

The Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 22, 2013
9:30 and 11:00 AM

“When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, ‘Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.’” Luke 2:15

What difference does seeing make?

Preparation for worship begins as you enter the sanctuary. Please consider others by turning off your cell phone and ending all conversations as you are seated. Read through the order of worship, the scriptures and the hymns. Pray silently for God to speak and to bless all of us. Don’t forget to greet those around you after the service.

We prepare for worship

Take a moment and meditate on this as you prepare for worship...

O Lord Jesus Christ, who at Your first coming sent Your messenger to prepare Your way, grant that the ministers and stewards of Your mysteries may likewise so prepare and make ready Your way, by turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, that at Your second coming to judge the world we may be found an acceptable people in Your sight, who lives and reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit ever, one God, world without end. Amen.

Prelude

The First Noel

arr. Bertraux
Mrs. Gloria Hague, Director of Music
Mr. Casey Burnett, trumpet

We praise our great God

*The Lighting of the Advent Candle (responsive)

When they had seen Him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherd said to them.

But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart.

The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

(ALL) *We light these candles to remind us to prepare our hearts for the coming of Jesus Christ.*

*Hymn No. 198

Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates

Truro

Lift up your heads, ye mighty gates! Behold, the King of glory waits;
The King of kings is drawing near, the Savior of the world is here.

A helper just he comes to thee, his chariot is humility,
His kingly crown is holiness, his scepter, pity in distress.

O blest the land, the city blest, where Christ the Ruler is confessed!
O happy hearts and happy homes to whom this King in triumph comes!

Fling wide the portals of your heart; make it a temple, set apart
From earthly use for heav’n’s employ, adorned with prayer and love and joy.

Redeemer, come! I open wide my heart to thee; here, Lord, abide!
Let me thy inner presence feel; thy grace and love in my reveal.

So come, my Sovereign, enter in! Let new and nobler life begin!
Thy Holy Spirit, guide us on, until the glorious crown be won.

*Invocation

We embrace Christ our Savior

Psalter Reading (responsive)

Psalms 66

(*Hymnal*, pg. 807)

Shout with joy to God, all the earth!

Sing the glory of his name; make his praise glorious!

Say to God, "How awesome are your deeds!

"So great is your power that your enemies cringe before you.

"All the earth bows down to you; they sing praise to you, they sing praise to your name."

Come and see what God has done, how awesome his works in man's behalf!

He turned the sea into dry land, they passed through the waters on foot—come, let us rejoice in him.

He rules forever by his power, his eyes watch the nations—let not the rebellious rise up against him.

Praise our God, O peoples, let the sound of his praise be heard;

he has preserved our lives and kept our feet from slipping.

For you, O God, tested us; you refined us like silver.

You brought us into prison and laid burdens on our backs.

You let men ride over our heads;

we went through fire and water, but you brought us to a place of abundance.

I will come to your temple with burnt offerings and fulfill my vows to you—vows my lips promised and my mouth spoke when I was in trouble.

I will sacrifice fat animals to you and an offering of rams; I will offer bulls and goats.

Come and listen, all you who fear God; let me tell you what he has done for me.

I cried out to him with my mouth; his praise was on my tongue.

If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened; but God has surely listened and heard my voice in prayer.

Praise be to God, who has not rejected my prayer or withheld his love from me!

**The Gloria Patri*

(*Hymnal*, pg. 734)

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.

*Assurance of Grace (responsive)

John 1:14, 16-18 (ESV)

The Word became flesh and dwelt among us,

and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

And from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.

For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.

*Hymn No. 230 *Thou Who Wast Rich beyond All Splendor* French carol

Thou who wast rich beyond all splendor, all for love's sake becamest poor;
Thrones for a manger didst surrender, sapphire paved courts for stable floor.
Thou who was rich beyond all splendor, all for love's sake becamest poor.

Thou who art God beyond all praising, all for love's sake becamest man;
Stooping so low, but sinners raising, heav'nward by thine eternal plan.
Thou who art God beyond all praising, all for love's sake becamest man;

Thou who art love beyond all telling, Savior and King, we worship thee.
 Emmanuel, within us dwelling, make us what thou wouldst have us be.
 Thou who art love beyond all telling, Savior and King, we worship thee.

Aisquith Life and Opportunities

The Prayers of God's People and the Lord's Prayer (in unison)

We respond in gratitude for God's blessing

**The Doxology (Hymnal, pg. 731)* and Prayer of Dedication

God's Tithes and Our Offerings

The Offertory (11 AM)

Gloria

Antonio Vivaldi
 The Adult Choir

Gloria, gloria, in excelsis Deo.

We hear God speak

Scripture Reading

John 14:1-14

(Pew Bible pg. 763)

Sermon

"Seeing the God-Man Christ"

Pastor Bell

We respond to God's grace

*Hymn No. 218

Angels, from the Realms of Glory

Regent Square

Angels, from the realms of glory, wing your flight o'er all the earth;
 ye who sang creation's story, now proclaim Messiah's birth:

Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the new born King.

Shepherds in the fields abiding, watching o'er your flocks by night,
 God with man is now residing, yonder shines the infant Light:

Sages, leave your contemplations, brighter visions beam afar;
 seek the great Desire of nations; ye have seen his natal star:

Saints below the altar bending, watching long in hope and fear,
 suddenly the Lord, descending, in his temple shall appear:

All creation, join in praising God the Father, Spirit, Son;
 evermore your voices raising to the'eternal Three in One:

*Benediction and Three-Fold Amen (*Hymnal, pg. 740*)

Postlude

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Danish
 arr. Noyon

*Those who are able, please stand.

Serving in our Nursery today: Janet & George Johnson; next week, December 29th: Brandi Kuriny & Meara Kuriny.

The RockHouse Christmas party will begin at 4 PM here at the church. For those not attending the movie, they will return to the church around 6:15 PM. Those attending the movie will return at approximately 10 PM.

Many thanks to those of you who donated and purchased cookies for the IMPACT Cookie Walk last week. We raised \$430 towards next summer's mission trips.

The hand-bell choir for the 11:00 PM Christmas Eve service will rehearse today after the 11 AM service.

Join us Christmas Eve at 6 PM for our Family Service and at 11 PM for our Candlelight Lessons and Carols Service. There will be a music recital from 10:30 to 11 PM featuring Mrs. Iraida Poberezhnaya, music director at Loch Raven PCA, on the harp. Invite your family and friends to join us.

Our Christmas Offering will go to the PCA Ministerial Relief Fund which provides assistance to the widows and orphans of ministers and missionaries as well as special assistance to retired ministers.

There will be only one service at 10 AM on December 29th and January 5th. There will be no Sunday School at 9:30 AM, but there will be nursery and the usual children's programs during the 11 AM service.

This is what to do if there is fresh snow or ice when you wake up on a Sunday morning. The decision on whether to have church will be made by 8 AM. Cancellation announcements will be posted on the church answering machine and on our website (www.aisquith.org). In addition, emails will be sent to those of you who are on the Aisquith Family email list. You can add your name by speaking to Elder Tom Ley. You may also telephone one of the pastors or elders. **NOTE:** We are no longer placing an announcement on the radio. When it appears that conditions will improve by mid-morning, we may only cancel the early service and Sunday School and still hold the 11 AM service and activities. Our decision will be based primarily on road conditions and the availability of parking. Don't assume, check! If you have any questions please speak to one of the elders.