulci Jubilo*

**THE SERVICE OF RESPONSE**

Call to Stewardship

Offertory

“O Holy Night”  
Sanctuary Choir

Adolphe Adam  
arr. Rene Clausén

O holy night, the stars are brightly shining,  
it is the night of the dear Savior’s birth.  
Long lay the world in sin and error pining  
till He appeared and soul felt its worth.  
A thrill of hope, the weary world rejoices,  
for yonder breaks the new and glorious morn:

*Fall on your knees, O hear the angel voices!  
O night divine, O night when Christ was born.  
O night, O holy night, O night divine!*

Led by the light of faith serenely beaming,  
with glowing hearts by His cradle we stand.  
Led by a star, above them brightly gleaming,  
appeared the wise men from far Eastern land.  
The King of kings lay in a lowly manger,  
to us this day is born to be our God.

\*Congregational Response

Hymn 606

*Old Hundredth*

**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

**THE SERVICE OF THE LORD’S SUPPER**

Sharing of the Bread and Cup

Intinction

(You are invited to come forward using the center aisle, taking a piece of bread,  
dipping it into the cup, and receiving the elements before returning to your pew by  
the outside aisle. Gluten free bread is available on the plate in the center.  
Those unable to come forward will be served at their seat.)

Communion Anthem

Michael Praetorius

“Lo, How a Rose E’er Blooming”  
Sanctuary Choir

Lo, how a Rose e’er blooming from tender stem hath sprung!  
Of Jesse’s lineage coming as men of old have sung.  
It came, a flow’ret 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 to men a Savior,  
When half-spent was the night.

Prayer after Communion (Unison)

**Holy and astounding God, at this table, in this meal, we have been met  
by Christ—the reflection of your glory, the imprint of your being. As we go from  
this place may our lives be a joyful song, proclaiming the good news of your  
righteousness and peace for all the world. Amen.**

\*Hymn 115

“Away in a Manger”

*Mueller*