

The First Sunday of Advent

December 3, 2017

10:30 AM

*We welcome you to worship today. It is a privilege to have you as our guest.
As you enter the sanctuary, begin to worship quietly with personal prayer.
Please turn off your cell phone and turn your thoughts toward God.*

We prepare for worship

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

To you I lift up my eyes, O you who are enthroned in the heavens! Behold, as the eyes of servants look to the hand of their master, as the eyes of a maidservant to the hand of her mistress, so our eyes look to the LORD our God, till he has mercy upon us. *Psalm 123:1, 2*

Prelude

March

G.F. Handel

Mr. Guy McIntosh, trumpet
Mrs. Gloria Hague, Director of Music

We praise our great God

*Call to Worship and Advent Candle Lighting (responsive)

In ancient times, God's people were waiting for the coming of the promised Messiah. The Lord had promised that the day would come when he would fulfill the gracious promise he had made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah.

Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth! Worship the Lord with gladness; come before him with joyful songs!

The gospels record how that promised Messiah came as a baby. That child grew to be a man who was fully human and yet divine—Jesus Christ, our Lord.

(ALL) We light this first Advent candle in celebration of the Christ who came. We lift up our eyes and watch for that wonderful day when he will come again.

*Hymn No. 193

Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence

Picardy

Let all mortal flesh keep silence, and with fear and trembling stand;
ponder nothing earthly-minded, for with blessing in his hand
Christ our God to earth descendeth, our full homage to demand.

King of kings, yet born of Mary, as of old on earth he stood;
Lord of lords, in human vesture, in the body and the blood.
He will give to all the faithful his own self for heav'nly food.

Rank on rank the host of heaven spreads its vanguard on the way,
as the Light of Light descendeth from the realms of endless day,
that the pow'rs of hell may vanish, as the darkness clears away.

At his feet the six-winged seraph; cherubim, with sleepless eye,
veil their faces to the presence, as with ceaseless voice they cry:
"Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, Lord Most High!"

*Invocation

We embrace Christ our Savior

Psalter Reading

Psalms 112

(Hymnal pg. 826)

Praise the LORD.

Blessed is the man who fears the LORD, who finds great delight in his commands.

His children will be mighty in the land; the generation of the upright will be blessed.

Wealth and riches are in his house, and his righteousness endures forever.

Even in darkness light dawns for the upright, for the gracious and compassionate and righteous man.

Good will come to him who is generous and lends freely, who conducts his affairs with justice.

Surely he will never be shaken; a righteous man will be remembered forever.

He will have no fear of bad news; his heart is steadfast, trusting in the LORD.

His heart is secure, he will have no fear; in the end he will look in triumph on his foes.

He has scattered abroad his gifts to the poor, his righteousness endures forever; his horn will be lifted high in honor.

The wicked man will see and be vexed, he will gnash his teeth and waste away;

the longings of the wicked will come to nothing.

Assurance of Pardon (responsive)

Ephesians 1:18-20, 22 (NIV)

I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints,

and his incomparably great power for us who believe.

That power is like the working of his mighty strength, which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms...

And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

*Confession of Faith (unison)

Westminster Confession of Faith, XIV.2

By [saving] faith, a Christian believeth to be true whatsoever is revealed in the Word, for the authority of God Himself speaking therein;¹ and acteth differently upon that which each particular passage thereof containeth; yielding obedience to the commands,² trembling at the threatening,³ and embracing the promises of God for this life, and that which is to come.⁴ But the principal acts of saving faith are accepting, receiving, and resting upon Christ alone for justification, sanctification, and eternal life, by virtue of the covenant of grace.⁵

¹ Jn 4:42; 1 Thes. 2:13; 1 Jn 5:10; Acts 24:14 ² Rom. 16:26 ³ Isa. 66:2

⁴ Heb. 11:13; 1 Tim. 4:8 ⁵ Jn 1:12; Acts 16:31; Gal. 2:20; Acts 15:11

*Hymn No. 196

Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus

Hyfrydol

Come, thou long expected Jesus, born to set thy people free;
From our fears and sins release us; let us find our rest in thee.
Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art,
Dear Desire of ev'ry nation, joy of ev'ry longing heart.

