

Hymn Notes:

“God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen”

This very old and well-known carol is not in our current *Glory to God* hymnal—that’s why we’ve printed the words. It was first published in 18th century England, probably around 1770. Even then it was introduced as “an ancient carol, sung in the streets of London.” In fact, old London had municipal watchmen who were licensed to perform certain tasks, including the singing of Christmas carols. This was one of their songs.

In *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens, Ebenezer Scrooge hears this song sung joyously in the street and tells the singer he’ll hit him with a ruler unless he stops singing. Of course that was not the intended response to this carol.

Commas are very important in hymns including the opening line of this one. It is not, as so often thought, addressed to merry gentlemen but rather to those who may be anxious. Indeed, its message of God’s reassuring love is specifically directed at the shepherds who are frightened by the sudden appearance of an angel in their midst. That also explains the gender specific language. The comma is often misplaced in the singing, if not in the printing. The meaning is “God keep you merry, gentlemen.”

BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS TO...

Sunday, December 29: Joyce Worley, Sarah Worley, Georgia Gordon

Monday, December 30: Doug Winder, Kaleb Adkisson

Tuesday, December 31: Mark Johnston, Nancy Turner

Wednesday, January 1: Jacob Mattheus

Thursday, January 2: Sheena Watkins, Cambia Woodford,
Robert Wood

Friday, January 3: Rocky Davis

Saturday, January 4: Martha Tobiassen, Louise Mylin, Brenda Williams
Pam Jeffre, Olive Scales, Oskar Scales



If you see someone whose birthday is listed and you haven’t seen them in church recently, give them a call!

The flowers in the sanctuary today are given to the glory of God by



Friends of Northwood



Flower orders & donation costs for flowers ordered for worship are made using the “2019-2020 Flower Reservation Chart” on the bulletin board across from the kitchen. Thank you to those providing flowers each week In Honor/In Memory of someone or an anniversary/birthday!

FAITHFULLY SERVING NORTHWOOD CHURCH TODAY

GREETERS:

Sharon Card & Ed Puschmann

USHERS:

Roger Snay & Polly Brown
Jon & Vickie Mills

VAN DRIVER: Jerry Koski

Ushers & Greeters



Acolytes

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

10:00 AM CHILDREN’S CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

3 Yr. Olds-2nd Grade (19/20 School Year)

Children remain in service with their family or join us in room 3 for a multi-age Sunday School worship following the anthem.

**11:00 AM MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOL
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION**

The Middle & High School youth (6th-12th graders) are NOT meeting this week for Sunday School.

ADULT CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

9:30 A.M. TCI (Today’s Christian Issues) Rooms 9-11

TCI will not meet today, December 29th. We’ll resume on January 5, 2020 with new discussions of contemporary issues and their effects on our faith journey. And, as always, we’ll have coffee and cookies to enrich the conversations.

11:00 A.M. Experiencing God Class Room 15, led by Vicki Krueger

Experiencing God will not meet today, December 29th. We will resume January 5th.

The Experiencing God class offers you a place to connect with other believers in the study of God’s word and how it applies to our daily lives. Our goals: to grow in our understanding of the Bible, as Jesus’ own group of disciples did; to meet the needs of others in our group in prayer and ministry; to become equipped for evangelism; and to let the living Word of God dwell richly in us.

11:30 A.M. Sunday Morning Bible Study

This Bible study will not meet today, December 29th. We will resume January 5th.

This Bible study meets at 11:30am on Sunday mornings in room 8 of the Christian Education Building. We are studying the minor prophets from the Old Testament. We are looking at God’s message of hope and reconciliation to God’s people while they were in exile. The book we are using is part of the *Immersion Bible Studies*— *Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, and Jonah* by Bruce Epperly. If you have any questions or would like to purchase a book for the study, please contact Cindy Huffman 727-409-8727 or lucindy1@aol.com. This is a discussion class and is approximately one hour in length. All are welcome! Come join us!

**Welcome To
Northwood Presbyterian
Church**

A Stephen Ministry Church

December 29, 2019



Ministers: All Members of the Church

E. Chris Curvin, Pastor
Paul Means, Associate Pastor for Congregational Care & Mission

Northwood Presbyterian Church

2875 State Road 580, Clearwater, FL 33761
(727) 796-8090 Fax (727) 797-8276
www.northwoodpc.org



Like us on Facebook!
facebook.com/npc.clearwater

Order for the Public Worship of God

December 29, 2019

1st Sunday of Christmas

10:00 AM Worship Service

WELCOME TO WORSHIP

(Let the congregation be silent, and in prayer as the music begins.
Please silence electronic devices.)

CALL TO WORSHIP (Responsive)

Leader: Let us proclaim the gracious deeds of God;

People: for the steadfast love of the Lord is great.

Leader: Now we have seen the saving love of the Lord,

People: the glory of God’s people and a light to all.

Leader: Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts;

People: in faith let us worship God!

OPENING VOLUNARY “Away in a Manger” arr. Diane Bish

(Acolytes symbolically bring in the light of Christ & then take it out into the world.)

