FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA

Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 20, 2020

A Service of Lessons and Carols

(Click here to connect to today's live worship.)

GATHERING MUSIC Largo (from Sonata 5 for violin)

J.S. Bach

Jacquelyn Bartlett, harp

Mitzi Lesher-Thomas

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE What Is this Lovely Fragrance

French carol

Kent Foss, trumpet; Gordon Campbell, organ

CALL TO WORSHIP John Weicher

Leader: I knew joy, but when I heard the laugh of my child,

All: Suddenly, joy was overflowing.

Leader: I knew love, but when you held my hand,

All: Suddenly, love was overflowing.

Leader: I knew God, but when you showed me grace,

when you forgave me, when you loved me, when you raised me,

All: Suddenly, God was overflowing.

Leader: So, let us worship Holy God together

as a reminder that God is here, and we are never alone.

All: This is community.

Leader: This is the body of Christ.

All: Welcome home.

ADVENT WREATH CANDLE LIGHTING LITURGY

Emily, Chris, and Miles James

OPENING HYMN O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

Veni Emmanuel

(Hymn No. 88, verses 1,3,5,7)

O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel, that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear. Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, O come, thou Lord of might, who to thy tribes on Sinai's height in ancient times didst give the law in cloud and majesty and awe.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, thou Key of David, come, and open wide our heavenly home; make safe the way that leads on high, and close the path to misery. Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, Desire of nations, bind all peoples in one heart and mind; bid envy, strife, and discord cease; fill the whole world with heaven's peace. Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

BIDDING PRAYER AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

Lenore Champion

Leader: Beloved in Christ, it is our duty and delight

to prepare ourselves to hear again

the message of the angels,

and to go in heart and mind to Bethlehem, and see this thing which has come to pass,

and the babe lying in a manger.

Therefore let us hear again from the holy scriptures

the tale of the loving purposes of God

from the first days of our sin

until the glorious redemption brought us by this holy child

and let us make this house of prayer glad with our carols of praise.

But first, because this of all things would rejoice Jesus' heart,

let us pray to him for the needs of the whole world,

and all his people;

for peace upon the earth he came to save;

for love and unity within the one Church he did build;

for goodwill among all peoples.

And particularly at this time, let us remember

the poor, the cold, the hungry, the oppressed;

the sick and them that mourn; the lonely and the unloved;

the aged and the little children;

and all who do not know the Lord Jesus,

or do not love him,

or who by sin have grieved his heart of love.

Lastly, let us remember all those who rejoice with us,

but upon another shore and in a greater light,

that multitude which no one can number,

whose hope was in the Word made flesh,

and with whom, in this Lord Jesus, we forevermore are one.

These prayers and praises let us humbly offer up to the throne of heaven,

in the words that Christ himself has taught us:

All: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread;

and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors;

and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

FIRST LESSON

Genesis 3:8-15; 17-19

Adam and Eve Disobey God

Susan Dunlap

Confession of Sin John Weicher

Call to Confession

Prayer of Confession (in unison)

God of the future,

you are coming in power to bring all nations under your rule.

We confess that we have not expected your kingdom,

for we lived casual lives, ignoring your promised judgment.

We accept lies as truth, exploit neighbors, abuse the earth,

and refuse your justice and peace. In your mercy, forgive us.

Grant us wisdom to welcome your way,

and to seek things that will endure

when Christ comes to judge the world.

Silent Confession

Declaration of Pardon

SECOND LESSON Isaiah 11:1-9 Alex and Amy Sanchez

The Peaceful Kingdom Is Foretold by Isaiah

Organ Voluntary Capriccio Pastorale Frescobaldi

Robert Parkins, organ

SOLO In the Bleak Midwinter Holst, arr. Charles Callahan

Lesley Curtis, soprano

In the bleak midwinter, frosty wind made moan; earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone; snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow, in the bleak midwinter, long ago.

