

Order for the Public Worship of God
December 20, 2020
4th Sunday of Advent
11:00 AM Worship Service

WE COME TO WORSHIP

OPENING VOLUNTARY

“O Come, All Ye Faithful”
Jubilation Handbells
“O Come, All Ye Faithful”
Piano and Organ

arr. Douglas E. Wagner

arr. Mark Hayes

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP

“Love Came Down at Christmas”
Stephanie Carson, Soloist

GARTAN

*Love came down at Christmas, Love all lovely, Love divine;
Love was born at Christmas star and angels gave the sign.*

*Worship we the Godhead, Love incarnate, Love divine;
Worship we our Jesus, but where-with for sacred sign?*

*Love shall be our token; love be yours and love be mine;
love to God and all men, love for plea and gift and sign.*

Text by Christina G. Rossetti, 1895

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Paul Means, Associate Pastor

CAROL #119

“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”

MENDELSSOHN

**Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the new born king.
Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!”
Joyful, all ye nations rise; join the triumph of the skies;
with angelic host proclaim, “Christ is born in Bethlehem!”
Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the new born king!”**

**Christ, by highest heaven adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord,
late in time behold him come, offspring of the virgin’s womb.
Veiled in flesh the God head see; hail the incarnate deity,
pleased in flesh with us to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel.
Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the new born 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.
Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the new born king!”**

THE ADVENT CANDLE OF LOVE

Lighting the Candle, Kevin, Laura, Shannon & Liam O’Leary

The reader offers words about the candle of love.

RESPONSE

Reader:and so we offer this mysterious prayer:

All: **Lord Jesus, into our darkness, quickly come.**

All singing: **Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.**

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION *(Together)*

While we ask, Lord, for the most meaningful Advent season ever, we sadly confess having done so little with so much. Forgive us Lord, for not bending the knee, for not reading your Word, for not searching our hearts, for not facing our sins. Grant that when Christmas morning comes to us, we may have a fresh resolve to live to the praise of Christ's glory. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE

REGENT SQUARE

**Angels, from the realms of glory, wing your flight o'er all the earth;
you who sang creation's story, now proclaim Messiah's birth:
come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the new born king!**

SOLO

**"Breath of Heaven"
Sarah Flaherty, Soloist**

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

CAROL #140
(stanzas 1,2,4)

"Once in Royal David's City"

IRBY

**Once in royal David's city stood a lowly cattle shed,
where a 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 weak and lowly, lived on earth our Savior holy.**

**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.**

WE GROW IN THE WORD

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Romans 16:25-27; Luke 1:26-38 (NRSV)

SERMON

Advent Series: The World Is Not Yet Finished
#4 "Turning Towards Love"
Chris Curvin, Pastor

WE GO OUT TO SERVE

CAROL #123
(stanzas 1,2,5)

"It Came Upon the Midnight Clear"

CAROL

**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 angel sing.**

Still through the cloven skies they come, with peaceful wings unfurled,

**and still their heavenly music floats o'er all the weary world:
above its sad and lowly plains they bend on hovering wing,
and ever o'er its Babel sounds the blessed angels sing.**

**For lo, the days are hastening on, by prophets seen of old,
when with the ever circling years shall come the time for told,
when peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling,
and the whole world give back the song which now the angels sing.**

BENEDICTION

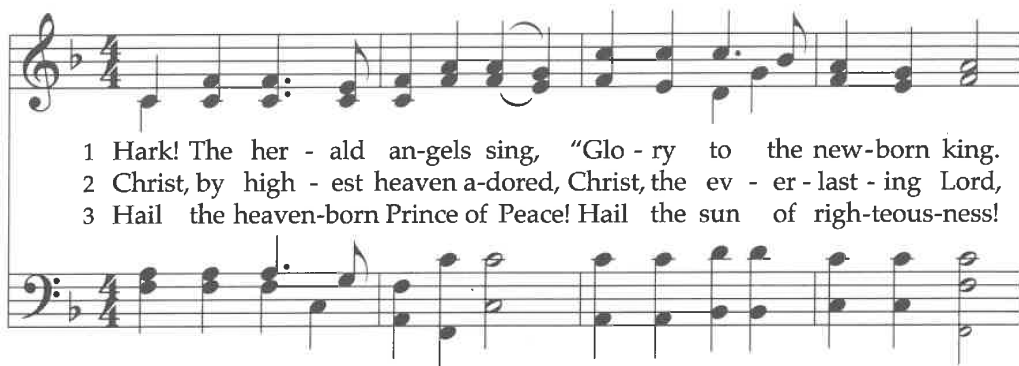
CLOSING VOLUNTARY

“Toccata on MENDELSSOHN”
(Hark! The Herald Angels Sing)

