

Christmas Eve

December 24, 2021

5:00 pm

Gathering as God's Family

Words of Welcome

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Throughout these past weeks we have seen an accumulation of light as an expression of the growing anticipation of the birth of Jesus Christ, who is the light of the world. I invite you to join in our responsive call to worship.

We light the first candle of Advent, the candle of the hope, because
Jesus is our hope.

We light the second candle of Advent, the candle of joy, because
we know that Jesus is the source of true and everlasting joy.

We light the third candle of Advent, the candle of peace, because
Jesus is the Prince of Peace.

We light the fourth candle of Advent, the candle of love, because
Jesus is love and those abide in love abide in him, and he abides in them.

Now we light the Christ Candle. We believe in the one, whom the Prophet Isaiah calls the Prince of Peace, for a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Let us join together in prayer.

Receive our thanks tonight for the beauty and majesty of Christmas, for your presence with us, and for your love that makes all things new. May your light shine as a sign of your promise and glory now and forever. Amen.

Prelude

Ring, Little Bells
Festival Ringers

arr. Lynne Hollander

Prayer of Confession

The heavenly host fills the skies; the shepherds rush to behold the babe.

But we stand still, for these glad tidings have lost all sense of urgency.

The angel chorus rejoices with alleluias, but we hear the words as nothing new.

This story is so familiar we forget its power to transform the world.

We forget it heralds a reign of justice.

We forget that this story requires something of us.

You have given us your Son.

Now give us the gift of faith,

into our hearts, our lives, our homes, our world,

that we might live as those who walk in his light.

Bless us with the gifts Emmanuel brings,

that hope, joy, peace, and love might flow through us

and bless your people everywhere.

Embolden us to tell your story and send us out, glorifying and praising God—

for to us is born a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord!

(Moment of Silent Reflection and Confession)

Assurance of Forgiveness
Hear the Good News of the Gospel!
In Jesus Christ we are forgiven.

Proclaiming God's Word

Old Testament Lesson: Psalm 96:10-13
The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God!**

Pew Bible, NRSV (OT), p. 551

Anthem

All Is Well
Youth Choir

M. Smith & W. Kirkpatrick

*All is well, all is well. Angels and men rejoice.
For tonight darkness fell into the dawn of love's light.
Sing Alleluia.*

*All is well, all is well. Let there be peace on earth.
Christ's come go and tell that he is in the manger.
Sing Alleluia.*

*All is well, all is well. Lift up your voices and sing.
Born is now Emmanuel; born is our Lord and Savior.
Sing Alleluia. Sing Alleluia.
All is well.*

*Born is now Emmanuel; born is our Lord and Savior.
Sing Alleluia. Sing Alleluia.
All is well.*

Time with the Children

New Testament Lesson: Luke 2:8-14

Pew Bible, NRSV (NT), p. 58

Sermon

"The Best Christmas Tradition"

Dr. John M. Willingham

"I am bringing good news of great joy for all the people"—Luke 2:10b

Responding to God's Word

Affirmation of Faith:

John 1:1-14

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people.

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world

did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

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.

Offering of Our Gifts and Lives

(Persons nearest the center aisle are asked to sign and pass the Act of Friendship pad toward the outside aisle. Please keep the cover open as the pad is returned.)

Offertory

He Is Born
Festival Ringers

arr. Mark Arnold

Congregational Response 143 *Angels, from the Realms of Glory*

REGENT SQUARE

**All creation, join in praising God the Father, Spirit, Son,
evermore your voices raising to the eternal Three in One:
come and worship, come and worship,
worship Christ, the newborn king!**

Prayer of Dedication

Going Forth in God's Name

Candle Lighting

*(You are invited to share the light of Christ through the Christmas candles.
For your safety, please tilt your unlighted candle toward the upright lighted candle
and remain seated as we sing the closing hymn.)*

Hymn

Silent Night, Holy Night!

STILLE NACHT

- | | |
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| 1. Silent night, holy night!
All is calm, all is bright,
'round yon virgin mother and child!
Holy Infant, so tender and mild,
sleep in heavenly peace,
sleep in heavenly peace. | 3. Silent night, holy night!
Son of God, love's pure light
radiant beams from thy holy face,
with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth |
| 2. Silent night, holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight,
glories stream from heaven afar,
heavenly hosts sing "Alleluia:
Christ the Savior is born;
Christ the Savior is born!" | 4. Silent night, holy night!
Wondrous star, lend thy light;
with the angels let us sing
Alleluia to our King:
Christ the Savior is born;
Christ the Savior is born. |

Closing Litany

In the beginning, God said, "Let there be light" and there was light.

God is light and in God there is no darkness at all.

If I say "Surely the darkness shall cover me, and the light about me become night,"
even darkness is not dark to God; the night is as bright as the day.

For it is the God who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

If we walk in the light we have fellowship with one another and the blood of Jesus.

Jesus said, "I am the light of the world."

And God saw that the light was good.

Benediction

(Please extinguish all candles following the benediction.)

Postlude:

Adeste Fideles

Eric H. Thiman

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Lighting the Advent Wreath: Judy and Kieran Cody. Judy is a current session member, is active in the music ministry and serves on the Worship, Music and the Arts Committee. Kieran has previously served as an Elder and as moderator of the Personnel Committee.

Assisting: Becca Bateman

Tonight's offering will support the Coalition to Shelter and Support the Homeless, which provides shelter and aid to our homeless neighbors in Central Bucks. The Code Blue shelter will be hosted at DPC for the month of February.

Upcoming worship services. We will have one service on December 26 and January 2 at 9:30 am. On January 9 we begin two services with worship at 8:30 and 10:30 am, with Sunday School for all ages in between. The later service will include Children's Worship Time, the Chancel Choir, and be Livestreamed with a recorded version able to be viewed anytime. Be sure to visit our website for more details.



SCAN ME

Let's Connect! Do you have a prayer request or want to share a joy or concern? We want to hear from you! Visit www.dtownnpc.org and click "Connect" at the top of the page to contact us or scan this QR code with your smart phone camera.

Liturgy notes: Tonight's prayer of confession is taken from *Call to Worship: Liturgy, Music, Preaching and the Arts*. Volume 53.1, p. 26.

Year-End Giving Information

Contributions must be received in the church office by 3 pm on Friday, December 31 or postmarked with a 2021 date in order to meet the IRS requirements for a 2021 charitable contribution. Checks that are dated, mailed, and *postmarked* in 2021 will be deductible (if eligible) in 2021, even if they are not delivered by the post office to DPC until 2022. Contributions received or postmarked after that date will not appear on your Charitable Contributions Report for 2021. For questions, contact Linay Richards at linayr@dtownnpc.org.



Be a bridge for Christ and a beacon of His love

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