Our God, heaven cannot hold him, nor earth sustain; heaven and earth shall flee away when he comes to reign: in the bleak midwinter a stable place sufficed the Lord God incarnate, Jesus Christ.

What can I give him, poor as I am?

If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;

if I were a wise man, I would do my part;

yet what I can I give him: give my heart.

THIRD LESSON Isaiah 9:2,6-7 Mitzi Lesher-Thomas

A Great Light Will Shine in the Darkness

HYMN No. 123 It Came Upon the Midnight Clear

Carol

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 all, from heaven'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 heavenly music floats o'er all the weary world: above its sad and lowly plains they bend on hovering wing, and ever o'er its Babel sounds the blessed angels sing.

Yet with the woes of sin and strife the world has suffered long; beneath the heavenly hymn have rolled two thousand years of wrong; and we at war on earth hear not the tidings that they bring; O, hush the noise and cease the strife to hear the angels sing!

And you, 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 hastening on, by prophets seen of old, when with the ever-circling years shall come the time foretold, when peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling, and the whole world give back the song which now the angels sing.

FOURTH LESSON Luke 1:26-38 Mindy Douglas

An Angel Appears to Mary

MEDITATION "The Not-Impossible Dream" Mindy Douglas

Hymn No. 145 What Child Is This Greensleeves

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, one and all, 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!

FIFTH LESSON Luke 2:1-7 Carlo Diy

Mary Gives Birth in Bethlehem

VOLUNTARY FOR BELLS AND PIANOStill, Still, Still
Cathy Moklebust

Kathy Parkins, piano; Gordon Campbell, bells

Sixth Lesson Luke 2:8-20 John Weicher

The Shepherds Hear the News of the Birth of the Christ Child

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming Es Ist Ein' Ros' (Praetorius) (video performance by FPC's virtual choir)

Lo, how a rose e'er blooming from tender stem hath sprung, of Jesse's lineage coming, by faithful prophets sung. It came, a floweret bright, amid the cold of winter, when half spent was the night.

Isaiah 'twas foretold it, the rose I have in mind; with Mary we behold it, the virgin mother kind. To show God's love aright she bore for us a Savior, when half spent was the night.

This flower, whose fragrance tender with sweetness fills the air, dispels with glorious splendor the darkness everywhere. Enfleshed, yet very God, from sin and death he saves us and lightens every load.

Invitation to Give and Dedication of the Offering

Mindy Douglas

Today we are receiving the Joy Gift Offering, a cherished Presbyterian tradition since the 1930s. The Offering distributes gifts equally to the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions and to Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. The Assistance Program provides critical financial support to church workers and their families in crisis. Presbyterian-related schools and colleges provide education and leadership development while nurturing racial and ethnic heritage. Click here to give online or you can mail a check to the church, made payable to FPC, memo: Joy Gift.

CLOSING PRAYER Mindy Douglas

Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
All: It is right to offer thanks and praise.

Leader: Let us pray.
All: God of grace,

your eternal Word took flesh among us

when Mary placed her life at the service of your will.

Prepare our hearts for his coming again;

keep us steadfast in hope and faithful in service, that we may receive the coming of his kingdom for the sake of Jesus Christ, the ruler of all,

who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,

one God, now and forever. Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

Angels, We Have Heard on High

Gloria

Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o'er the plains, and the mountains in reply echoing their joyous strains.

Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!

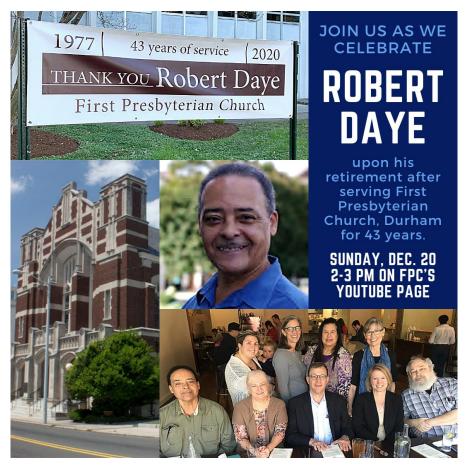
Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong? What the gladsome tidings be which inspire your heavenly song? Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Come to Bethlehem and see him whose birth the angels sing; come, adore on bended knee Christ, the Lord, the newborn King. Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Benediction Mindy Douglas