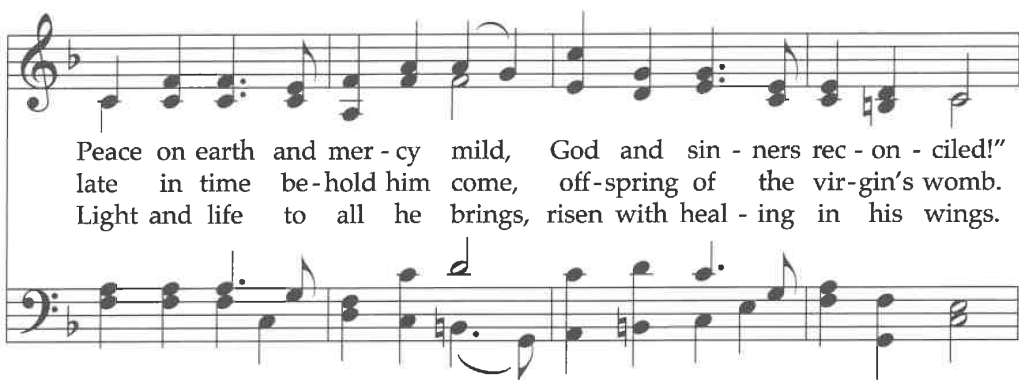
Joel Raney

Stephanie Carson, Music Director
Tom Huffman, Organist & Associate Music Director

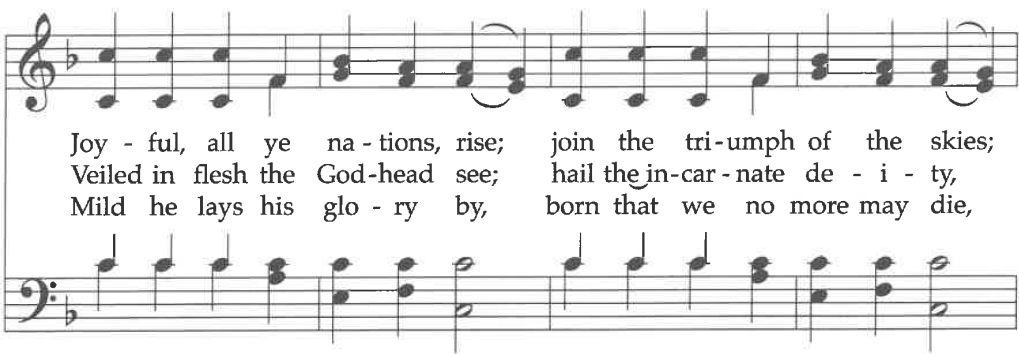
119 Hark! The Herald Angels Sing



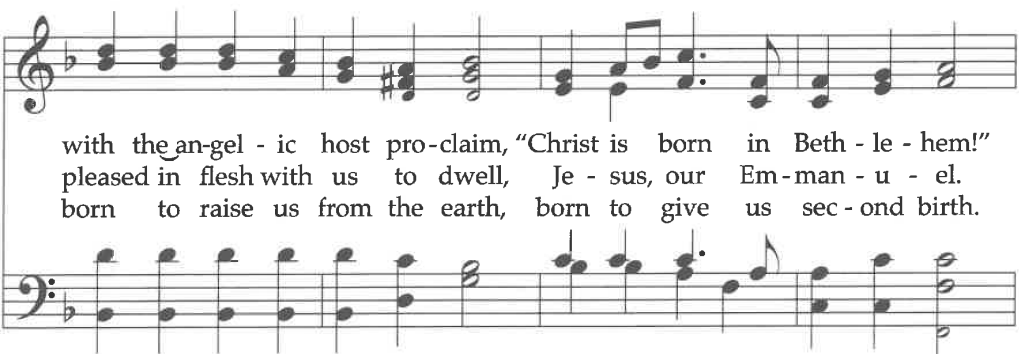
1 Hark! The her - ald an-gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born king.
 2 Christ, by high - est heaven a-dored, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord,
 3 Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the sun of righ-teous-ness!



Peace on earth and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled!"
 late in time be-hold him come, off-spring of the vir-gin's womb.
 Light and life to all he brings, risen with heal - ing in his wings.



