

*A Celebration of
Christmas*



*Christmas Eve
Eleven o'clock in the Evening
December 24, 2023
Sanctuary*

*First Presbyterian Church
Tulsa, OK*

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Eleven o'clock in the evening

The Words of Preparation

There has fallen on earth for a token a god too great for the sky. He has burst out of all things and broken the bounds of eternity: into time and the terminal land he has strayed like a thief or a lover, for the wine of the world brims over, its splendour is spilt on the sand.

Who is proud when the heavens are humble, who mounts if the mountains fall, if the fixed stars topple and tumble and a deluge of love drowns all...but unmeasured of plummet and rod, too deep for their sight to scan, outrushing the fall of man is the height of the fall of God.

Glory to God in the Lowest, the spout of the stars in spate—where thunderbolt thinks to be slowest and the lightning fears to be late: as men dive for sunken gem pursuing, we hunt and hound it, the fallen star has found it in the cavern of Bethlehem.

G.K. Chesterton, *Gloria In Profundis*

Man's maker was made man, that He, Ruler of the stars, might nurse at His mother's breast; that the Bread might hunger, the Fountain thirst, the Light sleep, the Way be tired on its journey; that the Truth might be accused of false witness, the Teacher be beaten with whips, the Foundation be suspended on wood; that Strength might grow weak; that the Healer might be wounded; that Life might die. St. Augustine, *Sermons*

The Prelude

Miniatures for Christmas

Dale Wood

Ron Pearson, organist

The Welcome

Rev. Dan Hutchinson

The Introit

I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day

Ryan O'Neal

I heard the bells on Christmas Day their old familiar carols play, and wild and sweet the words repeat of peace on earth, good will to men.

I thought how, as the day had come, the belfries of all Christendom had rolled along the unbroken song of peace on earth, good will to men.

And in despair I bowed my head: "There is no peace on earth," I said. "For hate is strong and mocks the song of peace on earth, good will to men."

Then pealed the bells more loud and deep: "God is not dead, nor doth he sleep; the wrong shall fail, the right prevail, with peace on earth, good will to men."

Till, ringing singing, on its way, the world revolved from night to day, a voice, a chime, a chant sublime, of peace on earth, good will to men!

The Lighting of the Christ Candle

George and Lara DeShurley

The candles of Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love are burning. Tonight, we light the Christ candle remembering the words of Gospel of John: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God...In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

Christ is our light!

He has come to dispel the darkness!

Christ is our light!

He has come to bring light and life to all people!

Come! Let us stand in honor!

And let us worship God!

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|------------------------|------------------------------|----------------|
| ◆ The Carols 41 | O Come, All Ye Faithful | ADESTE FIDELES |
| 23 | Angels We Have Heard on High | GLORIA |

◆ **The Litany of Christmas** Rev. Julia Metcalf

The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we have beheld His glory!

Alleluia! Alleluia!

Jesus, Son of the Living God, splendor of the Father, Light eternal:

Glory to You, O Lord!

Jesus, King of glory, Sun of righteousness, born of the Virgin Mary:

Glory to You, O Lord!

Jesus, Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Lord:

Glory to You, O Lord!

Jesus, Prince of Peace, Shepherd of souls, perfect in holiness:

Glorify to You, O Lord!

Jesus, Joy of the Highest heaven, and crown of all creation:

Glorify to You, O Lord!

Christ is born! Give Him glory! Christ has come down from Heaven! Receive Him! Christ is now on earth! Exalt Him! O earth, join with the angels and sing to the Lord! O you nations, join the choirs of heaven and praise Him in joy, for He has been glorified!

Alleluia, Amen!

◆ **The Carol** 31 Hark! The Herald Angels Sing MENDELSSOHN

◆ **The Prayer of Adoration** Sam DeVore

The Old Testament Reading Genesis 3:8-15, 17-19

The Prayer of Confession Rev. James Estes

Almighty God our Heavenly Father, we confess that we have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, but what we have done, and what we have left undone. Like Adam and Eve so long ago, we have questioned Your goodness, doubted Your promises, and rejected Your authority. In shame, we hide from You, and cast blame on one another. Yet, according to Your great faithfulness, You do not give up on us. You pursue us with salvation; even to the point of taking on flesh and bone. Lord, on this night, we ask that You would forgive us our sins and by Your Spirit's power, so awaken our hearts that we might draw near and receive Christ in a manger; our Savior, and our Lord...*(in silence)*

Response to Confession What Child Is This? GREENSLEEVES

What child is this who laid to rest on Mary's lap is sleeping? Whom angels greet with anthems sweet while shepherds watch are keeping. This, this is Christ the King whom shepherds guard and angels sing. Haste, haste to bring Him laud. The babe, the son of Mary.

