



Centenary Downtown

A UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

411 East Grace Street, Richmond, Virginia 23219
Dr. Matthew D. Bates, Senior Pastor
www.centumc.org ~ (804) 648-8319

December 11, 2022 Advent Lessons and Carols 10:30 A.M.

This service of Advent Lessons, Hymns and Carols is intended to be a preparation for the festival of Christmas. It is a service filled with symbolism. The service begins with the Chancel Choir outside an entrance door, representing the waiting of the world in darkness for the Advent of Christ. During the service the Chancel Choir processes through various locations in the nave eventually to the pulpit, which represents the light of the Word of God that began to shine in the world in the mystery of the incarnation of God in Jesus Christ. The service ends with a recessional by the Chancel Choir into the world where the light still shines in the darkness until the day of the Second Advent of Christ at the end of history.

The Voluntary

Savior of the Nations, Come

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Lee Covington, pianist

J. S. Bach/Ferruccio Busoni

(Please stand at the sound of the tower bell.)

+ The Matin Responsoy

Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina

Cantor – Taylor Jarrell

Tenor – Todd Minnich

Soprano – Emily Downey

Alto – Lauren Maho

Cantor: I look from afar:

Tenor: and lo, I see the power of God coming,
and a cloud covering the whole earth.

Cantor: Go Ye out to meet him and say:

Choir: Tell us, art thou he that should come to reign
over thy people Israel?
Soprano: High and low, rich and poor, one with another,
Choir: Go ye out to meet him say:
Alto: Hear, O thou Shepherd of Israel,
thou that ledest Joseph like a sheep,
Choir: Tell us, art thou he that should come?
Women: Stir up thy strength, O Lord, and come
Choir: to reign over thy people Israel.
Cantor: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Ghost.
Choir: I look from afar: and lo, I see the power of God coming,
and a cloud covering the whole earth.
Men: Go ye out to meet him and say:
Choir: Tell us, art thou he that should come to reign
over thy people Israel?

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+ **The Processional** *Savior of the Nations, Come* John McIntyre
Nancy and Vic Grand, handbells; Lynn LaBarre, finger cymbals

Savior of the nations, come; show the glory of the Son!
Ev'ry people, stand in awe; praise the perfect Son of God.

Not of human seed or worth, but from God's own mystic breath,
fruit in Mary's womb begun when God breathed the Word, his Son.

Wondrous birth! Oh, wondrous child of the virgin undefiled!
Mighty God and man in one, eager now his race to run!

Savior of the nations, come; show the glory of the Son!
Ev'ry people, stand in awe; praise the perfect Son of God.

attributed to St. Ambrose, 340-397

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The Greetings and Concerns of the Parish Dr. Matthew D. Bates

+ **The Lighting of the Advent Wreath**

Family Name

Leader: We light this candle as a symbol of Christ our Joy.
May the joyful promise of your presence, O God,
make us rejoice in our hope of salvation.

All: O come, O come, Emmanuel.

The Bidding Prayer

Dr. Bates

Beloved in Christ, as we await the great festival of Christmas let us prepare ourselves so that we may be shown its true meaning. Let us hear, in lessons from Holy Scripture, how the prophets of Israel foretold that God would visit and redeem his waiting people. Let us rejoice, in our carols and hymns, that the good purpose of God is being mightily fulfilled. Let us celebrate the promise that our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, will bring all people and all things into the glory of God's eternal kingdom. The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the Gospel preached to them.

But first, let us pray for the world which God so loves, for those who have not heard the good news of God, or who do not believe it; for those who walk in darkness and the shadow of death; and for the Church in this place and everywhere, that it may be freed from all evil and fear, and may in pure joy lift up the light of the love of God.

These prayers and praises let us humbly offer to God, in the words which Christ himself taught us:

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, the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

All of the readers this morning are drawn from members of our staff: choir section leaders, keyboard musicians and clergy.

The First Lesson

Isaiah 40:1-8

Reader: Emily Downey, Chancel Choir Soprano Section Leader

The prophet proclaims good news to the people in exile.

Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins.

A voice cries: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places

a plain. And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

A voice says, "Cry!" And I said, "What shall I cry?" All flesh is grass, and all its beauty is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the Lord blows upon it; surely the people is grass. The grass withers, the flower fades but the word of our God will stand for ever.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

The Carol *Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers* Adam Gumpeltzhaimer

Rejoice, rejoice, believers and let your lights appear!
The evening is advancing and darker night is near.
The Bridegroom is advancing, and soon He draweth nigh,
Up, pray and watch and wrestle! At midnight come the cry.

The watchers on the mountain proclaim the Bridegroom near.
Go meet Him as He cometh with alleluias clear.

The marriage feast is waiting, the gates wide open stand;
Up, up, ye heirs of glory! The Bridegroom is at hand.

