

**THE WORSHIP OF GOD**  
**DECEMBER 27, 2020**  
**FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS DAY**

**PRELUDE**

**Prelude on 'God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen'**

John Rutter  
(b. 1945)

*As the prelude is played, prepare your home, yourself, and your family to enter into this time of worship.*

**CALL TO WORSHIP (RESPONSIVELY)**

**Leader:** Christ is born! Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord from the heavens and from the earth.

**People:** Praise the name of the Lord, for his name alone is exalted; God's glory in Christ is among us.

**All:** Praise the Lord!

**HYMN No. 240**

**Hark! the Herald Angels Sing**  
Aldersgate Praise Band

**MENDELSSOHN**

1. Hark! the her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born King;  
2. Christ, by high - est heaven a - dored; Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord;  
3. Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of Righ-teous-ness!

peace on earth, and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on-ciled!"  
late in time be - hold him come, off - spring of a vir - gin's womb.  
Light and life to all he brings, risen with heal - ing in his wings.

Joy - ful, all ye na - tions rise, join the tri - umph of the skies;  
Veiled in flesh the God-head see; hail th'in - car - nate De - i - ty,  
Mild he lays his glo - ry by, born that we no more may die,

with th'an - gel - ic host pro-claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"  
pleased with us in flesh to dwell, Je - sus, our Em - man - u - el.  
born to raise us from the earth, born to give us sec - ond birth.

*Refrain*

Hark! the her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born King!"

### CALL TO CONFESSION

To us Christ is born! Without shame or pride, let us be bold to approach the Lord of life whose cradle is the manger and whose throne is the cross, and confess our sins, for surely he is with us in all things.

### PRAYER OF CONFESSION (IN UNISON)

**Merciful God, we confess that we have not loved you with our whole heart, and we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We have failed to make room for Christ and to welcome him in the face of the stranger. We have chased littler lights than the Light of your Salvation. In the struggle to cement our self-worth, we have cut others down and refused them mercy. Craving ease in life, we have sanitized the nature of your coming, and forgotten the poor and marginalized among us. Forgive us our failures, O God, and set us aright on the path of life; through your Son Jesus, whom you sent into the world to heal our brokenness and to make all things new. Amen.**

### PERSONAL CONFESSION AND MEDITATION (IN SILENCE)

### WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Leader: Hear the good news. For us and for our salvation God came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit and Mary. He lived, suffered, and died with us and for us while we were still sinners. This proves God's love for us. In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!

**People: In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!**

**All: Glory to God in the highest! Amen.**

### PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION (IN UNISON)

**O Holy Spirit, give us through the hearing of your Word faith that will protect us from despair, from passions, and from vice. Give us such love for God and our neighbor as will blot out all hatred and bitterness in us. And grant us, we pray, hope that will deliver us from fear and hesitation so that we may incarnate your love; through Jesus our Lord. Amen.**

### SCRIPTURE LESSON

### Luke 2:22-40

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 (as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord"), and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons."

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. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. 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, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

“Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.”

And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. 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 so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.”

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, 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. 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.

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

**SERMON**

**"In The Presence of All People"**

Rev. Patrick Murphy



**CALL TO PRAYER**

Minister: The Lord be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

Minister: Let us pray.

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE 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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

**GIVING**



**OFFERTORY**

**A Christmas Carol  
In the Bleak Mid-Winter  
Laura Sam, Soprano**

Joel Martinson  
(b. 1960)

In the bleak mid-winter frosty wind made moan,  
Earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone;  
Snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow,  
In the bleak midwinter long ago.

Our God, heaven cannot hold Him nor earth sustain;  
Heaven and earth shall flee away when He comes to reign:  
In the bleak mid-winter a stable place sufficed  
The Lord God Almighty Jesus Christ.

Enough for Him whom cherubim worship night and day,  
A breastful of milk and a mangerful of hay;  
Enough for Him whom angels fall down before,  
The ox and ass and camel which adore.

Angels and archangels may have gathered there,  
Cherubim and seraphim thronged the air,  
But only His mother in her maiden bliss  
Worshipped the Beloved with a kiss.

What can I give Him, poor as I am?  
If I were a shepherd I would bring a lamb,  
If I were a wise man I would do my part,  
Yet what I can I give Him, give my heart.

*-Christina Rossetti (1830-1894)*

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise God, all creatures here below:  
Alleluia! Alleluia!  
Praise God, the source of all our gifts!  
Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts!  
Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit!  
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

**BENEDICTION**

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**Copyright Acknowledgements**

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**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**The Upper Room:** The January-February issue of The Upper Room is available. Please feel free to stop by the church and pick up a copy. Copies are located in the Welcome Center.

**Offering Envelopes:** Offering envelopes are now available for pick-up outside the church office. Please collect your envelopes by December 31. Thank you.

**Church Office Hours:** Until January 4, the office hours are Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The office will be closed on Fridays. The church office will be closed **December 24, 25, and 28** for Christmas and **Friday, January 1** for New Year's Day. Merry Christmas and a very happy New Year from all the staff at FSUMC!

**2020 Contribution Deadline:** A friendly reminder from the Church Office: in order for contributions to be included as a contribution towards your 2020 statement, please have mail postmarked or dropped at the church office NO LATER THAN **December 31**. All contributions received after December 31 will be applied to your 2021 statement.

**Sanctuary Flowers:** The **2021** flower calendar is available in the Welcome Center. If you are interested in placing flowers in the Sanctuary in honor or in memory of a loved one, please write your name on the Sunday you wish to put flowers in the church. For more information, please contact Linda Paul at 336-543-5081 (cell) or kpaul5@triad.rr.com (email).

## **WORSHIP NOTES**

### **Prelude**

John Rutter is an English composer and conductor who is known the world over for his many choral works. His prelude on the well-known Victorian carol "God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen" is one of only a handful of organ works he composed. It features four full statements of the melody. In the first section, the first phrase of the melody appears in the pedal, while subsequent phrases are tossed back and forth between different divisions of the organ. In the second section, the melody is played on a solo reed against a rather rhythmically disjointed accompaniment. The third section features the melody in canon between the hands, while the fourth section features the melody in canon between the left hand and pedal. Here he uses a compositional device called augmentation, where the melody in the pedal part is presented in longer note values than were previously used.

### **Offertory**

Joel Martinson is considered to be one of the finest church composers writing today. He was born in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and earned bachelor's and master's degree in organ performance with a concentration in composition from the University of North Texas. Currently, he is the Director of Music and Organist at The Episcopal Church of the Transfiguration in Dallas, Texas, where he coordinates the vibrant musical life of the parish. This work comes from *Cycle of Light*, which is a collection of six sacred songs for the liturgical year based on texts by women. The cycle was premiered by bass-baritone Burr Cochran Phillips and pianist Terry Lynn Hudson on January 25, 1996 at Irons Recital Hall, University of Texas at Arlington.