Why lies He in such mean estate, where ox and ass are feeding? Good Christians, fear, for sinners here the silent Word is pleading. Nails, spears shall pierce him through, the cross be born for me, for you. Hail, hail the Word made flesh, the Babe, the Son of Mary.

So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh, come, peasant, king, to own him. The King of kings salvation brings, let loving hearts enthrone him. Raise, raise the song on high, the virgin sings her lullaby. Joy, joy for Christ is born, the babe, the Son of Mary.

The Promised Forgiveness

Friends, hear and believe the good news of the gospel: In Christ, all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through Him, He has reconciled to Himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of His Cross. Therefore, we proclaim that there is indeed forgiveness for anyone who calls upon His name! **Alleluia, Amen!**

◆ **Passing the Peace of Christ**

The peace of Christ be with you! **And also with you!**

◆ **The Response of Gratitude** 40 Joy to The World!

ANTIOCH

◆ **The Affirmation of Faith**

The Nicene Creed

Rev. Estes

We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things, visible and invisible.

We believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds; God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God; begotten, not made, of one being with the Father; through whom all things were made. For us and for our salvation, He came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became truly human.

For our sake He was crucified under Pontius Pilate; He suffered death and was buried; on the third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures; He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will

come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and His Kingdom will have end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son; who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, who has spoken through His prophets. We believe one holy catholic and apostolic church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins; and we look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

The Gospel Story, Part 1

Isaiah 9:1-2, 7-9

J.P. Schemmer

Isaiah 11:1-9

Casey Savage

The Anthem

Chill of the Nightfall

Hal Hopson

Chill of the nightfall, lamps in the windows, letting their light fall clear in the snow; bitter December bids us remember Christ in the stable long, long ago. Silence of midnight, voices of angels, singing to bid night yield to the dawn; darkness is ended, sinners befriended, where in the stable Jesus is born. Splendor of starlight high on the hillside, faint is the far light burning below; kneeling before him shepherds adore him, Christ in the stable long, long ago. Glory of daybreak! Sorrows and shadows, suddenly they break forth into morn; sing out and tell now all shall be well now, for in the stable Jesus is born!

The Gospel Story, Part 2

Micah 5:2

Elizabeth DeVore

Luke 2:1-16

The Song of Preparation

Brightest and Best

Hail blessed morn, see the great Mediator, down from the regions of glory descend. Shepherds go worship the babe in a manger, lo, for a guard the bright angels attend! Say, shall we yield Him, in costly devotion, fragrance of Edom and offerings divine? Gems of the mountain and pearls of the ocean, myrrh from the forest, or gold from the mine?

*Brightest and best of sons of the morning, dawn on our darkness and lend us
Thine aid! Star in the East, the horizon adorning, guide where our infant
Redeemer was laid.*

Vainly we offer each ample oblation, vainly with gifts would His favor secure.
Richer by far is the heart's adoration, dearer to God are the prayers of the
poor. *Refrain.*

Cold on His cradle the dewdrops were shining, low lies His bed with the
beasts of the stall. Angels adore Him, in slumbers reclining, wise men and
shepherds before Him do fall. Wise men and shepherds before Him do fall.
Refrain.

The Gospel Story, Part 3

John 1:1-4, 9-14

The Homily

The Astonishing Humility of God

Rev. Dan Hutchinson

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us... (John 1:14a)

The Offertory

Jesus, Joy of the Highest Heaven

Keith and Kristyn Getty

Jesus, joy of the highest heaven, born as a little baby under a wondrous star.
Like us, crying he takes His first breath, held by His mother helpless close to
her beating heart. Jesus laid in a lowly manger, facing a world of dangers;
come to turn me, a stranger, into a child of God. Jesus, King of the highest
heaven, learning to take His first steps that He might bring us life. Like us,
knowing our smiles and sorrows, He showed the way to follow, a way that is
true and right. Jesus, take away every darkness, steady my simple footsteps
that I might, in Your goodness, live as a child of God.