Laurentius Laurenti, 1700

Tr., Sarah Findlater, 1854

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The Second Lesson

Jeremiah 23:5-6

Reader: Lauren Maho, Chancel Choir Alto Section Leader

The Lord promises to send his people a righteous King.

"Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In his days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely. And this is the name by which he will be called: 'The Lord is our righteousness.'"

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

+The Hymn No. 2232 *Come Now, O Prince of Peace* GEONYONG

The Carol

Of the Father's Love Begotten

Paul Wohlgeomuth

Of the Father's love begotten,
Ere the worlds began to be,
He is Alpha and Omega,
He the source, the ending, He,
Of the things that are, that have been,
And that future years shall see,
Evermore and evermore!

O that birth forever blessed,
When the Virgin, full of grace,
By the Holy Ghost conceiving,
Bare the Savior of our race,
And the Babe, the world' Redeemer,
First revealed His sacred face,
Evermore and evermore!

O ye heights of heav'n adore Him;
Angel hosts, His praises sing;
Pow'rs, dominions, bow before Him,
And extol our God and King;
Let no tongue on earth be silent,
Every voice in concert ring
Evermore and evermore!

Aurelius C. Prudentius

Tr. by John M. Neale and Henry W. Baker

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The Third Lesson

Zechariah 9:9-10

Reader: Todd Minnich, Chancel Choir Tenor Section Leader

The Lord promises that the King will come to Israel in peace.

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Lo, your king comes to you; triumphant and victorious is he, humble and riding on an ass, on a colt the foal of an ass. I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim and the war horse from Jerusalem; and the battle bow shall be cut off, and he shall command peace to the nations; his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

+The Hymn No. 699 *Come, and Let Us Sweetly Join* CANTERBURY

The Carol *Prepare the Royal Highway* Swedish Folk Tune
setting by John Ferguson

Prepare the royal highway; the King of kings is near!
Let ev'ry hill and valley a level road appear!
Then greet the King of glory, foretold in sacred story:
Oh, blest is he that came in God's most holy name!

His is no earthly kingdom; it comes from heav'n above.
His rule is peace and freedom and justice, truth, and love.
So let your praise be sounding for kindness so abounding:
Oh, blest is he that came in God's most holy name!

Now fling the gates wide open to greet your promised king!
Your king, yet ev'ry nation its tribute too should bring.
All lands, bow down before him! All voices, join in singing:
Oh blest is he that came in God's most holy name!

Frans Mikael Franzen (1772-1847)
trans. Lutheran Book of Worship, 1978, alt.

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The Fourth Lesson Haggai 2:6-9

Reader: Taylor Jarrell, Chancel Choir Bass Section Leader

The Prophet foretells the advent of the Desire of all nations.

For thus says the Lord of hosts: Once again, in a little while, I will shake the heavens and the earth and the sea and the dry land; and I will shake all nations, so that the treasures of all nations shall come in, and I will fill this house with splendor, says the Lord of hosts. The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, says the Lord of hosts. The latter splendor of this house shall be greater than the former, says the Lord of hosts; and in this place I will give prosperity, says the Lord of hosts.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

+ The Hymn No. 203 *Hail to the Lord's Anointed* ELLACOMBE

The Carol *This Is the Truth from Above* Ralph Vaughan Williams
Lynn LaBarre and Emily Downey, soprano soloists

This is the truth sent from above,
The truth of God, the God of love,
Therefore don't turn me from your door,
But hearken all both rich and poor.

The first thing which I do relate
Is that God did man create;
The next thing which to you I'll tell
Woman was made with man to dwell.

Thus we were heirs to endless woes,
Till God the Lord did interpose;
And so a promise soon did run
That he would redeem us by his Son.

And at that season of the year
Our blest redeemer did appear;
He here did live and here did preach,
And many thousands he did teach.

Thus he in love to us behaved,
To show us how we must be saved;
And if you want to know the way,
Be pleased to hear what he did say.

English Traditional Carol

The Fifth Lesson

Isaiah 35:1-6

Reader: Lee Covington, Early Service Pianist

The Prophet foretells the glory of the kingdom of God.

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God. Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, fear not! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God. He will come and save you." Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then shall the lame man leap like a deer, and the tongue of the dumb sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

+ **The Hymn No. 216** *Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming* ES IST EIN ROS

The Sixth Lesson

St. Luke 1:26-35, 38

Reader: Tim Gerde, Minister to Senior Adults

The Angel Gabriel salutes the Blessed Virgin Mary.

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Hail, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and considered in her mind what sort of greeting this might be. And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there will be no end." And Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I have no husband?" And the angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God. And Mary said, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

+**The Hymn No. 215** *To a Maid Engaged to Joseph* ANNUNCIATION

The Carol

Gabriel's Message

Basque Carol

harmonized by Edgar Pettman

The angel Gabriel from heaven came,
his wings as drifted snow, his eyes as flame;
"All hail," said he, "thou lowly maiden Mary,
most highly favored lady," Gloria!

