

December 22nd, 2019

*This is the day that the LORD has made,
let us rejoice and be glad in it. Psalm 118:24*

Please greet those around you before the announcements begin.

Moments of Meditation

While the music is being played, quietly prepare your heart for worship.

“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men
on whom his favor rests.”

Luke 2:14

Prelude

Angels We Have Heard on High

arr. Smith & Hustad

Welcome and Announcements

Time of Greeting (Sharing God’s Welcome)

Interlude

Sing We Now of Christmas

arr. Wyrzten

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***Call to Worship**

Psalm 23:1-3

***Hymn of Praise**

What Child Is This

No. 213

What Child is this who, laid to rest, on Mary’s lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet, while shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing:
Haste, haste to bring Him laud, the Babe, the Son of Mary.

Why lies He in such mean estate, where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear; for sinners here the silent Word is pleading.
Nails, spear, shall pierce Him through; the cross be borne for me, for you:
Hail, hail the Word made flesh, the Babe, the Son of Mary.

So bring Him incense, gold, and myrrh; come, peasant, king, to own Him;
The King of kings salvation brings, let loving hearts enthrone Him.
Raise, raise the song on high, the virgin sings her lullaby:
Joy, joy for Christ is born, the Babe, the Son of Mary.

***Prayer of Invocation**

Lighting of the Fourth Advent Candle

Leader: Now muster your troops, O daughter of troops.

People: Siege is laid against us. With a rod they strike the judge of Israel on the cheek.

Leader: But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah,

People: From you shall come forth for us one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient of days.

Leader: Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has given birth; then the rest of his brothers shall return to the people of Israel.

People: And he shall stand and shepherd us, his flock, in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD our God.

Unison: And we shall dwell secure, for now He is great, to the ends of the earth. And Jesus Christ is our peace. (taken from Micah 5:1-5a)

Little lambs upon a hill, 'neath a starry sky,
lift your heads and hear the sound; music from on high!
Shepherds, listen to the news the angel songs proclaim.
In the hay your Maker sleeps, Lamb of God His name.

Shepherds, go and spread the word telling far and near,
sing aloud the song of hope all the world must hear.
“One who seeks you as His sheep has left His home in love;
now He lies in manger bed, Shepherd from above.”

Wayward lambs who wander far, lost without the light,
turn and hear the joyful song echoing tonight:
tidings of a Savior born, the Shepherd long foretold.
He has come to bring you home, safe into His fold.

Scripture Reading

Ezekiel 34:1-16
Pew Bible Page 1341

Prayer of Confession

Our Father in heaven, help us to delight in You and to enjoy You forever. For all the treasures and delights of this world have left us empty and unfulfilled. Forgive us, we ask, for making so much of all that this world has to offer us. In You there is everlasting joy and peace. Build us up by Your grace. Ignite in us a deeper desire to know You more. Drive us to Your word; disciple us according to it; and continue to renew our sinful hearts. Show us Your Son, Jesus, and make us more like Him. Grant to us a greater measure of Your grace, this week especially, that we might enjoy You, and in turn we might enjoy all the many blessings that You so generously bestow to us. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Assurance of Pardoning Grace

Psalm 23:4-6

⁴ For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was dried up as by the heat of summer. Selah. ⁵ I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not cover my iniquity; I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord," and you forgave the iniquity of my sin. Selah. ⁶ Therefore let everyone who is godly offer prayer to you at a time when you may be found; surely in the rush of great waters, they shall not reach him.

*Hymn of Thanksgiving

O Little Town of Bethlehem

No. 201

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go 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 wond'ring love.
O morning stars together, proclaim the holy birth.
And praises sing to God the King, and peace to men on earth!

How silently, how silently, the wondrous Gift is giv'n;
So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of His heav'n.
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!

Westminster Shorter Catechism 5 & 6

Q. 5 Are there more Gods than one?

A. There is but One only, the living and true God.

Q. 6 How many persons are there in the Godhead?

A. There are three persons in the Godhead; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one God the same in substance, equal in power and glory.

Prayer of Intercession

Tithes and Offering

Gesu Bambino

arr. DeCesare

When blossoms flower e'er 'mid the snows, upon a winter night,
was born the child, the Christmas rose, the King of love and light.
The angels sang, the shepherds sang, the grateful earth rejoiced;
And at His blessed birth the stars their exultation voiced.
O come let us adore Him; O come let us adore Him;
O come let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.

*Hymn of Preparation

While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks

No. 222

While shepherds watched their flocks by night, all seated on the ground,
the angel of the Lord came down, and glory shone around.

“Fear not,” said he – for mighty dread had seized their troubled mind -
“glad tidings of great joy I bring to you and all mankind.”

“To you, in David’s town this day, is born of David’s line,
the Savior, who is Christ the Lord, and this shall be the sign:

The heav'nly Babe you there shall find to human view displayed,
all meanly wrapped in swathing bands, and in a manger laid.”

Thus spake the seraph, and forthwith appeared a shining throng
of angels praising God, who thus addressed their joyful song:

“All glory be to God on high, and to the earth be peace;
good will henceforth, from heav'n to men, begin and never cease!”

