



December 24, 2022

Christmas Eve

9:00pm

*+ indicates you are invited to stand*

**Bold print** indicates congregation in unison

### GATHERING

*The act of assembling in Jesus' name bears witness to the Church's identity and mission as Christ's body in the world. Gather your thoughts and feelings. Entrust yourself to God's saving grace.*

#### Prelude

*Nativité from Symphonie-Passion*

Marcel Dupré

#### + Lighting of the Christ Candle

Alfred, Loretta, Christopher, and Nick Walker

One: Light looked down and saw bleakness.

**All: "I will go there," said light.**

One: Peace looked down and saw conflict.

**All: "I will go there," said peace.**

One: Love looked down and saw hatred.

**All: "I will go there," said love.**

One: So the Eternal Light, the Prince of Peace, the God of Love  
came down  
and crept in  
beside us.

#### +Hymn 140 *Once in Royal David's City*

Verse 1: Solo (Marc El Koubi, treble)

Verse 2: Choir

Verse 3-4: All

### WORD

*Where the scriptures are read and proclaimed, Jesus Christ, the living Word, is present by the power of the Holy Spirit. God's Spirit also evokes our response. Through singing, affirmation, and prayer, with the help of God's Spirit, we discern Jesus Christ, receive Christ's grace, and resolve to follow Christ's way.*

#### Prayer for Illumination

#### Scripture

Isaiah 26:16-19

Holy One, in distress they sought you,  
they pressed out a whispered prayer  
when your chastening was on them.  
Just as an expectant mother  
writhes-in-labor and cries out in her pangs

when her birthing time is near;  
thus were we because of you, Holy One.  
We too were expectant, we writhed-in-labor,  
but it was as though we birthed only wind.  
No victories have we won on earth,  
neither do the inhabitants of the world fall.  
Your dead shall live; their corpses shall rise.  
Awake and sing for joy you who dwell in the dust!  
For your dew is a radiant dew,  
and the earth shall release those long dead.

Psalm 68:4-11

One: Sing to God, sing praises to her Name;  
exalt her who rides upon the clouds;

**All: Holy is her Name, rejoice before her!**

**Mother of orphans and defender of widows, is God in her holy habitation!**

One: God settles the solitary in a home bringing prisoners into prosperity;  
while the rebellious shall live in a wasteland.

**All: God, when you marched before your people, when you moved out through the wilderness, the earth shook, even the heavens poured down,**

One: at the presence of God, the One of Sinai, at the presence of God, the God of Israel.

Rain in abundance, God, you showered abroad; when your heritage grew weary you prepared rest.

**All: Your creatures found a dwelling in her; God, you provided in your goodness for the oppressed. The Author of Life gave the word; the women who proclaim the good news are a great army.**

Titus 3:4-7

When the graciousness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, God saved us through the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, not because of any works of righteousness that we had done, but according to God's mercy. This Spirit God poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by God's grace, we might become heirs according to the hope of life eternal.

+Hymn 132    *Good Christian Friends, Rejoice*

Luke 2:1-20

Now it happened in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered (for taxation). This was the first registration and occurred while Quirinius was governor of Syria. So all went to be registered; each to their own towns. Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth in to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, for he was from the house and heritage of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was betrothed and who was pregnant. So it was, that, while they were there, the time came for her to birth her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and swaddled him, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

Shepherds were in that region there staying in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Most High God came upon them, and the glory of the Living God shone around them, and they were greatly terrified. But the angel said to them, "Fear not. Look! For I proclaim to you good news of great joy for all the people: For there is born to you this day a Savior who is the Messiah, the Sovereign God, in the city of David. This will be a sign for you: you will find a baby swaddled and lying in a manger." And immediately there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly array, praising God and saying,

"Glory to God in the highest heaven,

and on earth peace among peoples whom God favors!"

