



COUNTRYSIDE TRINITY CHURCH December 22, 2024

Welcome and Announcements

Kathy Loviska, Liturgist

Prelude

Noah Davis

Choir Introit

Congregation

Call to Worship-Responsive:

Liturgist

Liturgist: Give ear to our cries, O Shepherd of Israel;

All: let your face shine, and save us.

Liturgist: Though we've been fed the bread of tears,

All: let your face shine, and save us.

Liturgist: Though our enemies rise up,
though we feel consumed and surrounded,

All: let your face shine, and save us.

Liturgist: Awaken your might; lead us gently in your light.

All: Restore us, O God, so that we might be saved. Amen.

Opening Prayer:

Loving Shepherd,
as we draw closer to the feast of Christmas,
remind us again how to heed your will.
Help us to hear when you call.
Help us to follow where you lead.
Help us to trust your rod and staff.
Hold us closely in your care as we
anticipate the coming gift of Christ. **Amen.**

* **Opening Hymn** *"O Little Town of Bethlehem"* #121 GTG

Congregation

* Call to Confession

Liturgist

In our waiting and preparation,
we come to rest, again, at the foot of the cross.
Even in this season of anticipation,
we see the fullness of God's promised redemption
in the waters of baptism.
As those who are fully known and redeemed,
we confess our sin before God and one another.



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* Prayer of Confession

Congregation

**O God, giver of all good gifts,
we come before you as children
in need of your wisdom and grace.
Our fears and our hopes are braided together
in the rhythm of daily life.
Our visions of the future
depend on our own hands and ability.
Our expectations remain reasonable
and within our control.
Break into this tangle of fear and hope,
bringing peace to our souls.
Break into our vision of the future,
returning us to your hands.
Break into our expectations,
awakening us with curiosity and wonder;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.**

* Time of Silence for Personal Prayers of Confession

*Assurance of Pardon

Liturgist

Christ's coming is certain.
God's promise is true.
Trust in the transformational power
of God's forgiveness
and receive the gift of God's love.
In Jesus Christ we are forgiven!
Thanks be to God.

*Responding to Grace:

"Gloria from Angels we Have Heard on High"

Congregation

Lighting of the Candle of Joy:

Choir Sings:

"Light Three Candles"

Davis': Today, we light three candles, remembering that God incites us all.

All: **We respond and will continue to prepare our hearts, minds, and souls in this holy season of Advent.**

Davis': As we prepare our worship and living spaces for the coming of Jesus this Christmas,



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All: **May we share in God's generosity and invite all people to share in God's love.**

Davis': Let us pray. Almighty God, the maker of all that is and all that will be, we celebrate you this advent. We praise you for this season, to reflect, to remember, and to act on the goodness of your love. As we act on your invitation, and plan for the coming of Jesus Christ, we pray you guide our preparation, that we would open our hearts and homes to welcome you. We pray this all in the name of the Messiah, Jesus Christ, **Amen**

Choir Sings: *"Light Four Candles"*

Lighting of the Candle of Love:

Hanson's: Today, we light four candles, remembering that God has invited us all.

All: **We respond and accept God's welcome, in the hopes of welcoming all the world.**

Hanson's: May we welcome all of God's children as enthusiastically as we welcome Jesus.

All: **May we share in God's generosity and invite all people to share in God's love.**

Hanson's: Almighty God, we pray that as we reflect on these candles and what they represent, that we would be filled with hope, joy, peace and Love. We pray that as we reflect on what each of these blessing mean in our life, that we would bear them to all your creation. Let us be beacons of your light to all around. May your Spirit fill us, and guide us as we welcome Jesus Christ. **Amen**

Time With Young Disciples

Congregation

Prayer for Illumination

Almighty God of Hope,
We pray that as we hear these ancient words
That you would surround us with
understanding and knowledge.
Let your words fill us with understanding
And guide the meditations of this day.
Amen!



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First Scripture Reading: Zephaniah 3:14-20

Sing aloud, O daughter Zion;
shout, O Israel!
Rejoice and exult with all your heart,
O daughter Jerusalem!
The Lord has taken away the judgements against you,
he has turned away your enemies.
The king of Israel, the Lord, is in your midst;
you shall fear disaster no more.
On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem:
Do not fear, O Zion;
do not let your hands grow weak.
The Lord, your God, is in your midst,
a warrior who gives victory;
he will rejoice over you with gladness,
he will renew you in his love;
he will exult over you with loud singing
as on a day of festival.
I will remove disaster from you,
so that you will not bear reproach for it.
I will deal with all your oppressors
at that time.
And I will save the lame
and gather the outcast,
and I will change their shame into praise
and renown in all the earth.
At that time I will bring you home,
at the time when I gather you;
for I will make you renowned and praised
among all the peoples of the earth,
when I restore your fortunes
before your eyes, says the Lord.
This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks Be To God.**

Special Music: Mary Did You Know

Asher Neville



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Second Scripture Reading: Luke 1:39-55

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leapt in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, 'Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leapt for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfilment of what was spoken to her by the Lord.'

Mary's Song of Praise

And Mary said,
'My soul magnifies the Lord,
and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant.
Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;
for the Mighty One has done great things for me,
and holy is his name.
His mercy is for those who fear him
from generation to generation.
He has shown strength with his arm;
he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.
He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,
and lifted up the lowly;
he has filled the hungry with good things,
and sent the rich away empty.
He has helped his servant Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,
according to the promise he made to our ancestors,
to Abraham and to his descendants for ever.'

