



Online Worship Resource (Sunday, December 27, 2020)

BOLD TYPE IS SPOKEN BY THE CONGREGATION

Prelude: **Break Forth, O Beauteous Heavenly Light** Schop/Bach

*Break forth, O beauteous heavenly light, and usher in the morning.
You shepherds, shudder not with fright, but hear the angel's warning.
This child now weak in infancy, our confidence and joy shall be,
the power of Satan breaking, our peace eternal making.*

Jane Kerr, Organist

Welcome and Announcements

Call to Worship

Rev. Michelle Fincher

The prophet Anna and righteous Simeon sang your praise, O God.

They proclaimed Jesus our Lord to all who were looking for redemption.

Let us who seek redemption today prepare our hearts,

**that we may believe the good news of Jesus,
receive the light of salvation,
and live according to your word.**

Opening Hymn: "Angels, From the Realms of Glory"

Angels from the realms of glory, wing your flight o'er all the earth;

You, who sang creation's story, now proclaim Messiah's birth:

Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ the newborn king!

Shepherds in the fields abiding, watching o'er your flocks by night,

God with us is now residing, yonder shines the infant light:

Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ the newborn King!

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!

Call to Confession

(Liturgist)

Jesus came into an indifferent world, yet his life revealed the inner thoughts of humankind. Let us confess our sin before God who knows it already, that we may receive release and mercy. Let us pray together...

Prayer of Confession

Holy god, we confess that we have not lived as your faithful sons and daughters. We have kept silent in the midst of prejudice and hatred. We have been idle in the face of violence and injustice. We have not been a light to our neighbor or to the nations. Our lives have not revealed your glory. Forgive us, merciful God. Repair the ugliness of our sin and restore in us your beautiful grace; through Jesus Christ our Lord, we pray.

Assurance of Pardon

Sisters and brothers, receive the good news: the light of Christ shines in our darkness, to bring light and life to all.

By the gift of Christ, our sins are forgiven. Glory to God in the highest!
Amen.

Passing the Peace

May the peace of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

Children's Time

Prayer for Illumination

(Liturgist)

Let us prepare our hearts to hear God's Word by praying together the Prayer for Illumination:

As you led Simeon to embrace the infant Jesus, guide us, Holy Spirit, by your gracious light that we may welcome your saving Word. Amen.

Scripture Reading: Luke 2:22-40

²² When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord ²³ (as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord"), ²⁴ and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons."

²⁵ Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. ²⁶ It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. ²⁷ Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, ²⁸ Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

²⁹ "Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace,
according to your word;

³⁰ for my eyes have seen your salvation,
³¹ which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,
³² a light for revelation to the Gentiles
and for glory to your people Israel."

³³ And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. ³⁴ Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, "This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed ³⁵ so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too."

³⁶ There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, ³⁷ then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. ³⁸ At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

³⁹ When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. ⁴⁰ The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.

This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon Message "In Our Midst: Now What?" Rev. John Molina-Moore
and
Rev. Tara Spuhler McCabe

Hymn After Sermon: "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear"

It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old,
From angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold.
"Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heaven's all-gracious King";
The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing.

For lo, the days are hastening on, by prophets seen of old,
When with the ever-circling years shall come the time foretold.
When peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling,
And the whole world give back the song which now the angels sing.

Prayer of Dedication

Loving God, we thank you for giving us the light of the world, your son, Jesus Christ, through whom we have been adopted into your family. With Jesus our brother, we dedicate ourselves in ministry to the world, that we may live as heirs of your promises to the honor and glory of your name. Amen.

Pastoral Prayer and the Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Closing Hymn: "He Came Down"

He came down that we may have love; He came down that we may have love;

He came down that we may have love; Hallelujah forevermore.

....that we may have light

....that we may have joy

....that we may have peace.

Benediction

Postlude:

Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee

Beethoven

Joyful, joyful, we adore thee, God of glory, Lord of love!

Hearts unfold like flowers before thee, opening to the sun above.

Melt the clouds of sin and sadness; drive the dark of doubt away.

Giver of immortal gladness, fill us with the light of day.

Mortals join the happy chorus which the morning stars began.

Love divine is reigning o'er us, joining all in heaven's plan.

Ever singing, march we onward, victors in the midst of strife.

Joyful music leads us sunward in the triumph song of life.

Today's Worship Participants:

Rev. Michelle Fincher, Jane Kerr, organist, Judy Viccellio, guitar,
David Maley, piano, Rev. John Molina-Moore, NCP General Presbyter and
Rev. Tara Spuhler McCabe, Transitional Director, Congregational Development
and Mission, Guest Preachers,
and Whitney Roberts, technology team

NOTE: National Capital Presbytery (NCP)