

Gaithersburg Presbyterian Church
December 24, 2020 – Christmas Eve
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Welcome

Call to Worship [*responsive*]

Light looked down and saw the darkness.

I will go there', said light.

Peace looked down and saw war.

'I will go there', said peace.

Love looked down and saw hatred.

'I will go there', said love.

So the Lord of Light,

the Prince of Peace

the King of Love

came down and crept in beside us.

Let us worship the Savior who is born tonight.

Opening Prayer

Lighting of the Christ Candle

Carol

"O Come, All Ye Faithful"

Glory to God, #133, v.1,2

First Lesson

Isaiah 9:2, 6-7

The prophet speaks of God's promises to humankind.

² The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—
on them light has shined.

⁶ For a child has been born for us,
a son given to us;
authority rests upon his shoulders;
and he is named
Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
⁷ His authority shall grow continually,
and there shall be endless peace
for the throne of David and his kingdom.
He will establish and uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time onwards and for evermore.
The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

Second Lesson

Isaiah 11:1–9

God's peaceable kingdom is promised.

¹ A shoot shall come out from the stock of Jesse,
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.

² The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him,
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of counsel and might,
the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.

³ His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord.

He shall not judge by what his eyes see,
or decide by what his ears hear;

⁴ but with righteousness he shall judge the poor,
and decide with equity for the meek of the earth;
he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,
and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.

⁵ Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist,
and faithfulness the belt around his loins.

⁶ The wolf shall live with the lamb,
the leopard shall lie down with the kid,
the calf and the lion and the fatling together,
and a little child shall lead them.

⁷ The cow and the bear shall graze,
their young shall lie down together;
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

⁸ The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp,
and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den.

⁹ They will not hurt or destroy
on all my holy mountain;
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord
as the waters cover the sea.

Carol

"Once in Royal David's City"

Hymnal #140, v.1,2

Third Lesson

Zechariah 9:9-10

God promises a king who will establish a reign of peace.

⁹ Rejoice greatly, O daughter Zion!
Shout aloud, O daughter Jerusalem!
Lo, your king comes to you;
triumphant and victorious is he,
humble and riding on a donkey,
on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

¹⁰ He will cut off the chariot from Ephraim
and the warhorse from Jerusalem;
and the battle-bow shall be cut off,
and he shall command peace to the nations;
his dominion shall be from sea to sea,
and from the River to the ends of the earth.

Fourth Lesson

Isaiah 35:1-6

The prophet Isaiah announces the renewal of God's people.

¹ The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad,
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;
like the crocus ²it shall blossom abundantly,
and rejoice with joy and singing.

The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,
the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.

They shall see the glory of the Lord,
the majesty of our God.

³ Strengthen the weak hands,
and make firm the feeble knees.

⁴ Say to those who are of a fearful heart,
 ‘Be strong, do not fear!
 Here is your God.
 He will come with vengeance,
 with terrible recompense.
 He will come and save you.’
⁵ Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
 and the ears of the deaf unstopped;
⁶ then the lame shall leap like a deer,
 and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.
For waters shall break forth in the wilderness,
 and streams in the desert.

Carol

“Joy to the World”

Glory to God, #134, v.1,3,4

Fifth Lesson

Luke 1:26–35, 38

The angel Gabriel announces to Mary that she will give birth.

²⁶ In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin’s name was Mary. ²⁸And he came to her and said, ‘Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you.’ ²⁹But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰The angel said to her, ‘Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³²He 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. ³³He will reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.’ ³⁴Mary said to the angel, ‘How can this be, since I am a virgin?’ ³⁵The 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 will be holy; he will be called Son of God. ³⁸Then 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.

Sixth Lesson

Luke 2: 1–7

Jesus is born.

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. ⁵He went to be registered with Mary, to

whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

Carol "Still, Still, Still" Glory to God, #124

Seventh Lesson John 1:1-5, 14
The mystery of the incarnation.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

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

Carol "Silent Night" Glory to God, #122, v.1,3,4

Closing Blessing

Participating in the service:

The Sandhu / Masih Family: Arfan, Ulfat, Yerusa, Ashley and Matthew
Mrs. Carolyn Hayes, Director of Children and Young Families
Mr. Wade Meyers, Director of Music and Worship Arts
Rev. Mary Beth Lawrence
Rev. Mary Austin

The Call to Worship is from the writing of John Bell.