

CHRISTMAS EVE

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2020

SAINT GILES PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

this night, we are
THOSE WHO
DREAM
christmas eve

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: This year, we dreamed of world peace.

All: We dreamed of deep breaths and restful sleep.

One: We dreamed of love that lasts and suffering that passes.

All: We dreamed of doors open wide and a cure to disease.

One: We dreamed, because to dream is to believe.

All: For to dream is to hope; to dream is to see.

One: So let us make room in our being to dream yet again,

All: Of a world without fear, and a God that draws near.

One: For it is almost Christmas. Love is almost here.

All: May we dream to see, and hope to believe as we worship our holy God.

OPENING HYMN # 133

O Come All Ye Faithful

verses 1, 3, & 4

*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!*

*Sing, choirs of angels;
sing in exultation;
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God, all
glory in the highest!
O come, let us adore him;
O come, let us adore him;
O come, let us adore him,
Christ, the Lord!*

*Yea, Lord, we greet thee,
born this happy morning;
Jesus, to thee be all glory given;
Word of the Father,
now in flesh appearing!
O come, let us adore him;
O come, let us adore him;
O come, let us adore him,
Christ, the Lord!*

THE LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

The Wilber Family

- Voice One: In the beginning, God dreamed of a beautiful world. In Egypt, the Israelites dreamed of freedom.
- Voice Two: In the wilderness, the people dreamed of safety. In Jerusalem, the people dreamed of a Messiah.
- One: In Bethlehem, the shepherds and Wise Men dreamed of a new beginning. Then, several years later, Jesus walked this earth and dreams came true.
- Two: The sick were healed. The poor had food. The forgotten and ignored were seen.
- One: The children were welcomed. Everyone was invited to the table, and the world has never been the same.
- Two: So tonight, we are those who dream. Tonight, we dream the same dreams of our ancestors before us.
- One: Tonight, we dream of justice and mercy, of love and kindness, of peace and hope.
- Two: Tonight we dream of a God that draws near to us out of unfailing love and we light the Christ candle.
- One: May this candle be a reminder that there will be a day when every dream will be fulfilled. And until then, we will be those who dream.
- All: Let us worship our Holy God.**

LESSON

Isaiah 9:2, 6-7

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.
For a child has been born for us,
a son given to us;
authority rests upon his shoulders;
and he is named
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
His authority shall grow continually,
and there shall be endless peace
for the throne of David and his kingdom.
He will establish and uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time onward and forevermore.
The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

*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.*

*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.*

LESSON

Luke 1:26-35, 38

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin’s name was Mary. And he came to her and said, “Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you.” But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him 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 ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.” Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I am a virgin?” The angel said to 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 holy; he will be called Son of God.

Then Mary said, “Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.” Then the angel departed from her.

CAROL #119

Hark! the Herald Angels Sing

verses 1 & 2

***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 the angelic host proclaim,
“Christ is born in Bethlehem!”
Hark! The herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn king!”***

***Christ, by highest heaven adored,
Christ the everlasting Lord,
late in time behold him come,
offspring of the virgin’s womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see;
hail the incarnate deity,
pleased in flesh with us to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel.
Hark! The herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn king!”***

LESSON

Luke 2:1-7

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.

CAROL # 114

Away in a Manger

verses 1-3

***Away in a manger, no crib for his bed,
the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.
The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,
the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.***

***The cattle are lowing; the poor baby wakes,
but little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes.
I love thee, Lord Jesus; look down from the sky,
and stay by my side until morning is nigh.***

***Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask thee to stay
close by me forever and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in thy tender care,
and fit us for heaven to live with thee there.***

LESSON

Luke 2:8-16

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!”

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger.

CAROL # 113

Angels We Have Heard on High

verses 1 & 3

***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!***

***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!
Gloria in excelsis Deo!***

LESSON

Matthew 2:1-11

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, “Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.” When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

‘And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for from you shall come a ruler
who is to shepherd my people Israel.’”

Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.” When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

CAROL

O Holy Night

*O Holy Night the Stars are brightly shining,
it is the night of our Dear Savior's birth,
long lay the world in sin and error pining,
'til He appeared and the soul felt it's worth,
a thrill of hope the weary world rejoices,
for yonder breaks a new and glorious morn,*

*Fall on your knees, oh hear the angel voices,
O night, divine, O night, when Christ was born.*

*Truly he taught us to love one another,
His law is love and His gospel is peace,
Chains shall He break for the slave is our brother,
and in His name all oppression shall cease.
Sweet hymns of joy in grateful chorus raise we,
with all our hearts we praise His holy name,
Christ is the Lord, Then ever, ever praise Thee,
Noel, Noel. O night, o night divine.*

LESSON

John 1:1-14

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 came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

CAROL # 122 *Silent Night*
(Lighting of Candles)

*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,
heavenly hosts sing, "Alleluia!
Christ the Savior is born! Christ the Savior is born!"*

*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!*

***RESPONSIVE BENEDICTION**

One: We believe in hope.

All: We believe that to hope is to dream with our eyes wide open.

One: We believe in peace.

All: We believe that peace is not found by accident. Prepare the way.

One: We believe in joy.

All: We believe that joy is angel choruses and gifts from the Magi, as well as soul food, big tables, open doors, candle light, fireside, singing in the shower, and the body of Christ gathered as one.

One: We believe in love.

All: We believe that God loves us so much that God could not stay away. So God showed up as a child. We believe that that love is real, and we know that it changes us.

One: Therefore, we believe in the power of dreams,

All: And we believe that nightmares, which are all too real here and now, will have no place in God's promised day.

One: Until then, we believe in passing the light, in showing up, in doing the work, in listening for angel choruses, and in learning from the youngest among us.

All: We believe...

POSTLUDE

*Adapted from liturgy by Sarah Are | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org.