

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
16 EAST FIFTH STREET
ROANOKE RAPIDS, NORTH CAROLINA

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SERVICE OF THE LORD'S DAY

DECEMBER 20, 2020

ELEVEN O'CLOCK

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

GATHERING AROUND THE WORD

ORGAN PRELUDE

(Please use the prelude as a time to quietly prepare for worship)

ADVENT WREATH LIGHTING

One: Isaiah spoke to a people called chosen, to a tribe called Israel, with a light of hope. Gabriel came to a town called Nazareth, to a girl called Mary, with a light of joy. Mary went to a place called Bethlehem, to a stable called a nursery, with a light of love. As we light our third Advent candle,

All: we rejoice with Mary, for Love has flesh.

One: Come now, O Child of Mary.

All: Come now, O Prince of Love.

CHIMING OF THE LORD'S DAY

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

One: An angel spoke to Mary: "Do not be afraid!"

All: The child she carries will be God's son, and the world will never be the same.

One: An angel spoke to Mary: "Do not be afraid!"

All: God was with her, and God is with us, drawing us into worship and praise.

OPENING PRAYER

One: Most High God, for you nothing is impossible. Through a poor young woman in a small town you gave birth to your realm of endless glory. By your Holy Spirit, fill us with new life and hope and overshadow us with your power and grace so that we, like Mary, might be your servants, bearing witness to the promise of your Word; through Jesus Christ, who is coming to reign.

All;
2 Amen.

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God our Maker, we confess that we are not ready to meet you. You offer us a place in your house, yet we find no room for you in our lives. You invite us into your eternal realm, yet we fail to welcome others. Forgive us, God of grace. Let your word of life be with us so that we may truly believe that nothing is impossible with you; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

TIME FOR SILENCE

(We ask for forgiveness for our individual faults)

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

THE PEACE

One: Since God has forgiven us in Christ, let us forgive one another.
The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

All: **And also with you.**

PROCLAIMING THE WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE READING

Luke 1:26-38

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, 'Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you.' But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He 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. He will reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.' Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be, since I am a virgin?' The 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. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be

barren. For nothing will be impossible with God.’ Then 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.

One: The Word of the Lord

All: **Thanks be to God**

THE WORD IN MUSIC *My Soul Doth Magnify the Lord*
Soloist, Helen Wingfield

*My soul doth magnify the Lord,
and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour,
for he hath regarded the low estate of his hand maiden:
for behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed;
For he that is mighty hath done to me great things;
and holy is his name. And His mercy is on them that fear him
from generation to generation.
He hath shew'd strength with his arm;
he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.
He hath put down the mighty from their seats,
and exalted them of low degree
he hath filled the hungry with good things,
and the rich he hath sent empty away.
He hath holpen his servant Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,
As he spake to our fathers,
to Abraham and to his seed for ever. Amen.*

SERMON

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

God expressed love for all humankind through Israel, whom God chose to be a covenant people to serve him in love and faithfulness. Prophets, priests, teachers, and true believers called all Israelites to a destiny in which they would serve God faithfully and become a light to the nations. This calling proclaimed the coming of a new age, and a true servant of God in whom God’s purpose would be realized.

- Adapted from the Confession of 1967, (BOC 9.18)

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

One: Watching and waiting for the coming of Christ, we pray for the promise of a new creation,
saying: Come quickly, Lord;

All: our hope is in you.

One: With expectation, we pray for the church . . . Fill our mouths with the song of your unending love. May we never stop proclaiming your faithfulness from one generation to another.
Come quickly, Lord;

All: our hope is in you.

One: With expectation, we pray for the world . . . Come and dwell among all the people of the world. As you made your home with your people in ancient times, make your home among us now.
Come quickly, Lord;

All: our hope is in you.

One: With expectation, we pray for this community . . . By your power at work in us, use us to bring healing and freedom, liberation and comfort, and to share the good news that you walk in our streets.
Come quickly, Lord;

All: our hope is in you.

One: With expectation, we pray for loved ones . . . Remember those who are hurting or searching. Even when they feel that all is lost hold their desires and dreams in your heart.
Come quickly, Lord;

All: our hope is in you.

One: God our hope, as the promised day approaches, fill us with the joy of your Holy Spirit and strengthen us to serve you faithfully; through Christ, who is coming to reign and who taught us to pray, Our Father . . .

LORD'S PRAYER

BEARING AND FOLLOWING THE WORD INTO THE WORLD

HYMN 140

Once in Royal David's City

page 10

CHARGE

BLESSING

One: The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

All: **Alleluia! Amen.**

CHIMING OF THE TRINITY

POSTLUDE



THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Advent, from the Latin *adventus*, means *coming* or *arrival*. In ancient Rome, *Adventus* was a technical term for the “glorious entry” of an emperor into his capital city. In addition to celebrating conquest on the battlefield, the birthday of the royal leader was also commemorated in an *Adventus*.

Advent then is a most fitting word to describe the period leading up to Christmas; what we celebrate is the coming of our King and Emperor, one who is both fully man and fully God. The Church drives this point home for us in setting the Feast of Christ the King right before the start of Advent. This is the coming of Jesus into the world. Christians use the four Sundays of Advent, and the weeks between them, to prepare and remember the real meaning of Christmas

The Last Purple Candle

Whereas the purple color of the first two Advent candles drew our thoughts in the direction of penance and fasting, on the fourth Sunday of Advent, with the imminent approach of our King, Jesus Christ, the final purple candle represents royalty.

The color purple has been associated with royalty, power and wealth for millennia. Purple's elite status stems from the rarity and cost of the dye originally used to produce it. Purple fabric used to be so expensive that only rulers and kings could afford it.