POSTLUDE Joy to the World Antioch, arr. Sondra Tucker

Kent Foss, trumpet; Gordon Campbell, organ



Retirement Celebration for Robert Daye

At 2:00 p.m. today, the congregation will gather via the church's YouTube channel (<u>watch here</u>) and hear stories and see photos from Robert's 43 years with us as our sexton. Members of Robert's family have been asked to join him for this momentous occasion. Robert is receiving two special honors today. Click here to view information about the first honor!

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First Presbyterian Church welcomes all who worship with us. We honor and celebrate the human diversity and unity that God gives us in Christ. We welcome individuals of every age, race, nationality, gender, ability, sexual orientation, and economic circumstance to participate fully in the life of the church. On December 13, 101 households tuned in to the 11:00 a.m. livestreamed broadcast of worship.

Special thanks to *Jacquelyn Bartlett* (harp), *Kent Foss* (trumpet), *Lesley Curtis* (soloist), and *Gordon Campbell* (organist) for their music leadership with today's worship service. Gordon is serving as organist and interim music director while *Kathy Parkins* recovers from shoulder and bicep surgery.

This week, we are especially grateful to **John Fricks** who helped locate and edit the music files used in today's worship. **Many thanks** to **Jody Maxwell**, **Pat Dillon**, **Keith Rokoske**, and **Jay Klinck** for their "behind the scenes" technical assistance with our live broadcasts of worship each Sunday morning. We are also grateful to **Jennie Alwood** for the powerful images accompanying our online worship today.

Portions of *today's worship text* are taken from *Book of Common Worship (2018)*. *Hymn texts* and *music* are reprinted from *Glory to God* under Onelicense.net: A.713926.

~ Our Concerns ~

- * Kathy Parkins, recovering following shoulder and bicep surgery
- Grace Abels, recovering from back surgery
- Harold Dunlap
- * Kerry Holbrook
- Jane Rourk
- Carol Wills
- Evelyn Bass, aunt of Valerie McMillian, in hospice care at Hock Pavilion
- The many households impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic
- Those who are grieving during this holiday season

Care Communities:

Brookdale Durham: *Julian Boswell* Croasdaile Pavilion: *Bob Rankin*

Dubose Center at The Cedars, Chapel Hill: Arthur Clark

Durham Regent: John Kerr, Ann Prospero

Durham Ridge: **Phillip Herndon** Emerald Pond: **Paul Cornsweet**

Hillcrest Convalescent Center: Walter Chambliss, father of Will Chambliss

The Forest at Duke: Fran Bryant

Family and Friends of the Congregation:

- * Brendan Bequette, family friend of Margaret & Miguel Rubiera
- Peggy Boulden, mother of Dick Boulden
- Daniel Cheney, brother of Johanna Bernhardt, hospitalized with heart related issues
- * Meg Courtney, daughter of Bob and Mary Lee Clark, active friends of the congregation
- * Maureen Darcey, friend of Brianna Bennett
- Phil Goss, friend of the congregation
- Candee Herndon, friend of Kathy Krahenbuhl
- Peggy Mordecai, mother of Beth Eisenson
- * Shannon Putman, daughter of Mary Putman
- * Robert Reaves, husband of Floalice Reaves, friend of the congregation
- ❖ Joe Rudigier, brother of Jeanne Hervey

Click here to access FPC's Advent resources



Leaders: Mitzi Lesher-Thomas and Susan Dunlap TODAY from 4:00-5:00 p.m.

Zoom link: <u>https://zoom.us/j/99260154711</u>



Christmas Eve Services

How do you have a Christmas pageant without being in the same room?
What has become of our new(ish)
3:00 p.m. Christmas Eve service?
Most importantly, who gets to be Mary?