Sermon "Welcoming the Messiah" Rev. Nathaniel Asperger

Music Meditation: Noah Davis

* **Sermon Hymn** "Hark the Herald Angels Sing" #119 GTG Congregation

Joys and Concerns



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Call to Offering

Rev. Nathaniel Asperger

Prayer of Dedication

Rev. Nathaniel Asperger

* **Doxology**

Congregation

* **Closing Hymn**

"What Child is This" #145 GTG

Congregation

* **Charge, Benediction**

Rev. Nathaniel Asperger

* **Congregational Postlude:**

"Rejoice, Rejoice"

Noah Davis



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JESUS CHRIST: BIRTH

121 O Little Town of Bethlehem

1 O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, how still we see thee lie!
 2 For Christ is born of Mar - y and, gath - ered all a - bove,
 3 How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly, the won - drous gift is given!
 4 O ho - ly child of Beth - le - hem, de - scend to us, we pray;

A - bove thy deep and dream - less sleep the si - lent stars go by.
 while mor - tals sleep, the an - gels keep their watch of won - dering love.
 So God im - parts to hu - man hearts the bless - ings of his heaven.
 cast out our sin and en - ter in; be born in us to - day.

Yet in thy dark streets shin - eth the ev - er - last - ing light;
 O morn - ing stars, to - geth - er pro - claim the ho - ly birth,
 No ear may hear his com - ing, but in this world of sin,
 We hear the Christ - mas an - gels the great glad ti - dings tell;

the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee to - night.
 and prais - es sing to God the king, and peace to all on earth.
 where meek souls will re - ceive him, still the dear Christ en - ters in.
 O come to us; a - bide with us, our Lord Em - man - u - el!

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Though he was famed during his lifetime as a great preacher, no sermon Phillips Brooks ever preached has been heard or read by as many people as have sung this carol he wrote in December 1868 for the Sunday School children of Holy Trinity Episcopal Church in Philadelphia.

TEXT: Phillips Brooks, 1868
 MUSIC: Lewis Henry Redner, 1868

ST. LOUIS
 8.6.8.6.7.6.8.6
 (alternate tune: FOREST GREEN)



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GLORIA FROM ANGELS WE HAVE HEARD ON HIGH

Refrain

Glo - ri - a

1, 3

in ex-cel-sis De - o! De - o!

2

De - o! In ex-cel-sis De - o!

2 to Verse 3

Final

Text: 77 77 with refrain; trad. French carol, ca. 18th cent.;
tr. fr. *Crown of Jesus Music, II*, London, 1862; tr. by James Chadwick, 1813–1882, and others, alt.
Music: Trad. French carol; arr. © 2013, Spirit & Song, a division of OCP. All rights reserved.

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JESUS CHRIST: BIRTH

119 Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

1 Hark! The her - ald an-gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born king.
2 Christ, by high - est heaven a-dored, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord,
3 Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the sun of righ-teous-ness!

Peace on earth and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled!"
late in time be-hold him come, off-spring of the vir-gin's womb.
Light and life to all he brings, risen with heal - ing in his wings.

Joy - ful, all ye na - tions, rise; join the tri-umph of the skies;
Veiled in flesh the God-head see; hail the in-car - nate de - i - ty,
Mild he lays his glo - ry by, born that we no more may die,

with the an-gel - ic host pro-claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"
pleased in flesh with us to dwell, Je - sus, our Em - man - u - el.
born to raise us from the earth, born to give us sec - ond birth.

Brought together in the mid-19th century, the text and tune of this familiar carol began in quite different forms. The text had ten stanzas and began, "Hark, how all the welkin rings." The tune was created for a festival celebrating Gutenberg's introduction of moveable type.

TEXT: Charles Wesley, 1739, alt.
MUSIC: Felix Mendelssohn, 1840; arr. William Hayman Cummings, 1855

MENDELSSOHN
7.7.7.7.D with refrain

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JESUS CHRIST: BIRTH

145 What Child Is This

1 What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mar-y's lap is sleep-ing?
 2 Why lies he in such mean es - tate where ox and ass are feed - ing?
 3 So bring him in - cense, gold, and myrrh; come, one and all, to own him.

Whom an - gels greet with an - thems sweet while shep - herds watch are keep - ing?
 Good Chris - tian, fear; for sin - ners here the si - lent Word is plead - ing.
 The King of kings sal - va - tion brings; let lov - ing hearts en - throne him.

This, this is Christ the King, whom shep - herds guard and an - gels sing;
 Nails, spear, shall pierce him through; the cross be borne for me, for you.
 Raise, raise the song on high. The vir - gin sings her lul - la - by.

haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mar - y!
 Hail, hail, the Word made flesh, the babe, the son of Mar - y!
 Joy, joy, for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mar - y!

This Victorian text gains scope and power by having the original second halves of stanzas two and three restored. They give a stark forward glimpse of what lies ahead for this "babe, the son of Mary!" The tune is much older, dating from Tudor England.

TEXT: William Chatterton Dix, 1871
MUSIC: English ballad, 16th cent.; arr. *Christmas Carols New and Old*, 1871

GREENSLEEVES
8.7.8.7.6.8.6.7

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Re-joyce! Re-joyce!



Em - man - u - el shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el.