



*Fourth Sunday
in Advent*

*a
Service of
Music
and
Readings*

Preparation for Worship

He did not wait till the world was ready,
till men and nations were at peace
He came when the Heavens were unsteady
and prisoners cried out for release....

We cannot wait till the world is sane
to raise our songs with joyful voice,
for to share our grief, to touch our pain,
He came with Love: Rejoice! Rejoice!

— Madeleine L'Engle, *First Coming*

We Gather in God's Name

Welcome and Announcements

Please sign the friendship register

† Passing of the Peace

Leader: The peace of the Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Song of Praise

Ding Dong Merrily on High
Still, Still, Still
Joyful Ringers

McChesney
Larson

Call to Worship

One: Today we look to the God who surely comes.

Many: We cry, "Come, Emmanuel, be with us."

One: Today we celebrate the God who deeply loves.

Many: We praise you for your compassion, made known in Christ.

One: Today we honor the God who enters our world in the flesh of Jesus.

Many: We rejoice at your presence in our lives.

One: Let us come before the Lord and worship

† Hymn #87

Comfort, Comfort Now My People

† Prayer of Confession

God of grace and mercy beyond our understanding — when we pause and look upon the birth of Jesus your son, we are humbled. You came to our world so quietly then, so overlooked by all but poor peasants and shepherds. And still today, we overlook your presence in our world. You made your home among a people full of violence, pride, and sin. And still today, amid our own violence and pride and sin, we are not ready for your coming. Forgive us and open our hearts anew, that this Christmas, we may be ready to receive the message of your hope, peace, joy, and love. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

† Response #103

Come Now, O Prince of Peace (verses 1 and 4)

† Assurance of Forgiveness

Leader: Hear this good news of great joy: *The Prince of Peace is coming to proclaim peace on earth and good will to all.* In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven, renewed, and set free.

All: Thanks be to God!

We Proclaim God's Word

Children's Message: The Lighting of Advent's Fourth Candle

Response: *He came down that we may have light (repeat 2x): Hallelujah, forevermore.*
He came down that we may have love (repeat 2x): Hallelujah, forevermore.

Sharing of Our Tithes and Offerings

Offertory *Wachet auf (Sleepers, Wake!)* J. S. Bach
Rob Passow, Organist

† Response *Veni Emmanuel*

† Prayer of Dedication Kent Ford

The Message in Music and Readings

(A text of the scriptures is provided on the following pages.)

Come and See...

Reading: From *Come In* Robert Frost
Scripture: Matthew 25:13
Choral Selection: *Keep Your Lamps* Trad./Leavitt

Scripture: Luke 2:1-7
Reading: From *The House of Christmas* G. K. Chesterton
Choral Selection: *Inn at the End of the World* Chesterton/Sorenson

Scripture: Luke 2:8-19
Reading: From *Mary, Did You Know* Mark Lowry, 1984
Choral Selection: *Wexford Carol* Trad. Irish/Hagenberg

Reading: *Advent Summons* Mary Francis, PCC
Choral Selection: *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing* Wesley/Harmen

Scripture: Isaiah 9:2-7
Reading: From *Choose Something Like a Star* Robert Frost
Choral Selection: *Shines the Light* Dengler/Dengler

Reading: From *Welcome Inn* Phil Keaggy, 2009

We Depart To Serve God

† Parting Hymn #110 *Love Has Come*

† Charge and Benediction

Postlude *Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme* J. G. Walther
Rob Passow, Organist

SCRIPTURES AND READINGS

From *Come In* - Robert Frost

Far in the pillared dark
Thrush music goes—
Almost like a call to come in
To the dark and lament.

But no, I was out for stars:
I would not come in.

Watch therefore, for ye
know neither the day nor
the hour wherein the Son of
man cometh.

Matthew 25:13

And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem;... To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.

And so it was, that while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

Luke 2:1-7

From *The House of Christmas* - G. K. Chesterton

To an open house in the evening
Home shall men come,
To an older place than Eden
And a taller town than Rome.
To the end of the way of the wandering star,
To the things that cannot be and that are,
To the place where God was homeless
And all men are at home.