In this season of Jesus' birth and pandemic rethinking, we have some answers – thanks to the creativity of the Director of Children's Ministry *Lenore Champion* and many, many folks within the congregation. **At 3:00 p.m. on Christmas**

Eve, we will share our Christmas pageant worship service. Lots of members and friends of FPC have contributed photos and readings to tell the story in a fresh, creative, and unique way. These are being knit together, along with other liturgical elements, to form the worship service. As with all of our pandemic worship, it will be available on our YouTube page: First Presbyterian Church - YouTube, in this case at 3:00 p.m. This is the same place you can see our traditional 5:00 p.m. service (which will be led live at 5). This service will include communion and candle lighting. As with all services, Christmas Eve, Sunday, or otherwise, you can go back and watch it any time after it happens on the YouTube page.

A **Christmas Eve offering** will also be received. This annual offering will be allocated to three organizations this year, with each receiving one third of the amount received. The organizations are **Welcome Baby**, the **Food Bank of Central and Eastern NC**, and the **food ministry at Iglesia Emanuel**. You can mail your offering to the church, give it online <u>here</u>, or text the code XMASEVE to 917-373-3254.

Church Office/Staff Holiday Schedule

During the Christmas and New Year's Day holidays, the church staff will continue working from home as they have been during the pandemic. The pastors and administrators will be reachable by text and mobile phone. Their church voicemail and email will be monitored, so feel free to reach out to them if you have a need or concern.

Sunday, December 27
First Sunday after Christmas
No Sunday School

(No children, youth or adult classes)

Worship (virtual) at 11:00 a.m.

YEAR END GIVING

Please remember that the church must receive your charitable contributions by midnight on Monday, December 31, 2020; or the gift must be postmarked by December 31, 2020, if mailed, to be deductible on your 2020 taxes.

If you wish to make a contribution by credit card, this may be done through the church's website (https://firstpres-durham.org) at any time. To be deductible on your 2020 taxes, please initiate the gift by Tuesday, December 29. On-line contributions scheduled for December 31 will not reach us in time.

If you wish to make a donation through a gift of stock, please notify Tom Bloom, Business Administrator (<u>t.bloom@firstpres-durham.org</u>) as soon as possible. If you have recently transferred stock to FPC, but have not notified the church, please contact Tom Bloom, Business Administrator, ASAP.

Members aged 70 ½ + who own an IRA may be able to make a tax-excludable gift directly to First Presbyterian and have that gift satisfy any required minimum distribution for this year. Please contact your IRA administrator ASAP if you wish to consider this giving option for tax year 2020.

Support for Those who Mourn

Growing thru Grief offers year-round support to people who have lost a loved one. Currently we are meeting on Zoom each week. Here is a preview of our coming speakers:

December 22 Janet Stolp
December 29 Vivian Harris

To be determined
The Ugly Shoes Club

If you would like to attend any or all of these sessions, please send your request to admin@growingthrugrief.org. Then we can send you the information. Everyone must register every week. We need to receive your inquiry by 8 am on Monday for Tuesday's session.

We meet each Tuesday from 4:15-6, with a presentation plus small group discussion. For more information about Growing thru Grief, check out our website, *growingthrugrief.org*.

CHURCH STAFF

Tom Bloom, Business Administrator Lenore Champion, Children's Ministry Director Robert Daye, Sexton Mindy Douglas, Pastor/Head of Staff Susan Dunlap, Parish Associate