Joy to those who long to see thee, Dayspring from on high, appear;
Come, thou promised Rod of Jesse, of thy birth we long to hear!
O'er the hills the angels singing news, glad tidings of a birth:
"Go to him, your praises bringing; Christ the Lord has come to earth."

Come to earth to taste our sadness, he whose glories knew no end;
By his life he brings us gladness, our Redeemer, Shepherd, Friend.
Leaving riches without number, born within a cattle stall;
This the everlasting wonder, Christ was born the Lord of all.

Born thy people to deliver, born a child and yet a king,
Born to reign in us forever, now thy gracious kingdom bring.
By thine own eternal Spirit rule in all our hearts alone;
By thine all sufficient merit, raise us to thy glorious throne.

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

Advent Cry

Joseph Martin

Veni, veni, Redemptor. Peace will come on the wings of a promise. Hope will come like the morning's first call. Joy will come on the winds of the Spirit. Love will come. Come, Lord Jesus, come. Peace will come on the wings of the angels. Hope will come like a song in the night. Joy will blossom like roses in springtime. Love will come. Come, Lord Jesus.

Musical Interlude

After the Offertory, children grades 1-4 may recess for Children's Church through the side door, or may remain with their families.

We hear God speak in Word and Sacrament

Scripture Reading

Genesis 13:1-18

(Pew Bible, pg. 9)

Abram and Lot Separate

13 So Abram went up from Egypt, he and his wife and all that he had, and Lot with him, into the Negeb.

² Now Abram was very rich in livestock, in silver, and in gold. ³ And he journeyed on from the Negeb as far as Bethel to the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Ai, ⁴ to the place where he had made an altar at the first. And there Abram called upon the name of the LORD. ⁵ And Lot, who went with Abram, also had flocks and herds and tents, ⁶ so that the land could not support both of them dwelling together; for their possessions were so great that they could not dwell together, ⁷ and there was strife between the herdsmen of Abram's livestock and the herdsmen of Lot's livestock. At that time the Canaanites and the Perizzites were dwelling in the land.

⁸ Then Abram said to Lot, "Let there be no strife between you and me, and between your herdsmen and my herdsmen, for we are kinsmen. ⁹ Is not the whole land before you? Separate yourself from me. If you take the left hand, then I will go to the right, or if you take the right hand, then I will go to the left." ¹⁰ And Lot **lifted up his eyes** and saw that the Jordan Valley was well watered everywhere like the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt, in the direction of Zoar. (This was before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.) ¹¹ So Lot chose for himself all the Jordan Valley, and Lot journeyed east. Thus they separated from each other.

¹² Abram settled in the land of Canaan, while Lot settled among the cities of the valley and moved his tent as far as Sodom. ¹³ Now the men of Sodom were wicked, great sinners against the LORD.

¹⁴ The LORD said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him, "**Lift up your eyes** and look from the place where you are, northward and southward and eastward and westward, ¹⁵ for all the land that you see I will give to you and to your offspring forever. ¹⁶ I will make your offspring as the dust of the earth, so that if one can count the dust of the earth, your offspring also can be counted.

¹⁷ Arise, walk through the length and the breadth of the land, for I will give it to you." ¹⁸ So Abram moved his tent and came and settled by the oaks of Mamre, which are at Hebron, and there he built an altar to the LORD.

Sermon

"**Lift up your eyes** and see the Choice you must make"

Pastor Bell

Hymn No. 421 (vv. 1, 2)

Soul, Adorn Yourself with Gladness

Crüger

Soul, adorn yourself with gladness, leave the gloomy haunts of sadness,
Come into the daylight's splendor, there with joy your praises render.
Bless the One whose grace unbounded this amazing banquet founded;
He, though heav'nly high, and holy, deigns to dwell with you most lowly.