The Celebration of Communion

The Words of Institution

The Prayer of Consecration

The Sharing of the Bread and Cup

The Carols

Away in a Manger

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed, the little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head. The stars in the bright sky looked down where He lay, the little Lord Jesus, asleep on the hay.

Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask Thee to stay close by me forever, and love me, I pray. Bless all the dear children in Thy tender care, and fit us for Heaven to live with Thee there.

Infant Holy, Infant Lowly

Infant holy, Infant lowly, for His bed a cattle stall; oxen lowing, little knowing Christ the Babe is Lord of all. Swift are winging Angels singing, noels ringing, tidings bringing: Christ the Babe is Lord of all.

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 prophet bards foretold, when with the ever circling years comes round the age of gold; when peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling, and the whole world send back the song which now the angels sing.

O Little Town of Bethlehem

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie! Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by. Yet in thy dark streets shineth The everlasting light; the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary, and gathered all above, while mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wondering love. O morning stars together Proclaim the holy birth! And praises sing to God the King, and peace to men on earth!

O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray; cast out our sin, and enter in, be born in us today. We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell; O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel!

The Prayer of Thanksgiving and the Lord's Prayer

The Solo

O Holy Night *Adolphe Adam, arr. Mark Hayes*
Jeffrey Metcalf, soloist

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! Oh hear the angel voices! O night divine, O night when Christ was born.

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; then ever, ever, praise we, his power and glory evermore proclaim.

The Candle Lighting

Night of Silence

Daniel Kantor

Cold are the people, winter of life, we tremble in shadows this cold endless night. Frozen in the snow lie roses sleeping, flowers that will echo the sunrise. Fire of hope is our only warmth, weary, its flame will be dying soon. Voice in the distance, call in the night, on wind you enfold us, you speak of the light. Gentle on the ear you whisper softly, rumors of a dawn so embracing. Breathless love awaits darkened souls, soon will we know of the morning.

The Carol

Silent 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.

The Benediction

The Postlude

In Dulci Jubilo

J. S. Bach

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Christmas Day Worship!

Tomorrow: 11:00 a.m.

Refreshments following worship in the Atrium.

New Year's Eve Worship!

Pancake Breakfast: 9:30 a.m., atrium

Sunday, December 31: 11:00 a.m.

Welcome to the First Church community!

Merry Christmas! We are so glad to welcome you on this holy day; your presence adds to our joy!

If you do not have a home congregation, we warmly invite you to worship with us. We are a Presbyterian Church that is Evangelical in nature, meaning we take seriously the good news that life is found in Jesus Christ alone, and that this life is on offer to the whole world! We also place ourselves in the historic Reformed tradition, and we seek to be faithful to the Lord of the Church and the apostolic tradition that we have received.

Consider worshipping with us each Sunday morning! You will find service times below. Come and lift up your heart and your voice each week with God's people.

Below, you will also find ways to cultivate faith and friendships, as well as places to serve the common good in Jesus' name. We are glad that you are here, and we pray every blessing upon you and those precious to you!

Sunday Morning Worship

- 8:00 a.m. Kerr Chapel (Traditional worship and weekly communion)
- 8:30 a.m. Stephenson Hall (Contemporary worship and weekly communion)
- 11:00 a.m. Sanctuary (Traditional worship with choir)
- 11:00 a.m. Stephenson Hall (Contemporary worship and weekly communion)
- 11:00 a.m. Great Hall, Bernsen Center (Tulsa International Fellowship).

Our 11:00 o'clock Sanctuary Service:

Broadcast, Cox Channel 3, live at 11:00 a.m.,
Rebroadcast, 5:00 and 10:00 p.m.

Streamed on Facebook, Youtube, *FirstChurchTulsa.org/YouTube*,
and the FPC Website: www.firstchurchtulsa.org

Growing Your Faith!

