Welcome All
to
Candlelight Worship Service

January 3, 2021

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH | 2408 N. NAVARRO ST. | VICTORIA, TEXAS 77901

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ORDER OF WORSHIP

First Presbyterian Church
January 3, 2021
Second Sunday after Christmas Day

Prelude "Who Is This Child" *Douglas E. Wagner, 1994*

Welcome and Announcements

Passing of the Peace

One: The peace of Christ be with you.
All: And also with you!

Call to Worship

One: Sing praise to God, who gathers us here;
from the ends of the earth we come.
All: With a word of promise, a spring of water,
a loaf of bread, and a cup of wine,
God turns our mourning into dancing,
our sorrow into joy.

Prayer of the Day *unison*

God of every blessing, we rejoice
that you have chosen us from long ago,
adopted us as your beloved children,
and gathered us into your presence.
Now make known in our hearts and lives
your eternal purpose for heaven and earth
so that we may live, this day and always,
for the glory of Christ our Lord. Amen.

Opening Hymn: "Good Christian Friends, Rejoice" No. 28

Invitation to Confession

The gift of God's grace is lavished upon us—
poured out like water—
through the life and death of the risen Lord.
Trusting in the love and goodness of God,
let us confess our sin.

Prayer of Confession *unison*

Holy God, you have given us everything;
we have failed to respond with gratitude.
In Jesus Christ, you have given us your Word;
we answer with empty promises and lies.
In Jesus Christ, you have given us your light;
we try to hide ourselves from your glory.
In Jesus Christ, you have given us your life;
even this precious gift we have not received.
Have mercy on us, O God; forgive us.
In Jesus Christ, give us the faith and power
to become what you created us to be:
beloved children, full of grace and truth. Amen.

Kyrie Eleison

Lord, have mercy upon us.
Christ, have mercy upon us.
Lord, have mercy upon us.

Assurance of Pardon

This is God's promise,
the sign and seal of your redemption:
You have been called by God,
claimed in Christ,
set free through the Spirit.

Believe in God, Friends!
Believe the good news: in Jesus Christ we are forgiven!

Gloria Patri

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end.
Amen, amen.

Prayer for Illumination

Shine upon us, God of glory,
and by your Spirit reveal to us
the grace and truth of Jesus Christ,
your Word made flesh. **Amen.**

First Scripture Reading: Psalm 147:12-20 P. 582 in the Old Testament

Praise the LORD, O Jerusalem!
Praise your God, O Zion!
For he strengthens the bars of your gates;
he blesses your children within you.
He grants peace within your borders;
he fills you with the finest of wheat.
He sends out his command to the earth;
his word runs swiftly.
He gives snow like wool;
he scatters frost like ashes.
He hurls down hail like crumbs—
who can stand before his cold?
He sends out his word, and melts them;
he makes his wind blow, and the waters flow.
He declares his word to Jacob,
his statutes and ordinances to Israel.
He has not dealt thus with any other nation;
they do not know his ordinances.
Praise the LORD!

Second Scripture Reading: John 1:10-18 P.P. 91-92 in the New Testament

He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. (John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.'") From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

Sermon: "Remembering Our Faith**"** Rev. Jim DeMent

John 1:14: And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

Silence and stillness

Congregational Hymn: "The First Nowell" No. 56

Prayer of Thanksgiving *unison*

We give you thanks, God of all creation,
for the power of your life-giving Word,
making the winds blow and the waters flow.
Receive our gifts from our hands,
and use them to bring peace and blessing
to all your children; in Jesus' name. Amen.

Doxology

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

Affirmation of Faith (The Nicene Creed)

We believe in one God,
the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
and of all things visible and invisible;

And in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the only-begotten Son of God,
begotten of the Father before all worlds,
God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God,
begotten, not made,
being of one substance with the Father
by whom all things were made;
Who for us and for our salvation
came down from heaven,
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary,
and was made man,
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered and was buried;
and the third day he rose again
according to the Scriptures,
and ascended into heaven,
and sitteth on the right hand of the Father.

And he shall come again with glory,
to judge both the quick and the dead,
whose kingdom shall have no end.

