

*A Celebration of
Christmas*



*Seven-thirty o'clock in the Evening
December 24, 2022
Sanctuary*

*First Presbyterian Church
Tulsa, OK*

December 24, 2022
Half-past seven o'clock in the evening

CHRISTMAS: THE DRAMA OF GOD'S INCARNATION

The hinge of history is on the door of a Bethlehem stable.

Ralph Sockman

Infinite, and an infant. Eternal, yet born of a woman. Almighty, yet hanging on a woman's breast. Supporting a universe, yet needing to be carried in a mother's arms. Heir of all things, and yet the carpenter's despised son.

Charles Spurgeon

The Prelude

Miniatures for Christmas

Dale Wood

Ron Pearson, organist

The Duet

Brightest and Best

Jaclyn Metcalf, Eric Baird

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.*

Come, Adore the Humble King

Come, adore the humble King, lowly in the manger; fall before
His majesty, hail the little Savior! Hope what hope no tongue
could tell, God has come with us to dwell, His name is Emmanuel,
O praise the humble King!

Come, adore in humble state, He the song of angels! Join the
wise who call His name --and with all creation. Who, O who,
would condescend? God unknown now calls us friend; Love that
none could comprehend, O praise the humble King!

Come, adore the King who came to our world to save us; born to
heal our prideful race, crown us with forgiveness! Fall, O fall,
before the one, Who in mercy left His throne; Christ the Lord
God's only Son, His glories now we sing!

O praise the humble King, come adore, come adore; come adore
the King, bow before come adore the Name above all names!

The Call to Join the Heavenly Choir

The Rev. Julia Metcalf

Once upon a night God poked His face into our world. In fact,
He did more than that: He drew near; He came among us. No,
wait. It was even closer than that: He knocked on the door of
our hearts. That's what He did. And He said: "If anyone opens
the door, I *will* come in!"

Come, let's sing our way to Bethlehem.

Caroling!

It Came Upon a 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.

And ye, beneath life's crushing load, whose forms are bending
low, who toil along the climbing way with painful steps and
slow: look now! For glad and golden hours come swiftly on the
wing; O rest beside the weary road and hear 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.

How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of His heaven.
No ear may hear His coming, but in this world of sin, where
meek souls will receive Him still, the dear Christ enters in.

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!

I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day (Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, AD 1863)

I heard the bells on Christmas day their old familiar carols play,

and mild and sweet their songs repeat: of peace on earth good will to men.

It was as if an earthquake rent the hearth-stones of a continent, and made forlorn the households born 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!"

The Prayers for the Weary World

Then rang the bells more loud and deep: God is not dead, nor does he sleep! The wrong shall fail, the right prevail with peace on earth, good will to men!

The Faithfulness of God

God is not dead –nor does He sleep. He is at work redemptively forever and always. Even tonight. Even in this House of Prayer. In Jesus, God comes in person. He comes as the Great Good Shepherd who loves His flock, determined to deal with, and to save us from, every enemy, including our sins. This is His glory: His mercy and grace is poured out upon the world that He loves...

The Duet

The Glory of God

Words by David Scheiper

Samuel and Lucy Donohue

The Lord is my Shepherd –He reigns from on high! He guards His whole flock, from our birth 'til we die. God gave us His Son, One to save us from sin; His mercy and grace he poured out on all men.

He gave life eternal to share life with Him; He built us a house

to abide in Heaven. To God be the glory –the great *Three-in-One*! We praise Him and thank Him for all He has done.

God gave me a family and friends far and near, to honor and cherish and love through the years. Together we worship our Lord God most high; in Him we can trust and on Him we rely!

The Lighting of the Christ Candle

The Scheiper Family

Jim, Amy, William, David and Jonathan

The candles of Hope, Peace, Joy and Love are burning. We light the Christ candle, tonight, remembering the angel's Christmas proclamation:

“Behold, I bring you good news of a great joy that is for all the people; for unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Savior, who is Christ the Lord!”

“Come, join us,” say the shepherds! “Come and see!”

“Come, join us,” say the Magi. “Come, and adore!”

And to each and all of us He offers the great invitation:

“Come! Receive your King!”

♦ **The Carol** 41

O Come, All Ye Faithful

ADESTE FIDELES

The Christmas Greeting

The Rev. Julia Metcalf

Christ has come! Christ is Here! The peace of Christ be with you!

And also with you!

♦ **The Carol** 40

Joy to the World!

ANTIOCH

Well, it all happened once upon a night in the tiny town called Nazareth. God sent a message to a young Jewish woman, named Mary. She was engaged to man named, Joseph, whom she loved very much.

Gabriel suddenly appeared to Mary and said, “Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you!” Mary didn’t know what to think. She was confused and surprised.

“Don’t be afraid, Mary,” said the angel ---for God is smiling upon you. He wants you to know that you will conceive and give birth to a baby boy ---and you will name Him Jesus.

He will be very great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord will give him the throne of his ancestor David – and this child shall reign forever over Israel: his Kingdom will never end!”

Mary asked the angel, “But how can this happen? I am not yet living with my betrothed.”

And Gabriel said: “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, Mary, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the baby to be born in you will be holy, and he will be called the Son of God. And be assured of this: the Word of God will never fail.

And Mary said to the angel: “I am the Lord’s servant. Let it be done to me according to your word.” And then the angel left her.

The Carol 16 The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came

Stanzas 1 – 3 only

GABRIEL’S MESSAGE

"She will bear a son, and you will call his name, Jesus. He will save you from your sins." He will save us from our sins. He will save me from my sins. Amen.

The Story An Unexpected Edict From Rome (Luke 2)

So Joseph in love, embraced his pregnant Mary –and then it happened. A decree went out from Augustus Caesar that touched every part of Israel. Everyone had to go back to their ancestral home in order to be registered for a census. So Joseph and Mary travelled all the way to a little town called Bethlehem, about 75 miles –just when Mary was about to have her baby.

