

The Church Responds

The Affirmation of Faith - Apostles' Creed *(In Unison)*

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

The Prayers of the People and Lord's Prayer

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.

A Minute for Stewardship

The Church Goes Forth to Serve

The Closing Hymn #43 "O Little Town of Bethlehem" *(Presby Hymnal)*

O little town of Bethlehem, How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep The silent stars for 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 wondering love.
O morning stars, together Proclaim the holy birth!
And praises sing to God the King, and peace to all on earth.

How silently, how silently, The wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts The blessings of His heaven.
No ear may hear His coming, But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive Him, still The dear Christ enters in.

O holy Child of Bethlehem, Descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin and enter in, Be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels The great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us, Our Lord Emmanuel!

The Benediction and Postlude

Saint Andrews United Presbyterian Church

December 20, 2020

Fourth Sunday of Advent

10:30 AM

The Church in Preparation

The Prelude

Welcome and Announcements

The Introit and Time of Centering #110 "Love Has Come" *(Glory to God)*

Love has come: a light in the darkness! Love shines forth in the Bethlehem skies.

See, all heaven has come to proclaim it; hear how their song of joy arises:

Love! Love! Born unto you, a Savior! Love! Love! Glory to God on high.

Love is born! Come, share in the wonder. Love is God now asleep in the hay.

See the glow in the eyes of his mother; what is the name her heart is saying?

Love! Love! Love is the name she whispers. Love! Love! Jesus, Emmanuel.

Love has come and never will leave us! Love is life everlasting and free.

Love is Jesus within and among us. Love is the peace our hearts are seeking.

Love! Love! Love is the gift of Christmas. Love! Love! Praise to you, God on high!

The Call to Worship

Leader 1: Rejoice in the coming of Jesus the Savior,
Good news on the way.

Leader 2: Good news for the down-trodden and weary?

Leader 1: Good news – peace is coming.

Leader 2: Good news for the broken-hearted?

Leader 1: Good news – joy is coming.

Leader 2: Good news for those captive and imprisoned?

Leader 1: Good news – freedom is coming.

Leader 2: Good news for the hard of heart?

Leader 1: Good news—love is coming.

Jesus our Savior is on the way!

The Lighting of the Advent Wreath: The Love Candle

As we gather around the Advent wreath, we give thanks for the gift of God's love. In Christ, God comes to us in love and fills us with God's love for all people. Scripture tells us that "God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another." We light this candle to proclaim God's love.

The Opening Prayer *(In Unison)*

Gracious God, we thank you for showing us the depth of your love for all people—for young and old, rich and poor, sick and strong, saint and sinner. Join us in this hour of worship and empower us to open our hearts to you and to one another, through the grace of Christ. Amen.

The Opening Hymn #105 “People Look East” *(Glory to God)*

People, look east. The time is near of the crowning of the year.
Make your house fair as you are able; trim the hearth and set the table.
People, look east and sing today: Love, the Guest, is on the way.

Furrows, be glad. Though earth is bare, one more seed is planted there.
Give up your strength the seed to nourish, that in course the flower may flourish.
People, look east and sing today: Love, the Rose, is on the way.

Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim one more light the bowl shall brim,
shining beyond the frosty weather, bright as sun and moon together.
People, look east and sing today: Love, the Star, is on the way.

Angels, announce with shouts of mirth Christ who brings new life to earth.
Set every peak and valley humming with the word, the Lord is coming.
People, look east and sing today: Love, the Lord, is on the way.

The Prayer of Confession *(In Unison)*

God of surprises, you call us by name but we don't always hear you. You beckon us to follow but we look away. We cannot believe that you would trust us to bear your Son into the world. We silently wish you would choose someone else. Forgive us, Lord. Help us to respond to your call with the courage and faith of Mary. Pour your Spirit into our hearts and our lives so that we may live for the sake of Jesus Christ, your Son, our Savior. Amen.

A Time of Silent Confession and The Assurance of Pardon

Musical Response “Gloria Patri”

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.