Joy - ful, all ye na - tions, rise; join the tri-umph of the skies;
 Veiled in flesh the God-head see; hail the in-car - nate de - i - ty,
 Mild he lays his glo - ry by, born that we no more may die,



with the an-gel - ic host pro-claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"
 pleased in flesh with us to dwell, Je - sus, our Em-man - u - el.
 born to raise us from the earth, born to give us sec - ond birth.

Brought together in the mid-19th century, the text and tune of this familiar carol began in quite different forms. The text had ten stanzas and began, "Hark, how all the welkin rings." The tune was created for a festival celebrating Gutenberg's introduction of moveable type.

Once in Royal David's City 140

1 Once in roy - al Da - vid's cit - y stood a low - ly
 2 He came down to earth from heav - en who is God and
 3 Je - sus is our child - hood's pat - tern; day by day like
 4 And our eyes at last shall see him, through his own re -

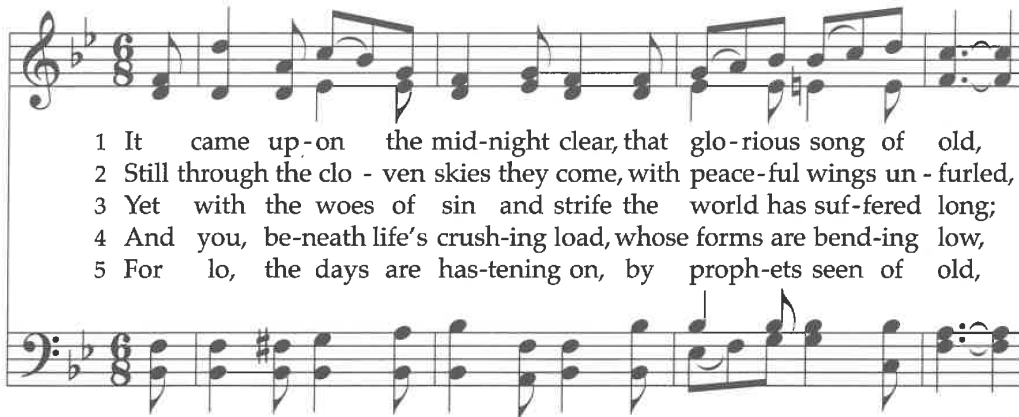
cat - tle shed, where a moth - er laid her ba - by in a
 Lord of all, and his shel - ter was a sta - ble, and his
 us he grew; he was lit - tle, weak and help - less; tears and
 deem - ing love; for that child so dear and gen - tle is our

man - ger for his bed: Mar - y was that moth - er
 cra - dle was a stall; with the poor and meek and
 smiles like us he knew; and he feels for all our
 Lord in heaven a - bove; and he leads his chil - dren

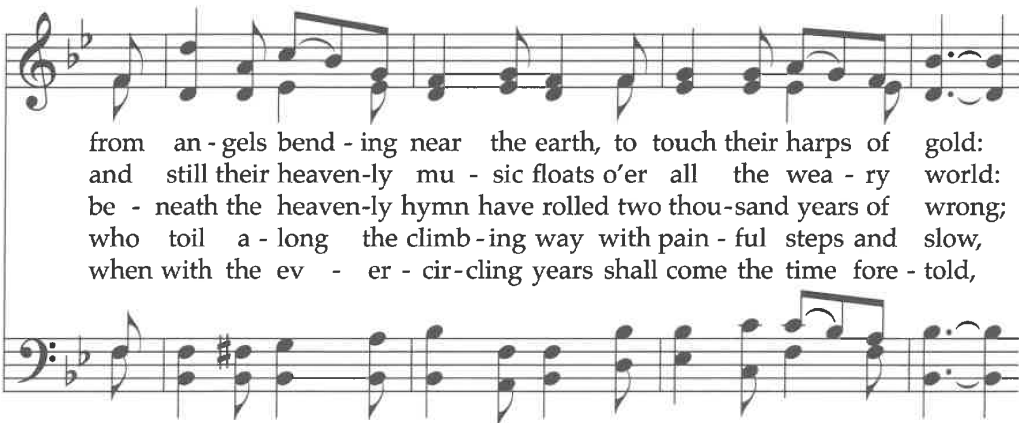
mild; Je - sus Christ, her lit - tle child.
 low - ly, lived on earth our Sav - ior ho - ly.
 sad - ness, and he shares in all our glad - ness.
 on to the place where he is gone.

Like "All Things Bright and Beautiful" (see no. 20), this popular Christmas hymn was written by an Irish poet to illustrate for children the various articles of the Apostles' Creed. It is not known which of several English villages the composer had in mind when naming this tune.