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, 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, good will toward men.

And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.

Luke 2:8-19

From *Mary, Did You Know*, Mark Lowery, 1984

Mary, did you know that your baby boy
will give sight to a blind man?
Mary, did you know that your baby boy
will calm a storm with his hand?
Did you know that your baby boy
has walked where angels trod?
When you kiss your little baby,
you kiss the face of God.
Mary, did you know?

Be born, sweet Child,
In our unholy hearts.
Come to our trembling,
Helpless Child.
Come to our littleness,
Little Child,
Be born unto us
Who have kept the faltering vigil.
Be given, be born,
Be ours again.

Come forth from your holy heaven,
Come away from your perfect shrine,
Come to our wind-racked souls
From the flawless tent,
Sweet Child.

Be born, little Child,
In our unholy hearts.

— *Advent Summons*,
Mary Francis, PCC

The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined. Thou hast multiplied the nation, and increased its joy: they joy before thee according to the joy in harvest, and as men rejoice when they divide the spoil.

For thou hast broken the yoke of his burden, and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, as in the day of Midian. For every battle of the warrior is with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood; but this shall be burned as fuel for the fire.

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

Isaiah 9:2-7

From *Choose Something Like a Star* - Robert Frost

O Star (The Fairest one in sight),
We grant your loftiness the right
To some obscurity of cloud—
It will not do to say of night,
Since dark is what brings out your light.
Some mystery becomes the proud.

But to be wholly taciturn
In your reserve is not allowed.
Say something to us we can learn
By heart and when alone repeat.
Say something!

And it says, "I burn."

But say with what degree of heat.
Talk Fahrenheit, talk Centigrade.
Use language we can comprehend.
Tell us what *elements* you blend.
It gives us strangely little aid,
But does tell something in the end.
And steadfast [Keats's star,]
Not even stooping from its sphere,
...Asks a little of us here.

It asks of us a certain height,
So when at times the mob is swayed
To carry praise or blame too far,
We may choose something like a star
To stay our minds on and be staid.

From *Welcome Inn*, Phil Keaggy, 2009

And on this hill, shepherds gazed upon a newborn Child
Who brought us peace, Who taught us love
Who guides us all

All are welcome, come and see with your eyes
Of every tradition, creed and race
The Bethlehem promise of hope has come, see with your eyes
For all of these children God has made

O let us go to Bethlehem where in this place, upon this hill
The heart of love seeks to cure with tender care those who endure
And on this hill skillful hands reach out with a gentle smile
Restoring lives with healing hands, bringing hope to every child [of God]

All are welcome, come and see with your eyes
Of every tradition, creed and race
The Bethlehem promise of hope has come, see with your eyes
For all of these children God has made
Let us go to Bethlehem

***The Flowers in the Sanctuary were placed by the
Sanctuary Guild and Members of Grace "To the Glory of God"***

Your greeter this morning was Mary Francis Koerner

Vocalists and Instrumentalists

Director - Scott Seifried

Instrumentalists:

Flute - Laura Seifried
Oboe - Lindsay Brown
Violin - Ahnika Emery
Violin - Jennifer Herrera
Viola - Holly Taylor
Cello - Mark Taylor
Piano - Rob Passow

Joyful Ringers:

Director - Jackie Owen
Beth Ann McClelland
Millie Smidt
Jennifer Treasure
Judy Riekse
Rob Gold
Pat Ferrell
Judy Ross
Laura Senich
Virginia Bouchard
John Pearson
Peter Smith
Kent Ford (Narrator)

Chancel Choir:

Sopranos -

Becky Yarbrough
Cheri Weaver (Narrator)
Virginia Bouchard (Narrator)
Rosalie Lawson
Jennifer Neel (Narrator)
Carol Purdy
Anne Sedlak

Altos -

Barbara Neel
Pat Ferrell (Narrator)
Jean Smith
Esther Wade
Beth Ann McClelland

Tenors -

Rob Gold
John Machado
Dave Retherford
Greg Suess (Narrator)

Basses -

Dave Lincoln
Jim Lawson (Narrator)
Jim Drinkard