Unfortunately, the theme of “royalty” or “majesty” presents a problem in our modern age. As independent Americans, we have been raised to be somewhat distrustful of and feel intimidated by the idea of kings and

queens. Aren't they the ones who take advantage of the weak and oppress their subjects? No, not in a Catholic context—far from it! Did not Our Lord Himself teach us to pray, “Thy KINGDOM come”?

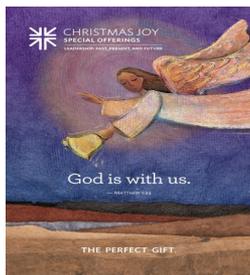


ANNOUNCEMENTS

We are live streaming the worship services via Facebook and Youtube. We plan to continue to use both media platforms. The links to the service can be found on the Church’s website or by using Facebook (FPC Roanoke Rapids) or Youtube (Search: First Presbyterian Church, Roanoke Rapids).

Offerings can be made by mailing your checks to the church at 16 East 5th Street, RR, NC 27870 or placing them in the letter slot in the Administration Building. Although the church is not open physically, the work of the church continues, so please remember your offerings.

The Session will meet via Zoom tonight at 6:00 pm.



The Christmas Joy Offering will be received today.

Please write your check to First Presbyterian Church with “Christmas Joy Offering” on the memo line and drop it in the mail slot in the Administrative Building or mail it to the church.

Plan to join us for our Christmas Eve Communion Service via Facebook and Youtube on December 24, at 5:00 pm.

We will celebrate the Sacraments of the Lord’s Supper (have your elements ready to partake). There will also be a Time for Young Christians, so be sure to include the children while watching the service.

Prayers for Healing of Friends & Families of the Church

Priscilla Ricks
Bill Howell
Glenn & Gayle Garner, @ Meals on Wheels
Sally Ray Warren
David and LaNae Grimes
Sandra Stephenson
Mary Francis Fisher
Harrison West

Ellen Burnett
Diane Bone
Eula Cutler
B.T. Brown
Doug Hayes
Bill Davis
Betsy Medlin
Linda Ray
Roger Fuester
Jeff Peedin
Frank Lonesky
Dee Campbell
Nancy Elias
Diana and Jeff Dillard
Carolyn Keeter
Matt and Kelly Small, loss of baby boy Luke
Dennis Gaylor, surgery
Darlene Kassner
Bobbie Scott, broken hip
Cheryl Wingfield, knee replacement
Marie Anderson, recovery from hip replacement
Mary Braswell Kiger, gall bladder surgery

Concerns Outside of our Community

- *SYRIA and YEMEN
- *SOMALIA, drought, famine, anarchy
- *EGYPT and LIBYA, political unrest
- *ISRAEL, PALESTINE, GAZA peaceful coexistence
- *IRAQ, AFGHANISTAN, security
- *USA, war in Syria, Iraq & Afghanistan
- *NIGERIA, abducted Chibok school girls
- *Ukrainian people victimized by foreign aggression
- *People of Sudan
- *Victims of gun violence in our country
- *People who are effected by Covid-19



Please take a look at our prayer list. If you have someone that needs to be on the prayer list or someone that needs to come off, please contact Tammy at firstpresbyterianchurchrr@gmail.com or call me at home (586-1818).

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming 129

1 Lo, how a rose e'er bloom-ing from ten - der stem hath sprung,
 2 I - sa - iah 'twas fore - told it, the rose I have in mind;
 3 This flower, whose fra-grance ten - der with sweet-ness fills the air,

of Jes - se's lin - eage com - ing, by faith - ful proph - ets sung.
 with Mar - y we be - hold it, the vir - gin moth - er kind.
 dis - pels with glo - rious splen - dor the dark - ness ev - ery - where.

It came, a flower - et bright, a - mid the cold of
 To show God's love a - right she bore for us a
 En - fleshed, yet ver - y God, from sin and death he

win - ter, when half spent was the night.
 Sav - ior, when half spent was the night.
 saves us and light - ens ev - ery load.

Although the early copies of this 15th-century German text include many more stanzas than are printed here, this simpler, shorter form has much to commend it. This early 17th-century harmonization of the traditional chorale melody invites and rewards singing in parts.

TEXT: German carol; stanzas 1, 2 trans. Theodore Baker, 1894, alt.; stanza 3 trans. Harriet Knuth Spaeth, 1985, alt. ES IST EIN' ROS'
 MUSIC: *Alte Catholische Geistliche Kirchengesäng*, 1599; arr. Michael Praetorius, 1609 7.6.7.6.6.7.6

Once in Royal David's City 140

1 Once in roy - al Da - vid's cit - y stood a low - ly
 2 He came down to earth from heav - en who is God and
 3 Je - sus is our child - hood's pat - tern; day by day like
 4 And our eyes at last shall see him, through his own re -

cat - tle shed, where a moth - er laid her ba - by in a
 Lord of all, and his shel - ter was a sta - ble, and his
 us he grew; he was lit - tle, weak and help - less; tears and
 deem - ing love; for that child so dear and gen - tle is our

man - ger for his bed: Mar - y was that moth - er
 cra - dle was a stall; with the poor and meek and
 smiles like us he knew; and he feels for all our
 Lord in heaven a - bove; and he leads his chil - dren

mild; Je - sus Christ, her lit - tle child.
 low - ly, lived on earth our Sav - ior ho - ly.
 sad - ness, and he shares in all our glad - ness.
 on to the place where he is gone.

Like "All Things Bright and Beautiful" (see no. 20), this popular Christmas hymn was written by an Irish poet to illustrate for children the various articles of the Apostles' Creed. It is not known which of several English villages the composer had in mind when naming this tune.

TEXT: Cecil Frances Alexander, 1848, alt.
 MUSIC: Henry John Gauntlett, 1849; harm. Arthur Henry Mann, 1919

IRBY
 8.7.8.7.7