

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

THE CHURCH GATHERS ...

When the prelude begins let us quietly prepare for the Worship of God.

PRELUDE Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern Dieterich Buxtehude
How Brightly Shines the Morning Star

OPPORTUNITIES AND CONCERNS OF THE CONGREGATION

CALL TO WORSHIP from Psalm 148

Leader: Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise him in the heights!
People: Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his host!
Leader: Praise him, sun and moon; praise him all you shining stars!
People: Kings of the earth and all peoples, princes and all rulers of the earth!
Leader: Young men and women alike, old and young together!
People: Let them praise the name of the Lord, for his name alone is exalted; his glory is above earth and heaven.

TO PRAISE AND CONFESS ...

***HYMN NO. 49** (blue hymnal) Once in Royal David’s City *Irby*

***CALL TO CONFESSION**

***PRAYER OF CONFESSION** (Unison)

Lord, you have called us to be your servants in a world of great need, but we have focused our first attention on making ourselves comfortable. You have called us to give special care to the least, the lost, and the broken, but we attend first to those who are most like us. You have called us to live the gospel, but we have been content simply to hear and agree. We confess that we have often missed the joy of living lives wholly abandoned to you. Forgive our hesitancy, our passivity, our comfort with superficiality. And grant that as your people we might grow to serve you with joyful hearts and eager hands, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

***KYRIE ELEISON** Healey Willan

(Congregation singing – music is found on the inside cover of the red hymnal)

Lord, have mercy upon us. Christ, have mercy upon us. Lord, have mercy upon us.

(First part: women; second: men; third: all)

***ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

Leader: Friends, believe the Good News!

People: In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

***RESPONSE** Refrain from Hymn No. 116 (red hymnal) Angels We Have Heard on High *Gloria*
Gloria in excelsis Deo.

GOSPEL

Luke 1:26-45

A TIME WITH THE CHILDREN

Linda Judge McRae

Children age 4 through 2nd grade are invited to go downstairs and participate in Children’s Worship. A nursery is available during the entire service for infants through age 3.

GOSPEL

Luke 2:36-40

SERMON

“Three Wise Women”

Rev. John Linton Muntz

“Blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord.” – Luke 1:45

***HYMN** If I Could Visit Bethlehem

Simmons

***AFFIRMATION OF FAITH** (Unison)

from A Declaration of Faith

Jesus announced the coming of God’s kingdom and its hidden presence in the midst of the world’s kingdoms. He taught his disciples to seek God’s kingdom first. We believe Christ gives us and demands of us lives in pilgrimage toward God’s kingdom. Like Christ we may enjoy on our journey all that sustains life and makes it pleasant and beautiful. No more than Christ are we spared the darkness, ambiguity and threat of life in the world. We are in the world, but not of the world. Our confidence and hope for ourselves and for other people do not rest in the powers and achievements of this world, but in the coming and hidden presence of God’s kingdom. Christ calls each of us to a life appropriate to that kingdom: to serve as he has served us; to take up our cross, risking the consequences of faithful discipleship; to walk by faith, not by sight; to hope for what we have not seen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE ... The Lord’s Prayer

(During the Prayers of the People there will be a time of silence. You are invited to use this time for personal reflection, confession, thanksgiving, and prayer.)

ANTHEM Hope Is Born

Sheldon Curry

Most holy Savior, heav’n’s purest light, dawn of my day and my song in the night. Child of the Father, calm in the storm; breathless I stand, for my hope is born.

Gather, ye shepherds. Wise Men, behold. Lo, in a stable salvation unfolds! Meet at the manger, ye weary and worn. Hopeless, draw near, for your hope is born.

Angels sing holy, alleluia. Sing for the mighty and mild. And all creation in sweet harmony, whispers a lullaby to the Child.

God’s dearest treasure, love’s purest rose, Lord of all life, both in joy and in woe. Bow down before Him. Love and adore. Glory to God, for our hope is born. Thanks be to God for our hope is born.

Sheldon Curry

Ibbie L. Muntz, Soprano

THE OFFERING

Please sign and pass the Friendship Register found on the pew nearest the center aisle.

If you would like to receive our newsletter, include your address, phone number and email address.

Though many of us contribute electronically or by a check in the mail, your holding and passing the offering plate is an act of blessing and dedication to our life together in Jesus Christ.