And it happened when the angels had departed from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to be, which the Sovereign God has made known to us." So they came hurrying and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger. Now seeing this, they made known what had been spoken to them about this child. And all who heard marveled at what was spoken by the shepherds to them. But Mary preserved all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen; it was just as it had been told them.

One: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

Meditation

Carla Pratt Keyes

+ Hymn 127 *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing (Jesus, the Light of the World)*

+ Affirmation of Faith

from John 1

**In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The Word was with God in the beginning. Everything came into being through the Word, and without the Word not one thing came into being that came into being. What has come into being in the Word was life, and that life was the light of all people. The light shines in the bleakness, and the bleakness did not overtake it.**

**The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was created through him; yet the world did not know him. To his own he came and his own did not receive him. But to all who did accept him, who believed in his name, he empowered to become children of God—that is, those who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of a human person, but of God.**

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

+ Response (*all sing*)

***Joy to the World, the Lord is come!  
Let earth receive her king; let every heart prepare him room,  
and heaven and nature sing, and heaven and nature sing,  
and heaven, and heaven and nature sing.***

#### EUCCHARIST

*The Lord's Supper is the sign and seal of our communion with the crucified and risen Lord. We celebrate with thanksgiving (eukharistia) the grace (kharis) with which Jesus welcomes us to sit at his table, eat what will satisfy our deepest hungers, and feed others as we've been fed. We offer ourselves in response to Christ's wonderful offering of love.*

Offering



*Tonight any monetary gifts put into the designated wall boxes beside each door at the back of the Sanctuary will be contributed to the Pastor's Discretionary Fund.*

*Monetary gifts and pledges to GPPC may also be given online at <https://www.ginterparkpc.org/giving>, or by using the QR Code to the left. Use the drop-down menu to contribute to the Pastor's Discretionary Fund.*

Anthem

There's Still My Joy

Manchester, Rollings, Chapman; arr. Emerson

*I took my tree down to the shore; the garland, and the silver star,  
To find my peace, and grieve no more, to heal this place inside my heart.  
On every branch I laid some bread, and hungry birds filled up the sky,  
They rang thy bells around my head, they sang my spirit back to life.  
One tiny child can change the world, one shining light can show the way.  
For all my tears, for what I've lost, there's still my joy, there's still my joy for Christmas day.  
The snow comes down on empty sand, there's tinsel moonlight on the waves,  
My soul was lost, but here I am, so this must be amazing grace.*

Celedonia Brown, violin

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise Christ, all people here below;  
Praise Holy Spirit evermore.  
Praise Triune God, whom we adore.**

Invitation to the Lord's Table

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving and the Lord's Prayer

One: The Lord be with you.

**All: And also with you.**

One: Lift up your hearts.

**All: We lift them to the Lord.**

One: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**All: It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

One: It is right to praise you and rejoice in you, our God and Savior, for you have looked with favor upon your servants; you have seen the proud deserving to be scattered and the desperate needing to be carried, and to all of us you have shown such mercy! Now even those who walk in darkness can see glimmers of your light, for the yoke of their burden you have broken. A child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rest upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

**All singing: Gloria in excelsis Deo. Gloria in excelsis Deo.** (Refrain, Hymn 113)

One: With angels and saints through the ages we rejoice at the good news of this day - the Savior born, the Christ revealed, the child around whom strangers gathered to worship that long-ago night in Bethlehem. Today we gather at this table; hungry people in search of food, lonely people in search of company, thoughtful people in search of meaning. We praise you, God, for the astonishing news that you are with us and for us and hold nothing back from us, not even your own self. We praise you for Jesus - lowly in a manger, yet radiant with heavenly light. King of the earth, Hope of the world, he came to make your blessings flow in every heart and every place. More powerful than sin and evil, stronger even than death is Christ's love for us.