Adult Discipleship

- Sunday School: 9:30 a.m. (15 classes available.)
- Weekday Bible studies.
- KGroups – Home-based fellowship groups.
- Wednesday Night Downtown – Full programming for all ages.
 - Optional Dinner 5:30, Stephenson Hall for all
 - 6:00 p.m. AWANA Clubs for children through grade 4
 - 6:00 p.m. Middle School (Pathfinders), High School (Exodus)
 - 6:15 p.m. Adult Classes
- Pastors' Studies
 - Rev. Dan Hutchinson, Sundays, 9:30 a.m.
 - Rev. Wambugu Gachungi, Wednesdays 6:15 p.m.

- Quarterly spiritual retreats and other opportunities for prayer and spiritual formation

Tulsa International Fellowship – Join with others from across the world for a time of worship and fellowship each Sunday at 11:00 a.m. in the Great Hall, Bernsen Center.

Young Adults – First Church is committed to providing a place for Young Adults to connect with one another and with the larger church. Find us on Facebook and Instagram at *Young Adult Ministries@FPC* or contact Rev. Julia Metcalf at 918-301-1030.

Inquirers' Class – A “No-strings-attached” opportunity to explore what it means to say “Yes” to Jesus, embrace His Church, and learn about this particular family of faith. Questions are invited. Friendships are formed. Our next class begins Sunday, January 21, 9:15 a.m. (for four weeks). To register, contact Patricia Hall at 918-301-1028.

Presbyterian Women – Monthly fellowship and Bible study meetings.

Serving the Master!

Helping Hand Ministry – Helping to prevent evictions and keep the utilities on, Helping Hand Ministry provides funds to those in need of a hand up. Come and see the good being done any Monday or Tuesday from 9-noon.

Guild of Intercessors – Intercessory prayer group that believes prayer is powerful and life-changing.

Faith Partners – A ministry offering compassion, resources, education and hope for those affected by addiction.

Deacons – Join the Deacons in serving those in need – the sick, the isolated and lonely, to any who may be overwhelmed or distressed – both within and beyond this community of faith.

Hope is Alive – Join the deacons in one of eight annual visits with the residents of Hope is Alive community. Come witness God’s power, quietly forging radical life transformation in those suffering from addiction.

Global Mission Trips – Serve Christ in the world through mission partnerships around the world. 2024 partner visits include a journey to North Carolina in May, Ireland in July and hosting a delegation from Kenya in the Fall. For details, email Hannah at damron@firstchurchtulsa.org

Works of HeART – Weekly art class for clients at the Day Center for the Homeless.

Masterwork Academy For Faith and Fine Arts – Training K-5th grade students, daily after school, in the joys of music, visual art, ballet, theater, fitness, and Bible study.

Marion Anderson Elementary School – There is always a way to be a blessing at Anderson, our partner in education school: be a weekly lunch buddy, help in the classroom, read to a student, or serve at a community night.

Children’s Ministries – Serve with us in the church’s Nursery, Preschool, or Elementary ministries by teaching, planning, or rocking babies!

Telecare – Help us keep in touch with homebound members and those who need encouragement.

Music Ministries!

First Church strives to glorify God across the broad spectrum of musical language. From children’s worship arts and seasonal youth ensembles to the adult Chancel Choir, Contemporary Worship Team, and TIF band, plus a handbell choir, and Gloria women's choir, there is a place for you to use your musical gifts at First Church.

Next Generation Ministries! *(Cradle to College)*

Children's Ministries - We are committed to coming alongside families as they raise their children in the faith of Jesus Christ. We focus on Spiritual Education, Worship, Service, and Fellowship by offering Sunday morning programming, Awana, VBS, and special events throughout the year.

FPC Youth - A community of Middle School (5th - 8th) and High School (9th - 12th) students who seek to grow in their relationship with Christ; encouraging one another in the day-to-day, and living as the Church here and now!

University Ministries – Designed to reach, teach, and love college-aged students throughout Tulsa so they may be life-long followers of Jesus Christ. Find us on Instagram at *@ukirktulsa* for more information.

For more information on any of the above, please contact the church office at 918-584-4701 or www.firstchurchtulsa.org.

First Presbyterian Church of Tulsa links

Website: *FirstChurchTulsa.org*

YouTube: *FirstChurchTulsa.org/YouTube*

Facebook: *@FirstChurchTulsa*

Instagram: *@FirstChurchTulsa*

LinkedIn: *@FirstChurchTulsa*

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