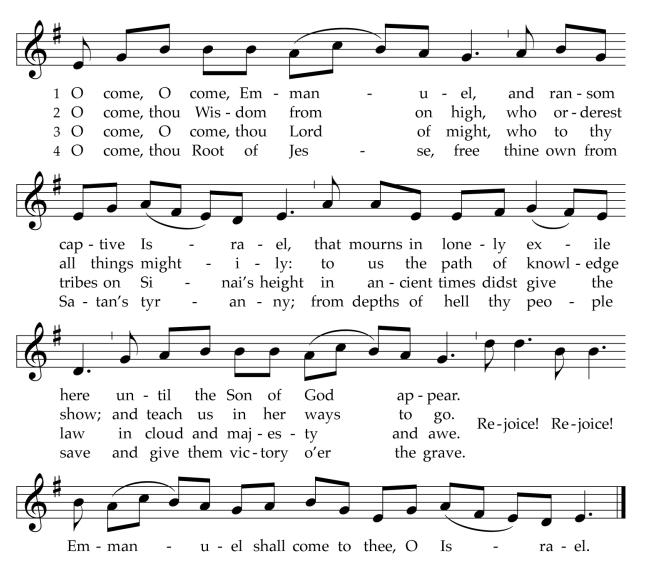


Sybil King, Administrative Assistant Mitzi Lesher-Thomas, Associate Pastor Valerie McMillian, Parish Administrator Kathy Parkins, Minister of Music John Weicher, Associate Pastor

For more information about First Presbyterian Church, email the church office: info@firstpres-durham.org or visit our website: https://firstpres-durham.org.

305 EAST MAIN STREET DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA 27701 919.682.5511

88 O Come, O Come, Emmanuel



- 5 O come, thou Key of David, come, and open wide our heavenly home; make safe the way that leads on high, and close the path to misery.
 - Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.
- 6 O come, thou Dayspring, come and cheer our spirits by thine advent here; disperse the gloomy clouds of night, and death's dark shadows put to flight. Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.
- 7 O come, Desire of nations, bind all peoples in one heart and mind; bid envy, strife, and discord cease; fill the whole world with heaven's peace. Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.



123 It Came Upon the Midnight Clear



- 1 It came up-on the mid-night clear, that glo-rious song of old,
- 2 Still through the clo ven skies they come, with peace-ful wings un furled,
- 3 Yet with the woes of sin and strife the world has suf-fered long;
- 4 And you, be-neath life's crush-ing load, whose forms are bend-ing low,
- 5 For lo, the days are has-tening on, by proph-ets seen of old,





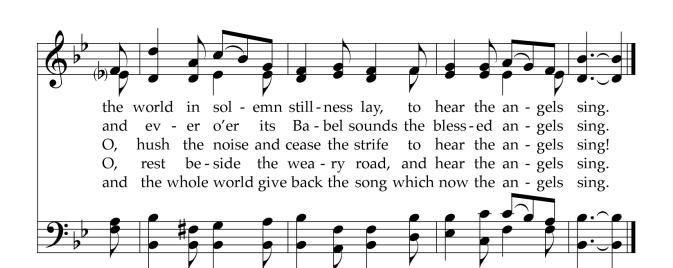
from an - gels bend - ing near the earth, to touch their harps of gold: and still their heaven-ly mu - sic floats o'er all the wea - ry world: be - neath the heaven-ly hymn have rolled two thou-sand years of wrong; who toil a - long the climb - ing way with pain - ful steps and slow, when with the ev - er - cir-cling years shall come the time fore - told,





"Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heaven's all-gra-cious King": a - bove its sad and low - ly plains they bend on hov-ering wing, and we at war on earth hear not the tid - ings that they bring; look now, for glad and gold - en hours come swift - ly on the wing: when peace shall o - ver all the earth its an - cient splen-dors fling,





145 What Child Is This



Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming 129



13 Angels We Have Heard on High



- 1 An gels we have heard on high, sweet-ly sing-ing o'er the plains,
- 2 Shep-herds, why this ju bi lee? Why your joy ous strains pro-long?
- 3 Come to Beth-le hem and see him whose birth the an gels sing;



and the moun-tains in re-ply ech - o - ing their joy - ous strains. What the glad-some ti - dings be which in-spire your heaven-ly song? come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ, the Lord, the new - born King.