Hasten as a bride to meet him, eagerly and gladly greet him.
 There he stands already knocking; quickly, now, your gate unlocking,
 Open wide the fast closed portal, saying to the Lord immortal:
 "Come, and leave your loved one never; dwell within my heart forever."

The Lord's Supper

We respond to God's grace

*Hymn No. 421 (vv 3, 4)

Soul, Adorn Yourself with Gladness

Crüger

Now in faith I humbly ponder over this surpassing wonder
 That the bread of life is boundless though the souls it feeds are countless;
 With the choicest wine of heaven Christ's own blood to us is given.
 Oh, most glorious consolation, pledge and seal of my salvation.

Jesus, source of lasting pleasure, truest friend and dearest treasure,
 Peace beyond all understanding, joy into all life expanding:
 Humbly now, I bow before you, love incarnate, I adore you;
 Worthily let me receive you, and, so favored, never leave you.

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

Postlude

The Heavens Declare the Glory of God

Danish
 Marrello

 *Those who are able, please stand.

Our thanks to Mr. Guy McIntosh for his participation today.

TODAY is your last opportunity to place a poinsettia in the Church for Christmas, please sign up in the book on the narthex table. The cost is \$8.50. Put your money in a pink pew envelope and write your name and the word "Flowers" on the outside.

The Christmas card box and file are in the narthex. If you'd like to distribute cards to our congregation members just drop them in the box and then check the alphabetical file under your last name. PLEASE don't put in cards for our many shut-ins. Mail them! They will enjoy hearing from you.

Tickets for the Maryland State Boychoir Festival of Lessons and Carols are available for Sunday, December 10 at 4 PM; Saturday, December 16 at 7 PM; and Sunday, December 17 at 4 PM. Tickets are \$25 and \$20; Students tickets are \$15. Call 410-554-8644 to get yours.

You are invited to an a cappella Christmas hymn and carol fest at Living Hope PCA (440 Darlington Rd., Havre de Grace, MD 21078) on Sunday, December 17th at 6:30 PM.

Advent Sermon Series

December 2017

"Lift up your eyes"

To you I lift up my eyes, O you who are enthroned in the heavens! Behold, as the eyes of servants look to the hand of their master, as the eyes of a maidservant to the hand of her mistress, so our eyes look to the LORD our God, till he has mercy upon us.

Psalm 123:1, 2

December 3

Genesis 13:1-18

“Lift up your eyes and see the Choice you must make”
Will you chose...the World or the Word?

December 10

Genesis 22:1-19

“Lift up your eyes and see the Crisis you must face”
Will you chose...Fatalism or Faith?

December 17

Joshua 5:13-15

“Lift up your eyes and see the Commander you must follow”
Will you chose to be...Apprehensive or Active?

December 24

Daniel 10:1-19

“Lift up your eyes and see the Christ you must worship”
Will you chose...Revulsion or Reverence?

December 31

Isaiah 51:1-11

“Lift up your eyes and see the Consummation you will experience”
Will you chose...the Earthly or the Eternal?

*Do you not say, ‘There are yet four months, then comes the harvest’? Look, I tell you, **lift up your eyes**, and see that the fields are white for harvest.*

John 4:35

This Week at Aisquith

TODAY	10:30 AM	Worship
		Children’s Church (grades 1-4)
	12:30 PM	Ladies’ Christmas Tea (rm. 11)
	6:30-8:30 PM	Youth Group (grades 7-12)
TUESDAY	10:30 AM	Ladies’ Bible Study (church library)
	10:30 AM	Men’s Bible Study (1st floor classroom)
	7:00 PM	Ladies’ Bible Study (church library)
WEDNESDAY	7:30 PM	Youth Group Bible Study (3rd floor)
NEXT SUNDAY	9:00 AM	Sunday School
	10:30 AM	Worship
		Children’s Church (grades 1-4)
	6:30-8:30 PM	Youth Group tonight (grades 7-12)

Coming Soon

Sunday, December 24th 7:00 PM Christmas Eve Service