The Church in Proclamation

Scripture Readings

2 Samuel 7: 1 – 11, 16

Luke 1:26 – 38

Leader: The word of the Lord Thanks be to God

Special Music “Angels We Have Heard on High” Baritone: Nate Grossman

The Micro Message

Musical Response #138 “Who Would Think That What Was Needed”

Who would think that what was needed to transform and save the earth
might not be a plan or army, proud in purpose, proved in worth?
Who would think, despite derision, that a child should lead the way?
God surprises earth with heaven, coming here on Christmas Day.

Shepherds watch and wise men wonder; monarchs scorn and angels sing;
such a place as none would reckon hosts a holy helpless thing.
Stable beasts and bypassed strangers watch a baby laid in hay;
God surprises earth with heaven, coming here on Christmas Day.

Centuries of skill and science span the past from which we move,
yet experience questions whether, with such progress, we improve.
While the human lot we ponder, lest our hopes and humor fray,
God surprises earth with heaven, coming here on Christmas Day.

The Sermon Rev. Merry Meloy

The Hymn #101 “No Wind at the Window” *(Glory to God)*

No wind at the window, no knock on the door;
no light from the lampstand, no foot on the floor;
no dream born of tiredness, no ghost raised by fear:
just an angel and a woman and a voice in her ear.

“O Mary, O Mary, don't hide from my face.
Be glad that you're favored and filled with God's grace.
The time for redeeming the world has begun,
and you are requested to mother God's Son.”

“This child must be born that the kingdom might come:
salvation for many, destruction for some;
both end and beginning, both message and sign;
both victor and victim, both yours and divine.”

No payment was promised, no promises made;
no wedding was dated, no blueprint displayed.
Yet Mary, consenting to what none could guess,
replied with conviction, “Tell God I say, Yes.”



Happy Birthday to:

December 23	Karen Pressler
December 23	Stephanie Arienzo
December 28	Gary Gregson
December 28	Thalia Payne
December 29	Deanna Golden
December 31	Dave Landis
December 31	Fred Young
January 2	Mary Cotton



Remote Christmas Eve Celebration



We'll be celebrating the birth of Christ with an online program of music, Scripture, and pictures. Please watch our website for more info, share it with your family and friends, and then join us for this very special Christmas Eve experience!

Announcements

and

Scripture Readings

Office Holiday Schedule



The church office will be closed on Wednesday, December 23rd through Monday, December 28th. Pastor Merry will be with her mother for Christmas. While she is away, Rev. Mary Kitchen will be available in case of emergencies. If you have a pastoral care need or concern, please call Rev. Kitchen (412-266-0930)

Communion Sunday, January 3rd



We'll start the new year with a celebration of Communion during our remote worship service on Sunday, January 3rd. Please plan on using the bread and juice you have at home as we share the Lord's Supper together.

Scripture Readings

2 Samuel 7: 1 – 11, 16

¹ Now when the king was settled in his house, and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies around him, ² the king said to the prophet Nathan, “See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a tent.”

³ Nathan said to the king, “Go, do all that you have in mind; for the LORD is with you.”

⁴ But that same night the word of the LORD came to Nathan: ⁵ Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the LORD: Are you the one to build me a house to live in? ⁶ I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle. ⁷ Wherever I have moved about among all the people of Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders^[a] of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, “Why have you not built me a house of cedar?” ⁸ Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David: Thus says the LORD of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel; ⁹ and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. ¹⁰ And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly, ¹¹ from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house. . . .

¹⁶ Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me,^[c] your throne shall be established forever. ¹⁷ In accordance with all these words and with all this vision, Nathan spoke to David.

Luke 1:26 – 38

²⁶ In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷ to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin’s name was Mary.

²⁸ And he came to her and said, “Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you.”

²⁹ But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be.

³⁰ The angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹ And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³² 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. ³³ He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.”

³⁴ Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I am a virgin?”

³⁵ 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^[c] will be holy; he will be called Son of God. ³⁶ And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. ³⁷ For nothing will be impossible with God.”

³⁸ 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.