(*continued on next page*)

Affirmation of Faith (The Nicene Creed) (*continued*)

And we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life,
who proceedeth from the Father and the Son;
who with the Father and the Son together
is worshipped and glorified;
who spoke by the prophets.

And we believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins.
And we look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Prayers of the People

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper

INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE

GREAT THANKSGIVING

One: The Lord be with you.
All: And also with you.
One: Lift up your hearts.
All: We lift them to the Lord.
One: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
All: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is truly right and just to give you thanks
in every time and in every place, almighty God.

We give you thanks for the gift of creation
and especially for the gift of our life.
We are grateful that you have made us in your image
and that you pardon us when we act
as though you have no authority over our lives.
We are grateful that you sustain us in your great love.

And so, with all your people,
with angels, archangels,
and with all the company of heaven
we praise and magnify your glorious name,
joining our voices in the eternal hymn:

SANCTUS: UNISON

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

You are holy, and blessed is your Son, Jesus Christ,
who was born of Mary and shared the joys and sorrows of the life that we know.
You anointed Jesus Christ with your Spirit
to preach good news to the poor,
to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives,
to give sight to the blind, and to liberate the oppressed,
proclaiming the year of the Lord's favor.

In Christ's baptism, suffering, death, and resurrection
you gave birth to your Church, and made a new covenant with us by water and the Spirit.

Remembering your gracious acts in Jesus Christ,
we take from your creation this bread and this wine,
and joyfully celebrate his dying and rising, as we await the day of his coming,
proclaiming the mystery of faith:

GREAT IS THE MYSTERY OF FAITH: UNISON

Christ has died,
Christ is risen,
Christ will come again.

Gracious God, pour out your Holy Spirit upon your people
and upon these your gifts of bread and wine,
so that the bread we share and the cup we bless
will be for us the body and blood of Christ.

By your Spirit make us one with Christ
and with all who share this feast,
united in ministry in every place.
As this bread is Christ's body for us,
send us out to be the body of Christ in the world.

Make us one with Christ,
one with our neighbors,
and one in service to all the world.

Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all glory and honor are yours, almighty God, now and forever. **Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

BREAKING OF THE BREAD

COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

One: Merciful God, we give thanks that you have invited us to this Table.
All: We give thanks that you have received us as members of the body of Christ and have affirmed us as a community of faith.
One: Lead us to live as faithful and dedicated disciples in service to all the world;
All: in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Closing Hymn: "Go, Tell It on the Mountain" No. 29

Charge and Benediction

Postlude: Walt's Carol *Grace M. Stutsman, 1886*

Pastor's Notes

The Nicene Creed proclaims that Jesus Christ is "Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten not made …". Although the distinction between "begotten" and "made" may seem like mere semantics to Christians in the 21st Century, to the Christian patriarchs meeting in Nicaea in the 4th Century, the distinction was profound. Theologians of that period argued that if God "made" something, then whatever he made, as important as it may have been (the heavens, the earth, humanity, etc.), it was nevertheless *not* God. An artist may paint a self-portrait, but the painting will never be the artist. God made man and woman, but no human will ever be God.

To declare, however, that Christ is "begotten" of God means that Christ is a part of God-- or, as the Nicene Creed puts it, "being of one substance with the Father." In the Old Testament, children were "begotten" of their parents, meaning that what resulted was of the same kind as the parents. Christ is of the same kind as God. God did not "make" Jesus, God gave ("begat") of himself to become incarnate in Jesus. In completing the theological concept, the Christians meeting at the Council of Nicaea in 325 A.D. concluded that since God and Jesus are of the same kind, God and Jesus have therefore been coexistent since the beginning of time or, again as the Nicene Creed declares, Jesus was "begotten of the Father before all the world."

All this may seem like the leaders of the early church were counting angels on the head of a pin, but in fact they were carefully reading the opening chapter of the Gospel According to John: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. [Jesus] was in the beginning with God. … And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth" (John 1:1-2, 14). Central to our Christian faith is the belief that God has loved his people since the beginning of time and that, in the fullness of time, God came incarnate in Jesus to declare to his creation the good news of his love. Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ, such love promises us redemption and life everlasting.

