

GLORY TO GOD
IN THE
HIGHEST
HEAVEN

AND ON EARTH
PEACE AMONG
THOSE WHOM
HE FAVORS!

*to give light
to those
who sit in darkness
and in
the shadow
of death*

BY THE TENDER MERCY OF
OUR GOD, THE DAWN FROM ON
HIGH WILL BREAK UPON US

The Worship of God
Christmas Eve
December 24, 2023 | 6:00p

Inspired by the bold and boundless hospitality of Jesus, we are “open to all,” which means we welcome and accept all people into the life of our Church without regard to race, gender, sexual orientation, age, economic status, political affiliation, physical or mental capacity, or religious belief. We believe that God’s call is given to all people, and we embrace the Spirit that continues to cross boundaries in order to unite the world.

Masks are encouraged but not required for anyone. We encourage you to make the best decision for yourself and your family.

Prelude

“Christmas Medley”	various, arr. R. Pool
“Adagio”	G.P. Telemann
“Il Est Né”	Traditional French, arr. E. Brock
“Medley”	various, arr. R. Pool
“In The Bleak Midwinter”	G. Holst
“Fantasia on Greensleeves”	R. Vaughan Williams
“En Prière”	G. Fauré

Delaine Leonard, *harp*; Jennifer Dior, *flute*

Call to Worship and Invocation

Rev. Carrie Veal

*Opening Carol

“O Come, All Ye Faithful” ADESTE FIDELES
**O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem!
Come, and behold him, born the King of angels!**

Refrain:

**O come, let us adore him;
O come, let us adore him;
O come, let us adore him, Christ, the Lord!**

**Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning;
Jesus, to thee be all glory given!
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing! [Refrain]**

**Sing, choirs of angels; sing in exultation;
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God, all glory in the highest! [Refrain]**

*Lighting the Christ Candle

Rene, Julie, Josef, Colin, Sofia, and Lucas Bartholomew

Leader: A trumpet blares through the silent night!
A new song heralds the coming light!

People: **Let us sing the new song,
let us turn to the light,
let us build a new earth,
let us celebrate new life!**

Leader: Let the sea’s deep rumble make the sky tremble!
Let the field’s high chanting make the clouds dance!

All: Let us sing the new song,
let us turn to the light,
let us build a new earth,
let us celebrate new life!

(Lighting the Christ Candle)

***People:** *(singing)*

MENDELSSOHN

“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”

**Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King:
peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!”
Joyful, all ye nations, rise, join the triumph of the skies;
with th'angelic hosts proclaim, “Christ is born in Bethlehem!”**

Refrain:

Hark! the herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King”

**Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings, risen with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by, born that we no more may die,
born to raise us from the earth, born to give us second birth. [Refrain]**

Welcome of Our Guests

Rev. Dr. JJ Flag

*If you are our guest today, please fill out the pew card or scan the QR code
so we may offer you our gratitude for joining us today.*

***Passing of the Peace**

Gospel Reading – Luke 2:1-20 NRSV

Mary Miller

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no place in the guest room.

Now in that same region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid, for see, I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

“Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them, and Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, just as it had been told them.

Leader: For the Word of God in scripture,
for the Word of God among us,
for the Word of God within us.

People: Thanks be to God.

***Carol**

“Joy To the World”

ANTIOCH

**Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her King;
let ev’ry heart prepare him room
and heav’n and nature sing,
and heav’n and nature sing,
and heav’n, and heav’n and nature sing.**

**Joy to the world! The Savior reigns:
let all the songs employ;
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.**

Christmas Meditation

Rev. Dr. Ben Boswell

“What’s Left to Ponder?”

Solo

McKenzie Coleman
Adolphe Adam

“O Holy Night”

O holy night! the stars are brightly shining;
it is the night of the dear Savior’s birth.
Long lay the world in sin and error pining,
till he appeared and the soul felt its worth.
A thrill of hope – the weary world rejoices,
for yonder breaks a new and glorious morn!
Fall on your knees! O hear the angel voices!
O night divine, O night when Christ was born!
O night, O holy night, O night divine!

Truly he taught us to love one another;
his law is love and his gospel is peace.
Chains shall he break, for the slave is our brother,
and in his name all oppression shall cease.
Sweet hymns of joy in grateful chorus raise we;
let all within us praise his holy name.
Christ is the Lord! O praise his name forever!
His pow’r and glory evermore proclaim!
His pow’r and glory evermore proclaim!

Church at Prayer

Rev. John Blackshire, Ph.D.

There are several ways to give:
scan the QR code below or drop your offering in the plate.



