

**Christmas Eve Service**  
*Aisquith Presbyterian Church*

December 24, 2020

7:00 PM

Prelude

Mrs. Wendy Wickham

Call to Worship

“Joy to the world! The Lord is come. Let earth receive her king! Let every heart prepare him room!  
And heaven and nature sing!”

This Christmas Eve, we light this white candle as a visible sign that Jesus Christ is at the center of our lives and at the heart of this church. And we confess together...

**We believe in “one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of his Father before all worlds, God of Gods, 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 is seated at the right hand of the Father; and he shall come again, with glory, to judge both the living and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end.”**

from *The Nicene Creed*

\*Carol

*O Come, All Ye Faithful*

*Adeste Fideles*

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,  
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;  
come and behold him born the King of angels:

*O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,  
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.*

God of God, Light of Light;  
lo, he abhors not the Virgin’s womb:  
very God, begotten, not created;

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,  
sing, all ye citizens of heav’n above;  
glory to God in the highest;

Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning:  
Jesus, to thee be all glory giv’n;  
Word of the Father, late in flesh appearing;

\*Invocation

*The Nine Lessons of Christmastide*

THE FIRST LESSON

Genesis 3:1-15

God declares in the Garden of Eden that the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head.

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made.

He said to the woman, "Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden'?" And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.'" But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.

And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man and said to him, "Where are you?" And he said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself." He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate." Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

The Lord God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you above all livestock and above all beasts of the field; on your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel."

Reader: The Word of the Lord.  
Congregation: **Thanks be to God.**

Carol (vv. 1, 2)

*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."

THE SECOND LESSON

Genesis 22:15-18

God promises to faithful Abraham that in his seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.

And the angel of the Lord called to Abraham a second time from heaven and said, "By myself I have sworn, declares the Lord, because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies, and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice."

Reader: The Word of the Lord.  
Congregation: **Thanks be to God.**

Carol

*It Came upon the Midnight Clear*

Willis

It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old,  
From angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold:  
“Peace on the earth, good will to men, from heav’n’s all gracious King”;  
the world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come, with peaceful wings unfurled,  
And still their heav’nly music floats o’er all the weary world:  
Above its sad and lowly plains they bend n hov’ring wing,  
And ever o’er its Babel sounds the blessed angels sing.

And ye, beneath life’s crushing load, whose forms are bending low,  
Who toil along the climbing way with painful steps and slow,  
Look now! For glad and golden hours come swiftly on the wing:  
O rest beside the weary road and hear the angels sing.

For lo, the days are hast’ning on, by prophet bards foretold,  
When with the ever-circling years comes round the age of gold;  
When peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling,  
And the whole world give back the song which now the angels sing.

THE THIRD LESSON

Isaiah 7:10-14; 9:2, 6, 7

Christ’s birth and kingdom are foretold by the prophet.

Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz: “Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven.” But Ahaz said, “I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test.” And he said, “Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary men, that you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.”

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone.

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.  
**Congregation: Thanks be to God.**

\*Carol

*Joy to the World*

Antioch

Joy to the world! The Lord is come: let earth receive her King;  
Let every heart prepare him room, and heav’n and nature sing...

Joy to the earth! The Savior reigns: let men their songs employ;  
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains repeat the sounding joy...

No more let sins and sorrows grow, nor thorns infest the ground;  
He comes to make his blessings flow far as the curse is found...

He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the nations prove  
The glories of his righteousness and wonders of his love...

THE FOURTH LESSON

Micah 5:2-4

The prophet foretells the glory of Bethlehem.

But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days. Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has given birth; then the rest of his brothers shall return to the people of Israel. And he shall stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God. And they shall dwell secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.  
Congregation: **Thanks be to God.**

Carol No. 201 (vv. 1-3)

*O Little Town of Bethlehem*

St. Louis

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie;  
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by:  
Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting Light;  
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary; and gathered all above,  
While mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wond'ring love.  
No ear may hear his coming, but in this world of sin,  
Where meek souls will receive him still, the dear Christ enters in.

How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is giv'n!  
So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of his heav'n.  
No ear may hear his coming, but in this world of sin,  
Where meek souls will receive him still, the dear Christ enters in.

THE FIFTH LESSON

Luke 1:26-38

The angel Gabriel visits the Virgin Mary.

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."

And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?"

And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most

High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God. And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. For nothing will be impossible with God.” And Mary said, “Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word.” And the angel departed from her.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.  
Congregation: **Thanks be to God.**

\*Carol

*Angels We Have Heard on High*

Gloria

Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o’er the plains,  
And the mountains in reply echo back their joyous strains.

*Gloria in excelsis Deo.*

Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?  
Say what may the tidings be, which inspire your heav’nly song?

