

Welcome All to Candlelight Worship Service



CHRISTMAS EVE
December 24, 2020

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

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ORDER OF WORSHIP

First Presbyterian Church
December 24, 2020
Christmas Eve
7:00 o'clock p.m.

Prelude "Ave Maria"

"O Holy Night"

*Bach/Gounod
1685/1818-1893
Placide Cappeau/Adolphe Charles Adams
1847/1803-1856*

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 a new song to God, all the earth;
declare the glory of God's saving work.

All: **We who have walked in gloom see a great light.
Into all the shadowy places of life, light comes.**

One: Praise God, who created heaven and earth
as a sanctuary of beauty and strength.

All: **We rejoice, for a child is born, an heir is given,
to bring peace, righteousness, and justice.**

One: Tremble before God, who judges people fairly,
whose truth is proclaimed in unexpected places.

All: **Glory to God in the highest!
We see in a manger good news of great joy!**

Prayer of the Day

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?

A song to be learned from the heavens and the earth:

(continued on next page)

Prayer of the Day *(continued)*

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.**

**Lighting of the Advent Wreath -
The Christ Candle**

The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness,
on them light has shined. *Isaiah 9:2*

Opening Hymn: “O Come, All Ye Faithful”

No. 41

Invitation to Confession

Friends, the grace of Christ educates us
so that we can live sensible, ethical, and godly lives.
On this eve of his birth,
we confess that we struggle to receive him still.

Prayer of Confession *unison*

**God of Love Incarnate,
we confess that, with the shepherds,
we are terrified of your glory;
for in glory’s light we see plainly
all that is wrong in the world:
how oppression still enslaves;
how garments of war are still stained with blood;
how those seeking refuge still find no place of safety.
We also see what is wrong in us:
how passionately we pursue the things of this world,
but forget to ponder the mystery of faith;
how we do not practice the peace you intend
in our relationships, our community,
or even in the church.**

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Prayer of Confession *(continued)*

**Forgive us, we pray,
and help us not to be afraid.
Like the shepherds,
we want to follow and find you.
In the Savior’s name we pray. Amen.**

Kyrie Eleison *singing in unison*

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

Assurance of Pardon

Good news!
Great joy!
In Jesus Christ
the grace of God has appeared,
bringing salvation to all.
Glory to God in heaven,
and on earth, peace.

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

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’ name we pray. **Amen.**

First Scripture Reading: Isaiah 9:2-7

P. 638 in the Old Testament

The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—
on them light has shined.

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First Scripture Reading *(continued)*

You have multiplied the nation,
you have increased its joy;
they rejoice before you
as with joy at the harvest,
as people exult when dividing plunder.
For the yoke of their burden,
and the bar across their shoulders,
the rod of their oppressor,
you have broken as on the day of Midian.

Anthem: “Cradle Song/Still, Still, Still”

W.J.. Kirkpatrick, 1985
arr. W. Ebret, 1918

Duet by Linda Patterson and Robert Wyatt

Second Scripture Reading: Luke 2:1-14

P. 58 in the New Testament

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

“Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”

Sermon: “Living Between the Fact of Darkness and the Hope of Light”

Rev. Jim DeMent

Luke 2:9: Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them . . .

Silence and stillness

Congregational Hymn: “Angels We Have Heard on High”

No. 23

Prayer of Thanksgiving *unison*

**O Lord, in the spirit of Joy we offer to you our gifts.
May they be used to bring to all the world the good news of your gracious love,
manifested by the birth at Bethlehem.
We also dedicate our lives so that we might be for you a light unto the world,
in the name of Christ our Lord, 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 Apostles’ Creed)

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord;
who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried;
he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty;
from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic church;
the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins;
the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Prayers of the People

Congregational Hymn: “O Little Town of Bethlehem”

No. 40

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.