**All: When we eat this bread and drink this cup,  
we proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen, our judge and our hope.**

One: Eternal God, by your Holy Spirit, make us agents of your healing love. In word and deed may we display your glory and tell out your good news. Encourage us, like Jesus, to bind up the brokenhearted, proclaim liberty to the captives, and comfort all who mourn. Help us to cultivate peace among your people. Strengthen us to serve you gladly. And fashion us strangers gathered here into a community so unified and joyous that it will draw others near to praise and partake of you, too. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, who makes us bold to pray together:

**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.**

Breaking the Bread and Presenting the Cup

Communion of the People

*(Bread is gluten-free and vegan with honey.)*

*One at a time or in family groups, please come forward.*

*Servers are masked and have used hand sanitizer.*

*Please hold your hand flat to receive the bread and take a cup from the tray.*

*You can consume those elements once you've returned to your pew,  
or while seated briefly on a front pew.*

*Please return to your seat by a side aisle.*

*If you cannot easily come forward, we will happily bring the elements to your pew.*

*After others have been served, please raise your hand to signal us.*

Prayer after Communion

**Welcome, welcome, Jesus Christ our infant savior,  
baby who makes every birth holy.  
May we, who like the shepherds have witnessed in the stable a new kind of  
love return to our work with joy.  
May we, for whom the heavens have opened to proclaim that God is with us,  
go out to be instruments of your peace, day by day. Amen.**

The Candle Lighting

*The candles will be lighted, beginning with the person on the inside aisle.  
To keep the wax from dripping, please light your candle from that of your neighbor and  
hold your candle upright after it is lighted.  
During the singing of the final stanza, please hold your candle aloft,  
extinguishing it upon completion of the carol.*

Hymn 133     *O Come, All Ye Faithful*

**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!**

**True God from true God, Light from light eternal,  
born of a virgin, a mortal he comes;  
very God, begotten, not created!  
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!**

SENDING

*Our worship and service do not end with the postlude; we go forth to love and serve God in our daily lives.*

Charge and Blessing

The Peace

One: The peace of Christ be with you.

**All: And also with you.**

*As we prepare to go out into the world, let us greet one another in Christ's name.*

Postlude

## OFFERING TO SUPPORT OUR PASTOR'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

Many times neighbors and travelers come through our doors needing assistance. Often we refer them to organizations like Area Congregations Together in Service (ACTS) which GPPC supports financially. ACTS case managers work with clients to assess needs, craft budgets, and offer help with rent, mortgage, and utilities. Occasionally we offer direct assistance: a night in a hotel, a bus ticket, a tank of gas, an electric bill, medicine, a meal. Your gift to the Pastor's Discretionary Fund will enable us to keep making such gifts.

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WORSHIP LEADERS: Our director of music is Doug Brown. Our liturgist is our Seminary Intern Andrew Byrd. Managing the Facebook Livestream is Bonnie Neighbour.

A WOMEN'S LECTONARY FOR THE WHOLE CHURCH, assembled by Wilda Gafney is guiding GPPC's worship this year. Gafney's translations of scripture are being used in tonight's worship.

POINSETTIAS - Thanks to everyone who purchased a poinsettia to decorate our chancel. If you would like to take your poinsettia home tonight, please do! Any poinsettias not retrieved at the end of tonight's service will be donated to local group homes and/or homebound members of GPPC.

HEARING ASSISTANCE DEVICES are available in the Narthex. Please see today's greeter or an usher.

PLEASE TAKE THE PAPER BULLETIN YOU HAVE USED home for reference and/or recycling. Thank you!!

PLEASE JOIN US ON SUNDAY, DECEMBER 25 AT 11:00AM FOR BRUNCH CHURCH

Jesus Christ's first bed was a manger – a place you typically find food. Still we meet God incarnate at the place we share a meal. We will look for God in one another as we share the Lord's Supper: a feast of bread and cup, eggs and fruit, fellowship, scripture, and prayer around tables in the Fellowship Hall.

ANNOUNCEMENTS about events in the life of GPPC are available through a weekly e-newsletter. If you would like to be added to the distribution, please contact Karen Mitscherlich at [ginterparkpc@gmail.com](mailto:ginterparkpc@gmail.com).