Such a long trip. How hard and difficult it must have been. When they arrived in Bethlehem they had nowhere to go. Finally they found a quiet place out in one of the caves, where the animals would be put up for the night. The carol tells the story and includes in stanza three our prayer on this holy night.

The Solo O Holy Night Adolphe Adam, arr. Mark Hayes *Rev. Julia 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 Prayers of the People

The Story

God's Angel Army Sings

Jacob Hand

That night in Bethlehem shepherds, as always, were outside guarding their flocks. An angel of the Lord suddenly showed up right above them, the glory of the Lord shone around them, and the shepherds and their sheep were terrified.

“Fear not!” said the angel, “for look—I’m bringing you good news of great joy for all the people. For tonight right over there in Bethlehem, a Savior is born for you –the Messiah, the Lord! Go and see for yourselves! And you’ll know it’s the truth when you find a little baby wrapped in bands of cloth, lying in a manger, that’s right: where the animals feed.”

And suddenly there was with the angel a great choir of angels praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”

The Anthem

How Great Our Joy

German carol, arr. John Rutter

While by the sheep we watched at night, glad tidings brought an angel bright. *How great our joy! Praise we the Lord in heaven on high!* There shall be born, so he did say, in Bethlehem a child today. *Refrain.* There shall the child lie in a stall, this child who shall redeem us all. *Refrain.* This gift of God we’ll cherish well, that ever joy our hearts shall fill. *Refrain.*

The Homily God's Ludicrous Arrival --and What it Means for Us

You will find Him...lying in a manger.

Luke 2:12

The Solo

Away in a Manger

Samuel Donohue, soloist

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

Congregation joins:

The cattle are lowing, the poor baby wakes, but little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes. I love thee, Lord Jesus, look down from the sky, and stay by my side until morning is nigh.

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.

The Story The Gift of Worship (Matthew 2)

Rev. Wambugu Gachungi

And then, magi arrived, these mysterious wise men from distant lands. On entering the house, the magi saw the Child with Mary his mother. There were no royal trappings, nothing to suggest that this is the King of all kings.

But when the wise men saw Jesus they knelt before Him --as if that were the most fitting response to His arrival. That much they knew. It was crystal clear in the darkness.

The Anthem

Christmas Lullaby

John Rutter

Clear in the darkness, a light shines in Bethlehem: angels are singing, their sounds fill the air. Wise men have journeyed to greet their Messiah, but only a mother and baby lie there.

Ave Maria, hear the soft lullaby the angel hosts sing. Ave Maria, maiden, and mother of Jesus our King.

Where are his courtiers, and who are his people? Why does he bear neither scepter nor crown? Shepherd his courtiers, the poor for his people, with peace as his scepter and love for his crown. *Refrain.*

What though your treasures are not gold or incense? Lay them before him with hearts full of love. Praise to the Christ child, and praise to his mother who bore us a Savior by grace from above. *Refrain.*

Sharing the Light of the World

The Candle-lighting

In Him was life, and His life was the Light of all. The Light shines in the darkness and the darkness has never overcome it! John 1:4-5

The Anthem

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. Spirit among us, shine like

the star, your light that guides shepherds and kings from afar. Shimmer in the sky so empty, lonely, rising in the warmth of your Son's love. Star unknowing of night and day, spirit we wait for your loving Son.

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."

(we lift our candles on the 3rd stanza)

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 Charge and Benediction**

(Please extinguish candles and bring them to the receptacles at the doors of Stephenson Hall following worship.)

◆ **The Postlude**

In Dulci Jubilo

J. S. Bach

◆ *Please stand*

Christmas Day Worship!

Tomorrow: 11:00 a.m.

Refreshments following worship in the Atrium.

Welcome to the First Church community!

Merry Christmas! We welcome you on this holy night; your presence adds to our joy!

Jesus established the Church –and if you don't have a home congregation, we warmly invite you to explore the spiritual DNA of this church family -- represented here. We're a local expression of the Body of Christ, a Reformed and Evangelical Presbyterian Church, seeking to be faithful to the Lord of the Church and the apostolic tradition that we have received.

Consider worshipping with us each Sunday morning! Look at the service times (below) and resolve to lift up your heart and voice each week. Consider the opportunities to cultivate faith and friendships here.

Check out the ways you might serve the common good in Jesus' name. We're glad you're here and we pray every blessing upon you and those precious to you!

Sunday Morning Worship

8:00 a.m. Kerr Chapel (weekly communion)

8:30 a.m. Stephenson Hall (informal worship, weekly communion)

11:00 a.m. Sanctuary (Traditional, with choir)

11:00 a.m. Stephenson Hall (Contemporary, with praise band, 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 mornings: 9:30 a.m. --fifteen Sunday morning classes
- 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 AWANA Clubs for children through grade 4
- 6:15 Middle School (Pathfinders), High School (Exodus)
- 6:15 Adult Classes
- Pastors’ Studies
Dr. Jim Miller, Wednesdays at 11:30 and 6:15,
Sundays, 9:30
Rev. Dan Hutchinson, Sundays, 9:30
Rev. Wambugu Gachungi, Wednesdays 6:15
- 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 Dan Hutchinson at 918-301-1040.

Inquirers’ Class – An “No-strings-attached” opportunity to explore what it means to say “Yes” to Jesus, embracing His Church, learning about this particular family of faith. Questions are invited. Friendships are formed. Our next class begins Sunday, January 15, 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 needs 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 serving those in need – to 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. 2023 partner visits include a journey to Ireland in June and Kenya in July. For details, email Hannah (hdamron@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/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.