In keeping with a long-standing tradition, half of the Christmas Eve Offering will go to support the Sunshine Fund, which was created to provide benevolence to members of our church and the greater community. The other half will provide support to our budget.

Offertory Anthem

Chancel Choir
Kyle Pederson

“Sing We Now of Christmas ”

Sing we now of Christmas, Noel sing we here.
Hearts in expectation, Noel drawing near.
Sing we Noel, Noel, Noel;
sing we now of Christmas, sing we now Noel.

In stillness lays the world in silent reverie,
longing for the birth of love and mercy.
Yearning for hope, good news to fill our souls;
turning to the manger that grounds all mystery. Noel.

Angels bending low, shepherds bend their knee,
Wisemen from the east, all have come the child to see.
All of creation where love has come to dwell;
Sing we now of Christmas the good news that we tell. Sing Noel!

***Presentation of Gifts and the Doxology**

GLORIA

“Angels We Have Heard on High”

**Angels we have heard on high,
sweetly singing o’er the plains,
and the mountains in reply
echoing their joyous strains.
Gloria in excelsis Deo!
Gloria in excelsis Deo!**

***Prayer of Dedication**

Rev. Dr. JJ Flag

Communion

Invitation to the Table

Rev. Dr. Ben Boswell and Rev. Tara Gibbs

Prayer of Thanksgiving and the Lord’s Prayer

**Our God who is in heaven, hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come, your 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 yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.**

Words of Institution

All are invited to participate in Communion. You may come forward to one of the stations at the front of the Sanctuary to receive bread and juice or pre-packaged, gluten-free elements. If you prefer to be served at your seat, please raise your hand and a Deacon will assist you.

Music During Communion

Delaine Leonard, harp; Jennifer Dior, flute and Lee Northcutt, organ

Hebrew Scripture - Isaiah 9:2-7 (NRSV adapted)

Rev. Dr. Ben Boswell

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined. You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. 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 Protector, Prince of Peace. His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore.

Leader: For the Word of God in scripture,
for the Word of God among us,
for the Word of God within us.

People: Thanks be to God.

Lighting of the Candles

*Carol with Candlelight

“Silent Night, Holy Night!”

STILLE NACHT

**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.**

**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.**

**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.**

**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.**

***Christmas Benediction**

Rev. Dr. Ben Boswell

*The congregation extinguishes their candles.
The greeters will receive your candles as you leave.*

Postlude

Lee Northcutt, organ
Michael Dell


“Organ Flourish on Joy to the World ”

If you are our guest today, please connect with a minister after worship and receive a Welcome bag.



Audio/Video Team Members are Wes Cobb, Joe Kuhlmann, Hannah Combs, Alicia Dunn, Eric Roberts, and volunteers.



We are affiliated with allianceofbaptists.org  Alliance of Baptists



HOW TO JOIN MYERS PARK BAPTIST CHURCH

Becoming a member of Myers Park Baptist is as simple as filling out a Joining Card. To receive a card or learn more, contact Rev. Carrie Veal at cveal@myersparkbaptist.org.



Our Covenant

We, the members of the Myers Park Baptist Church, are a people on a journey of faith. By God's grace we are experiencing love through Jesus Christ and in the community of the faithful. We are discovering in this experience our freedom to become new creatures and our responsibility to be faithful stewards of our lives and of this world.

We will be open to all new light, strengthened by God and each other in our faith. We will sustain a critical examination of Scripture, belief and ritual as interpreters of God's active presence in the world. We will accept controversy as a reality of life together and an opportunity for growth toward maturity. We covenant to be a community of God's New Creation and affirm that we are open to all and closed to none.

We covenant together to nurture this church as a community of faith and as an instrument for reconciliation in the world: by worship, by Christian education, by the dedication of our personal and material resources and by all the other ways we express the significance of our lives with God and one another.

We covenant together to be priests celebrating God's presence in community and in the world, believing we are participants in God's kingdom on Earth.

OUR MINISTERS

Rev. Dr. Benjamin Boswell

Senior Minister

Rev. Carrie Veal

Executive Minister

Rev. Tara Gibbs

Associate Minister of Spiritual Growth

Rev. Dr. JJ Flag

Associate Minister of Pastoral Care & Justice

J. Kevin Gray

Minister of Music & Worship



**MYERS PARK
BAPTIST
CHURCH**

Inclusivity | Spirituality | Community | Justice

We occasionally take photographs during our worship service. If you would prefer not to be included, please contact Laura Geer | Communications Director | lgeer@myersparkbaptist.org.

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