Sermon

Songs of Advent, part 4

Luke 2:8:20

Pew Bible Page 1591

Outline

1. Shepherds

2. Sign

3. Reaction

Questions for Further Reflection:

1. There is a lot of talk today in the about social justice (racism, fairness and equality, helping the poor and oppressed, immigration, etc.). Some would say that is the church's chief end. How does the angel's announcement to the shepherds disprove this erroneous thinking? What is the church's chief end? What are we to be doing as a church, first and foremost?
2. God sent his angels to give a sign to the shepherds. Why does God NOT customarily appear like this to his people today? Read Galatians 1:6-8 for help.
3. What does it mean to say that someone is a peaceful person? What passages from the Bible can you think of that talk about peace? How do they apply to our lives today?
4. Where did the shepherds go after they saw Jesus? What are some things that you can be doing to witness to the love of Jesus to the people closest to you? In your work? Community?

***Hymn of Response**

Go, Tell It on the Mountain

No. 224

Go, tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere;
Go, tell it on the mountain, that Jesus Christ is born.

While shepherds kept their watching o'er silent flocks by night,
behold throughout the heavens there shone a holy light.
Go, tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere;
Go, tell it on the mountain, that Jesus Christ is born.

The shepherds feared and trembled when, lo! above the earth,
rang out the angel's chorus that hailed the Savior's birth.
Go, tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere;
Go, tell it on the mountain, that Jesus Christ is born.

Down in a lowly manger the humble Christ was born,
and God sent us salvation that blessed Christmas morn.
Go, tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere;
Go, tell it on the mountain, that Jesus Christ is born.

***Benediction**

***Gloria Patri**

No. 735

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.

***Postlude**

Good Christian Men, Rejoice

arr. Innes

*** Congregation:** Please stand as able.

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Duet

Denise O'Neal and Bruce Stoltzfus

French Horn

Becky Schoon

Organ

Sandy Schoon

Piano

Sandy DeGroot

Intercessory Prayer

Nelson Schoon, Elder

Poinsettias

The poinsettias in front of the sanctuary are in memory of loved ones who have passed before us. We honor them this Christmas season.

Blanch & Harold Anderson, mother and father of Kathie Anderson

Chris Bliss, father of Jenni Gretzinger

Til Bos, sister of Pete Lanenga

Brianna Darling, granddaughter of Jerry & Sandy DeGroot

Tom Gasche, husband of Martha Liechty Gasche

Mildred Harreld, mother of Debra Chappell

Nancy & Britt Kern, mother and father of Mike Kern

Anna Ketner, mother of Bill Ketner

Dorothy Ketner, wife of Bill Ketner

Bill Kraeger, husband of Debra Chappell

Maria, grandmother of Lidia Nazario

Dorothy & Louis Runge, mother and father of Robbin Kern

Bill Saggau, father of Sandy Schoon

Lillian & Warren Schoon, mother and father of Nelson Schoon

Charles Sederberg, husband of Phyllis Sederberg

LaVergne & Harvey Terpstra, mother and father of Barb Terpstra

Vicente, grandfather of Jimmy Trujillo

George Veenstra, husband of Joan Veenstra

Mary Workman, sister-in-law of Cherie Lee Yonker

Weekly Calendar

<u>DATE</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>EVENT</u>
SUN 12/22	10:30 AM	Worship Service
TUES 12/24	6:00 PM	Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
SUN 12/22	10:30 AM	Worship Service



Serving the Lord

	12/22	12/24 Christmas Eve	12/29
AM Nursery	V. Lash, Aaron L.	C. Tuitman, Alanna T.	B. Schoon, Emily S.
Greeters	Stechly	Lindborg	Trujillo
Treats	O'Neal	-----	Lindborg
Serve/Cleanup	O'Neal	-----	Lindborg
Audio	B. Armstrong	B. Schoon	J. Martin
Elder of the Week	Schoon	-----	Stoltzfus

Announcements

☞ **Christmas Eve Service:** A special candlelight service is scheduled for this Tuesday, December 24, at 6:00 pm. The Valparaiso Mennonite Church will be joining us for this service. Invite your friends to come and prepare for Christ's birth through this service of Lessons and Carols. Please contact one of the elders or deacons if you would like a ride to this Christmas Eve Service.

☞ **No Sunday School Classes:** There will be no Sunday School classes next Sunday, December 29. Classes will resume on January 5.

☞ **Poinsettias:** If you ordered a poinsettia, you can take yours home after the Christmas Eve service or you can pick it after the morning worship service next week Sunday. At that time, any poinsettias that are left are free on a first-come, first-served basis.

☞ **Thank You from Fred and Julia Hess:** "Thank you to everyone in the congregation for being such a large part of Marge and Fred's faith journey while they lived in Valparaiso. They were very fortunate to be part of such a loving family in God. We are especially grateful for the 'Bible Study' ladies, a group that formed many years ago and who formed a life-long bond with Marge. This is truly a statement of 'God amongst us.'"

☞ **Thank You from Curtis McDaniel:** "Thank you so much for your special gift for our 10-year anniversary celebration! That was such a surprise to see your gift that the Lindborgs delivered. Thank you for your generosity and your prayers for RUF Campus Ministry at Purdue. God is using this ministry to change lives and I'm so honored that you would partner with us to make that happen."