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

*PASSING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

(Please complete the bulletin insert, “FRIENDSHIP SHEET,” and pass it toward the center aisle.)

*HYMN #119 “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing” MENDELSSOHN

CALL TO CONFESSION Rev. Jack Alwood

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (Together)

God of love, as we reflect back on this past year and to live out our faith in the year upcoming, we confess our weaknesses, failures, and transgressions, our broken promises, our selfishness and our lack of faith in your goodness and grace. O Dear Lord, for these sins of commission and omission, may you show us mercy, grant us forgiveness and by your grace empower us to live faithful lives that make a difference for Jesus’ sake in whose name we pray. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

*CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE #581 GREATOREX

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be,

world without end. Amen, amen.

SOLO “Who Is This Child” Benjamin Harlan

Michele White, Soloist arr. Tom Fettke

Why to this Babe do angels sing, and why do treasure wise men bring?

And why a crown about His head as shepherds worship at His bed?

Who is the Child so sweet and mild? Is He a child or a king?

A glist’ning star lights up the sky, a brighter light shines in reply.

One tiny Infant clothed with grace, gives life to all who seek His face.

Who is this Child so sweet and mild? Is He a child or a king?

Come bow before this Holy One, the newborn Christ, God’s chosen Son,

A child who at His royal birth was heaven’s gift to all the earth.

Who is this Child so sweet and mild? Is He a child or a king?

He is a Child, and our King.

--text by Patricia King Stowell

OUR MINISTRY WITH THE CHILDREN

(Children ages 3yrs – 2nd grade are welcome to remain in service with their parents or join us in room 3 for Children’s Church.)

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & 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 debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

CALL TO OFFERING

MUSICAL OFFERING Anna Laura Page

“Ding Dong! Merrily on High/He Is Born!”

Heather Wood & Sarah Flaherty

Ding dong! Merrily on high in heav’n the bells are ringing.

Ding dong! Verily the sky is riv’n with angel singing.

Gloria, “Hosanna in excelsis!”

He is born, the divine Christ-child. Play the oboe and bagpipes merrily!

He is born, the divine Christ-child. Sing we all of the infant mild.

Through long ages of the past prophets have foretold His coming!

Through long ages of the past now the time has come at last!

*DOXOLOGY—#606 OLD HUNDREDTH

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;

Praise God, all creatures here below;

Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;

Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

*HYMN “God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen” GOD REST YOU MERRY

God rest you merry, gentlemen, let nothing you dismay,

for Jesus Christ our Savior was born upon this day,

to save us all from Satan’s power when we were gone astray.

O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy, O tiding of comfort and joy.

In Bethlehem and Judah this blessed babe was born,

and laid within a manger upon this blessed morn:

for which his mother Mary did nothing to take in scorn.

O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy, O tiding of comfort and joy.

From God our heavenly Father a blessed angel came,

and unto certain shepherds brought tidings of the same,

how that in Bethlehem was born the Son of God by name.

O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy, O tiding of comfort and joy.

The shepherds at those tidings rejoiced much in mind,

and left their flocks a feeding in tempest, storm and wind,

and went to Bethlehem strait-way, the blessed babe to find.

O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy, O tiding of comfort and joy.

Now to the Lord sing praises, all you within this place,

and with true love and brotherhood each other now embrace;

this holy tide of Christmas all others doth deface.

O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy, O tiding of comfort and joy.

WE GROW IN THE WORD

SCRIPTURE READING Luke 2:22-40 NRSV(page 833)

MESSAGE “Eyes That See the Salvation of God”

Paul Means, Associate Pastor

WE GO OUT TO SERVE

*HYMN #140 “Once in Royal David’s City” IRBY

Once in Royal David’s city stood a lowly cattle shed,

where mother laid her baby in a manger for his bed:

Mary was that mother mild; Jesus Christ, her little child.

He came down to earth from heaven who is God and Lord of all,

and his shelter was a stable, and his cradle was a stall;

with the poor and meek and lowly, lived on earth our Savior holy.

Jesus is our childhood’s pattern; day by day like us he grew;

he was little, weak and helpless; tears and smiles like us he knew;

and he feels for all our sadness, and he shares in all our gladness.

And our eyes at last shall see him, through his own redeeming love;

for that child so dear and gentle is our Lord in heaven above;

and he leads his children on to the place where he is gone.

*BENEDICTION

SUNG BLESSING “Peace Be to You” Paul Manz

(please be seated) Michele White, Soloist

Peace be to you and grace from him who freed us from our sins,

Who loved us all and shed his blood that we might saved be.

Sing holy, holy to our Lord, the Lord, Almighty God,

Who was and is and is to come; sing holy, holy, Lord!

CLOSING VOLUNTARY “Good King Wenceslas” Daniel E. Gawthrop

(You are invited to reflect on the worship service during the closing voluntary. If you must leave before the end of the service, please respect those who remain and leave quietly.)

*Congregation will stand. If standing is difficult for you, feel free to remain seated

Stephanie Carson, Music Director

Tom Huffman, Organist and Associate Music Director