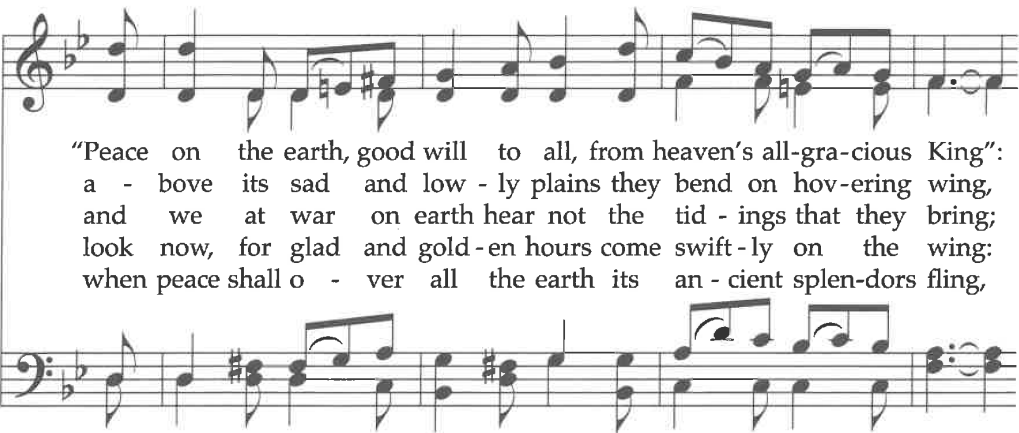
123 It Came Upon the Midnight Clear



1 It came up-on the mid-night clear, that glo-rious song of old,
 2 Still through the clo - ven skies they come, with peace-ful wings un - furled,
 3 Yet with the woes of sin and strife the world has suf-fered long;
 4 And you, be-neath life's crush-ing load, whose forms are bend-ing low,
 5 For lo, the days are has-tening on, by proph-ets seen of old,



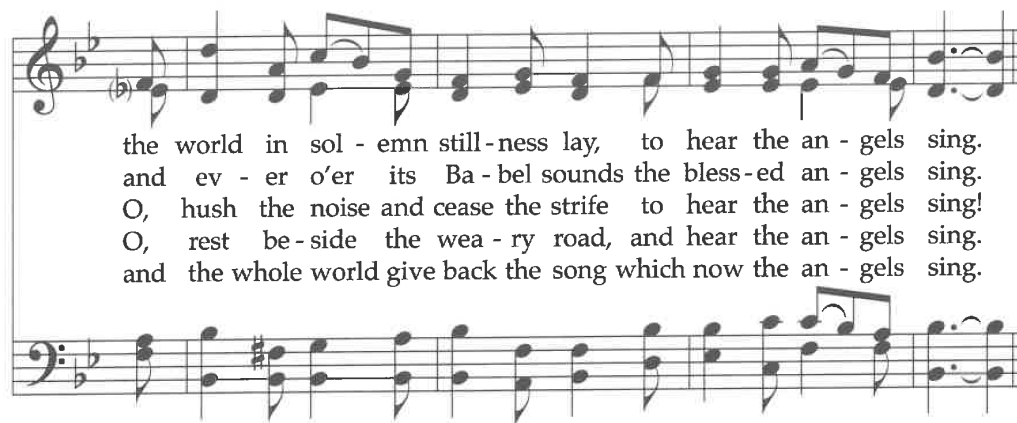
from an - gels bend - ing near the earth, to touch their harps of gold:
 and still their heaven-ly mu - sic floats o'er all the wea - ry world:
 be - neath the heaven-ly hymn have rolled two thou-sand years of wrong;
 who toil a - long the climb-ing way with pain - ful steps and slow,
 when with the ev - er - cir-cling years shall come the time fore - told,



"Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heaven's all-gra-cious King":
 a - bove its sad and low - ly plains they bend on hov-ering wing,
 and we at war on earth hear not the tid - ings that they bring;
 look now, for glad and gold-en hours come swift - ly on the wing:
 when peace shall o - ver all the earth its an - cient splen-dors fling,

The "it" of the first line of this text by a Unitarian minister does not refer to the birth of Jesus, but to "that glorious song of old," the angelic tidings of peace on earth. The restored third stanza laments how often the noise of human strife has obscured that message.

JESUS CHRIST: BIRTH



the world in sol - emn still - ness lay, to hear the an - gels sing.
and ev - er o'er its Ba - bel sounds the bless - ed an - gels sing.
O, hush the noise and cease the strife to hear the an - gels sing!
O, rest be - side the wea - ry road, and hear the an - gels sing.
and the whole world give back the song which now the an - gels sing.