“For now a blessed Mother thou shalt be,
all generations laud and honor thee,
thy Son shall be Emmanuel, by seers foretold,
most highly favored lady,” Gloria!

Then gentle Mary meekly bowed her head,
“To me be as it pleaseth God,” she said,
“my soul shall laud and magnify his holy Name.”
Most highly favored lady, Gloria!

Of her, Emmanuel, the Christ, was born
in Bethlehem, all on a Christmas morn,
and Christian folk throughout the world will ever say--
“Most highly favored lady,” Gloria!

Basque carol; paraphrased by Sabine Baring-Gould
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+The Seventh Lesson

St. Mark 1:1-15

Reader: Matthew D. Bates, Senior Minister

Jesus proclaims the coming of the kingdom of God.

The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in Isaiah the prophet, "Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, who shall prepare thy way; the voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight--" John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And there went out to him all the country of Judea, and all the people of Jerusalem; and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair, and had a leather girdle around his waist, and ate locusts and wild honey. And he preached, saying, "After me comes he who is mightier than I, the thong of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And when he came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens opened and the Spirit descending upon him like a dove; and a voice came from heaven, "Thou art my beloved Son; with thee I am well pleased." The Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. And he was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and

he was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered to him. Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent, and believe in the gospel."

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

+**The Hymn** *On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry* WINCHESTER NEW
(see back page)

The Offertory Prayer

The Offertory Anthem

There Shall a Star from Jacob Come Forth Felix Mendelssohn

There shall a star from Jacob come forth,
and a sceptre from Israel rise up.
And dash in pieces princes and nations.

As bright the star of morning gleams,
So Jesus sheddeth glorious beams
of light and consolation!

Thy Word, O Lord, radiance darting, truth imparting,
gives salvation;
Thine be praise and adoration!

Numbers 24:17, Psalm 2:9

+**The Vesper Responsory** Richard Proulx
Taylor Jarrell, cantor; Nancy and Vic Grand, handbells

Cantor: Let us go forth in peace.

Choir: In the name of Christ. Amen.

Cantor: Glory to God on high!

Choir: *Come to us, Lord of love.*

Bring peace to your people on earth. Alleluia!

Judah and Jerusalem, fear ye not, nor be dismayed,
Today ye go forth, and the Lord, he is with you.

refrain

Rise up, O Jerusalem, stand upon the heights,
and ye shall see the salvation of our God.

refrain

Say to those who are frightened: be strong, fear ye not.
Here is our God, He has come to save us.

refrain

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(silence)

+The Collect for the Day

Minister: We wait for your loving kindness, O Lord.

People: **In the midst of your temple.**

Minister: Let us pray.

People: **Merciful God, who sent your messengers the prophets to preach repentance and prepare the way for our salvations: Give us grace to heed their warnings and forsake our sins, that we may greet with joy the coming of Jesus Christ our Redeemer; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.**

+The Blessing

Go forth into the world in peace; be of good courage; hold fast that which is good; render to no one evil for evil; strengthen the fainthearted; support the weak; help the afflicted; honor all persons; love and serve the Lord, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.

And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be upon you, and remain with you for ever.

Amen.

+The Hymn No. 718

HELMSLEY

Lo, He Comes with Clouds Descending

(Please be seated for the closing voluntary.)

The Voluntary

Veni Emmanuel

Noel Rawsthorne

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+ The congregation stands

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PLEASE WELCOME organist Michael Simpson to our service today. Michael is a retired church musician. He served three churches in Richmond during a career of more than 50 years. He was also accompanist and assistant director of the Richmond Symphony Chorus.

On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry

1 On Jor - dan's bank the Bap - tist's cry an -
 2 Then cleansed be ev - ery breast from sin; make
 3 For thou art our sal - va - tion, Lord, our
 4 To heal the sick stretch out thine hand, and
 5 All praise, e - ter - nal Son, to thee, whose

1 noun - ces that the Lord is nigh; a - wake and heark - en,
 2 straight the way for God with - in, and let each heart pre -
 3 ref - uge, and our great re - ward; with - out thy grace we
 4 bid the fall - en sin - ner stand; shine forth, and let thy
 5 ad - vent doth thy peo - ple free; whom with the Fa - ther

1 for he brings glad tid - ings of the King of kings.
 2 pare a home where such a might - y guest may come.
 3 waste a - way like flowers that with - er and de - cay.
 4 light re - store earth's own true love - li - ness once more.
 5 we a - dore and Ho - ly Spi - rit ev - er - more.

Words: Charles Coffin (1676-1749); tr. Charles Winfred Douglas (1867-1944), after John Chandler (1806-1876); alt.

Music: *Winchester New*, melody from *Musicalishes Hand-Buch*, 1690; harm. William Henry Monk (1823-1889), alt.

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LM