Come to Bethlehem and see him whose birth the angels sing;  
Come, adore on bended knee Christ the Lord the newborn King.

THE SIXTH LESSON

Luke 2:1-7

The Evangelist tells of the birth of Jesus.

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. And all went to be registered, each to his own town. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.  
Congregation: **Thanks be to God.**

SPECIAL MUSIC

*What Child Is This?*

Traditional English carol  
Gwen Cicone and Christine Clark  
Angelo Cicone, guitar

What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mary’s lap is sleeping?  
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet, while shepherds watch are keeping?  
This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing:  
Haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary.

Why lies he in such mean estate, where ox and ass are feeding?  
Good Christian, fear; for sinners here the silent Word is pleading.  
Nails, spear, shall pierce him through; the cross be borne for me, for you:  
Hail, hail the Word made flesh, the babe, the son of Mary.

So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh; come peasant, king to own him;  
The King of kings salvation brings, let loving hearts enthrone him.

Raise, raise the song on high, the virgin sings her lullaby:  
Joy, joy for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mary.

THE SEVENTH LESSON

Luke 2:8-16

The shepherds go to the manger.

And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths 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, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!"

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." And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

Congregation: **Thanks be to God.**

\*Carol

*Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*

Mendelssohn

Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King;  
Peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!"  
Joyful, all ye nations, rise, join the triumph of the skies;  
With th'angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

***Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King."***

Christ, by highest heav'n adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord!  
Late in time behold him come, offspring of the Virgin's womb.  
Veiled in flesh the God-head see; hail th'incarnate Deity,  
Pleased as man with men to dwell, Jesus our Emmanuel.

Hail the heav'n-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of Righteousness!  
Light and life to all he brings, ris'n with healing in his wings.  
Mild he lays his glory by, born that man no more may die,  
Born to raise the sons of earth, born to give them second birth.

SPECIAL MUSIC

*Were You There on That Christmas Night*

Natalie Sleeth  
Amelia, Beryl, and Zeke Wickham

Were you there, were you there on that Christmas night  
When the world was filled with a holy light?  
Were you there to behold, when the wonder foretold  
Came to earth?

Did you see, did you see how they hailed Him King  
With the gifts so rare that they chose to bring?  
Did you see how they bowed as they praised Him aloud  
At His birth?

Did you hear how the choirs of Angels sang  
At the glory of the sight?  
Did you hear how the bells of Heaven rang  
All-through the night?

Did you know, did you know it was God's own Son,  
The salvation of the world begun?  
Did you know it was love, that was sent from above  
To the earth?

THE EIGHTH LESSON

Matthew 2:1-11

The wise men are led by the star to Jesus.

Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, saying, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him." When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet: 'And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.'"

Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star had appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word, that I too may come and worship him." After listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. And going into the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.  
Congregation: **Thanks be to God.**

The Offering of Our Gifts and Prayer of Dedication

Carol

*Thou Who Was Rich*

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'ward 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.

THE NINTH LESSON

John 1:1-14

St. John unfolds the mystery of the Incarnation.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.

The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

And 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.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.  
Congregation: **Thanks be to God.**

\*Carol

*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, heav'nly 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!

\*Benediction

Now may He who by His Incarnation gathered into one things earthly and heavenly, fill you with the sweetness of inward peace and good will; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be upon you and remain with you always. Amen.

Postlude

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**A very special thanks to Mrs. Wendy Wickham for coordinating our music tonight.**

**Our Christmas Offering** will go to the *PCA Ministerial Relief Fund*.

If you donated a poinsettia for this year's service, thank you! You may take it home after the service.

The 2021 offering envelopes are in the narthex. If you would like to begin using envelopes for your giving, please speak to Pastor Bell.

Please pick up your Christmas Cards!

## *Poinsettias for Christmas 2020*

### *From*

### *Memorial*

*The Andrade Family*

*In memory of James E. Lewis Jr., Giovanni & Adrian Andrade*

*Sylvia Barfield*

*In memory of loved ones*

*Sylvia Barfield*

*In memory of Ida & James Barfield*

*George & Ruth Ellen Beerli*

*In memory of Mr. & Mrs. Charles Gronenthal*

*The Beerli & Barfield Families*

*In memory of Mr. & Mrs. Gebhard Beerli*

*John & Christine Clark*

*In loving memory of our grandparents*

*John & Christine Clark*

*In loving memory of John's father, John Clark Sr.*

*Gus & Debbie DeFord*

*In memory of parents and siblings*

*Gus & Debbie DeFord*

*In honor of grandchildren & children*

*Anna, Andrew & Bruce Graham*

*In memory of Rev. Thomas Graham*

*John Schaller*

*In loving memory of Sandy*

*Candy Short*

*In memory of Donald Short & Susan McKinney*

*The Wickham Family*

*In memory of Joseph*