We have reproduced below the lyrics of the hymns selected for this morning's worship service. All the hymns below are either in the public domain or have been reproduced, under license, from *The Presbyterian Hymnal* (Westminster/John Knox Press, Louisville: 1990). If you are worshiping with us from home, we encourage you to sing along. If you are worshiping with us in the Sanctuary, we invite you to contemplate the lyrics as Robert Wyatt, our Choirmaster, plays the melodies. Under our current Health Protocols, we must refrain from singing out loud, but that does prevent us from finding comfort, hope, strength, and courage in these familiar hymns. Follow the verses in this order:

Verse 1
Verse 2
Verse 3
Verse 4

Good Christian Friends, Rejoice

Good Christian friends, rejoice
With heart, and soul, and voice;
Give ye heed to what we say:
Jesus Christ is born today;
Ox and ass before Him bow,
And He is in the manger now.
Christ is born today!
Christ is born today!

Good Christian friends, rejoice
With heart, and soul, and voice;
Now ye hear of endless bliss:
Jesus Christ was born for this!
He hath opened heaven's door,
And we are blest forevermore.
Christ was born for this!
Christ was born for this!

Good Christian friends, rejoice
With heart, and soul, and voice;
Now ye need not fear the grave:
Jesus Christ was born to save!
Calls you one and calls you all
To gain the everlasting hall.
Christ was born to save!
Christ was born to save!

The First Nowell

The first Nowell the angels did say
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
In fields where they lay a-keeping their sheep,
On a cold winter's night that was so deep.

They looked up and saw a star
Shining in the east beyond them far,
And to the earth it gave great light,
And so it continued both day and night.

And by the light of that same star,
Three wise men came from country far,
To seek for a king was their intent,
And to follow the star wherever it went.

This star drew nigh to the northwest;
O'er Bethlehem it took its rest;
And there it did both stop and stay,
Right over the place where Jesus lay.

Refrain:
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
Born is the King of Israel.

Go, Tell it on the Mountain

While shepherds kept their watching
O'er silent flocks by night,
Behold throughout the heavens
There shone a holy light.

The shepherds feared and trembled
When lo! above the earth,
Rang out the angel chorus
That hailed our Savior's birth.

Down in a lowly manger
The humble Christ was born,
And God sent us salvation
That blessed Christmas morn.

Refrain:
Go, tell it on the mountain
Over the hills and everywhere;
Go, tell it on the mountain
That Jesus Christ is born!

Caregiving Concerns and Prayer Requests

Kathryn Amsler

Gloria Aoueille

Leonard "Mac" McCameron

Kathleen McCameron

Roland Merrill

Sarah Waldrop

Nathan Galvan
(Son of Leila Galvan)

Samantha Skaggs
(Niece of Roxanna and Henry Hauschild)

John & Jere Swoboda
(Prior FPC Members)

Carol Wisdom
(Daughter of Lea Lenz)

For caregiving concerns—please contact:
Jack Kleinecke (361. 212.3229); or Gayla Whitaker (361. 935.0950)

FPC Opportunities for Worship & Service

Sunday, January 10
10:30 AM Worship Service

A copy of our
"COVID-19 Pandemic
Public Health and Safety Protocols
for In-Person Gatherings
at the Church"
can be obtained as you enter the church
or at our website:
www.fpcofvictoria.org.

FPC Victoria Servant Leadership

Session Members

Jim DeMent, Moderator
Jack Kleinecke, Clerk of Session
John Horadam
Billy Leske
Lynn McAuley
Dawn Neel
Susan Salinas
Jim Stokes
Gayla Whitaker
Bonnie Wilkinson

Other

Paula Leske, Presbyterian Women
Melissa Samudio, Presbyterian Day School
Shelley Hartman, Dawn Neel, and Helen Resendez,
Kids for Christ, Vacation Bible School

Clergy, Music, and Administration

Rev. Jim DeMent, Interim Pastor
Robert Wyatt, Organist/Choirmaster
Tasha Wolf, Office Administrator

Office Hours

Monday — Friday, 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM
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