OFFERTORY In dulci jubilo

J. S. Bach

In Quiet Joy

(from the *Orgelbüchlein*)

***AT THE PRESENTATION** Doxology No. 514 (red hymnal)

Old Hundredth

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise him, all creatures here below; Praise him

above, ye heavenly host: Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

TO GO FORTH AND SERVE ...

***HYMN NO. 256** (blue hymnal) Let the Whole Creation Cry

Salzburg

***CHARGE AND BENEDICTION**

***CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE NO. 586** (blue hymnal) Amen

Danish melody

***POSTLUDE** Vom Himmel kam der Engel Schar

J. S. Bach

To Shepherds as They Watched by Night

(from the *Orgelbüchlein*)

*Indicates standing.

NOW THE SERVICE BEGINS

ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR TODAY

WELCOME TO ALL WHO WORSHIP here today.

PASTORAL CARE ELDERS FOR THE WEEK: Terry Crow and Hap McSween

CARE TEAM COORDINATORS FOR JANUARY: Sue Byerly and Judy Jorden

LARGE PRINT HYMNALS AND HEARING DEVICES are available from the ushers.

SERVING TODAY

ACOLYTES: Maggie Gordon and Ellie Tidwell

GREETERS: Buz and Lucy Johnson

CHILDREN'S WORSHIP: Janet and Peter Tortorelli, Julia Tortorelli

SENIOR USHER: Bill Wiesehuegel

USHERS: Buz Johnson, Trish Groves, Bill Holt, Hap McSween, Lalla Phillips

OUR THANKS to Ibbie Muntz for her enrichment of our worship this morning, and to Eileen

Rudd for serving as the organist while Peter Van Eenam is away.

Adult Sunday School

Parenting (Library)

January 6 - February 10

Sabbath in the Suburbs by MaryAnn McKibben Dana

This "is compelling reading for anyone, but will particularly resonate with working parents who are trying to balance the demands of young children, jobs, and the other obligations that creep into our calendars. It is an excellent resource for families who want to live in a more mindful way savoring our children's formative years rather than enduring them." Linda Judge-McRae and Ashley Porter will facilitate the class. Books are available in the church office at a cost of \$12.00.

Faith and Life (McKinnon Room)

January 6 - April 21

Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life by Karen Armstrong

This is a thought-provoking book about making the world a more compassionate place. "The twelve steps begin with 'Learn about Compassion' and close with 'Love your Enemies'". In between, the author takes up self-love, mindfulness, suffering, etc. Larry Ridley and Hope Gosselin will facilitate the class. Books are available in the office at a cost of \$12.00.

Current Topics (Fellowship Hall)

January 6 - February 10

"Living the Questions 2", a DVD series, "is an open-minded alternative to studies that attempt to give participants all the answers." Featuring 30 acclaimed scholars and theologians such as Marcus Borg, Walter Brueggemann, Diana Butler Bass, and John Shelby Spong, this series is full of thought-provoking sessions such as "Taking the Bible Seriously", "A Passion for Christ: Paul", and "Embracing Mystery". The class will be led by Tim Crais, Paula Smartt, John Smartt, and Laura Barron. Study guides will be made available in the office at no charge or via email. However, you can still join the class at any point without preparation and enjoy the DVDs and participating in the discussion.

Bible Study (Prayer Room)

January 6 - February 10

In Bible Class, we will continue our journey with Peter, Paul, and other apostles through the Book of Acts. We'll begin with Paul's message at the Areopagus, the high court in Athens. This sermon illustrates the beginnings of the attempts to explain the nature of Christ, and is an early step on the path that led to the development of Christology. We read together and discuss ... come join us!

FOYER GROUPS shuffle in December to prepare new groups to convene in January. Please check your *Abbey* for details, and contact Sue Murrian for more information or to join a group or to drop out of the January rotation.

THE CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING collection concludes today. Fifty percent of this offering supports racial ethnic education at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges, helping students develop their gifts and find their calling. The other fifty percent of the offering helps families of active and retired church workers meet unexpected needs through the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions.

THE CHURCH OFFICE will be open from 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. tomorrow. We will be closed on January 1st, and will return to regular hours on Wednesday, January 2nd.

College /Young Adult Gathering

Our College and Young Adult group will gather on Friday, January 4th at 6:30 p.m. at the home of Tim and Anne Crais (6818 Haverhill Drive). Barbara, Tim and Anne will make sure you have a good dinner, and we'll all enjoy catching up before it's time to get back to our busy schedules.