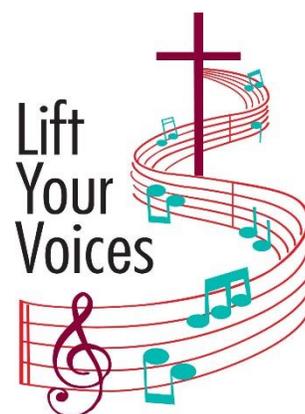


WORSHIP SERVICE IN HYMN AND WORD

December 27, 2020

Gaylord United Church of Christ, Gaylord MN



Welcome and News of the Church

Statement of Welcome

**No matter who I am, No matter where I am on life's journey,
I am welcome here. No matter who you are, no matter where you are on life's journey,
You are welcome here!**

Statement of Purpose

One: Who are you?

All: I am a beloved child of God!

One: What does that mean?

All: I am a person of worth to be valued!

One: Then what will you do?

**All: I will live a life of Love and Acceptance of
myself and all God's people!**

Prelude

Sandy Wentzloff

Call to Worship

Glory to God in the highest!

And hope to every discouraged heart.

Glory to God in the highest!

And peace to every conflicted soul.

Glory to God in the highest!

And joy to every downcast spirit.

Glory to God in the highest!

And love to everyone.

Let us sing praises to our God.

Let us offer this light against the darkness

GATHERING HYMN

"Once in Royal David's City"

vs 1, 2, 3 NCH #145

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.

Jesus came down to earth from heaven, who is God and Head of all,
sheltered in a rustic stable, cradled in a common stall;
With the poor and meek and lowly, lived on earth our Savior holy.

And through all His wondrous childhood, Jesus honored and obeyed,
Loved and watched the tender mother, whose strong arms a cradle made.
So, like Jesus, we should be, serving God obediently.

INVOCATION

Let us pray,

Holy God of love, there is light in our lives because of the abundance of your steadfast love. A love so vast, so deep, so real, that you became one of us. May we live within the power of this love and may we share its light with a world where too many dwell in darkness. Amen

MEDLEY of CHRISTMAS HYMNS

“O Come, All You Faithful”

verses 1 and 3

NCH #135

O come, all you faithful, joyful and triumphant;

O come now, O come now to Bethlehem.

Come and behold the ruler, of all angels;

O come in adoration, O come in adoration, O come in adoration, Christ the Lord.

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation;

O sing, all you messengers of heavenly love! Glory to God, all glory in the highest;

O come in adoration, O come in adoration, O come in adoration, Christ the Lord.

“What Child is this”

verses 1 and 3

NCH #148

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.

So bring Him incense, gold and myrrh, Come, peasant, King, to own Him:

The King of Kings salvation brings, Let loving hearts enthrone him.

This, this is Christ the King, Whom shepherds guard and angels sing:

Haste, haste to bring Him laud, the babe, the son of Mary.

“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”

verses 1 and 3

NCH #144

Hark, the herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King;

Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!”

Joyful, all ye nations rise, Join the triumph of the skies;

With the angelic host proclaim, “Christ is born in Bethlehem”

Hark! The herald angels sing “Glory to the newborn King!”

Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Son of righteousness!

Light and life to all He brings, Risen with healing in His wings,

Mild He lays His glory by, Born that man no more may die,

Born to raise the sons of earth, Born to give them second birth.

Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King!”

“Good Christian Friends, Rejoice”

verses 1 and 3

NCH #129

Good Christian friends, rejoice, with heart and soul and voice;

Now give heed to what we say: Jesus Christ is born today;

Ox and ass before Him bow; asleep within the manger now.

Christ is born today! Christ is born today!

Good Christian friends, rejoice, with heart and soul and voice;
Now you need not fear the grave: Jesus Christ was born to save!
Calls you one and calls you all, to gain His everlasting hall.
Christ was born to save! Christ was born to save!

PSALM 98 (responsively)

**O sing to the LORD a new song,
for he has done marvelous things.
His right hand and his holy arm
have gained him victory.**

**The LORD has made known his victory;
he has revealed his vindication in the sight of the nations.
He has remembered his steadfast love and faithfulness
to the house of Israel.
All the ends of the earth have seen
the victory of our God.**

**Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth;
break forth into joyous song and sing praises.
Sing praises to the LORD with the lyre,
with the lyre and the sound of melody.
With trumpets and the sound of the horn
make a joyful noise before the King, the LORD.
Let the sea roar, and all that fills it;
the world and those who live in it.
Let the floods clap their hands;
let the hills sing together for joy
at the presence of the LORD, for he is coming to judge the earth.
He will judge the world with righteousness,
and the peoples with equity.**

LECTIONARY TEXT

Luke 2:25-35, 39-40

Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying, 'Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.' And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, 'This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.' When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.

MEDITATION and HYMN

This is commonly known as the “Cradle Hymn.” The words are often attributed to Martin Luther. However, the origin is unknown. In 1887, “Away in a Manger” appeared in a little book of song entitled “Dainty Songs for Little Lads and Lasses.” “Away in a Manger” quickly became America’s favorite children’s carol. In 1945, Richard Hill published a fascinating article “Not So Far Away in a Manger” in which he announced he had discovered the first two stanzas of “Away in a Manger” in an 1885 songbook published by German Lutherans in Pennsylvania. In essence, authorship is not important! This Christmas hymn has blessed children around the world who have come to love and know Jesus through this sweet carol and who have gone to sleep praying: “I love thee Lord Jesus, look down from the sky and stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.”

“Away in a Manger”

verses 1 and 3 NCH #124

**Away in a manger, No crib for a bed, the little Lord Jesus lay down his sweet head.
The stars in the sky look down where he lay, The little Lord Jesus, Asleep on the hay.
Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask You to stay close by me forever and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children In Your tender care, and fit us for heaven to live with you there.**

MEDITATION and HYMN

Do you know what was one of the hardest, smelliest, and most dangerous jobs in Jesus’ time? If you said, “shepherd,” then you’re right! Shepherds worked long hours and slept outside. Not only was their job hard but they were considered as outcast in this day; religiously and politically. Yet it was to these smelly shepherds that the angels came that first Christmas and they were the first to receive the word of the birth of the Messiah: the Christ Child.

In “Angels We Have Heard on High,” we sing the story of the shepherds and we sing the song of the angels, “Glory to God in the Highest.” Although we don’t know who wrote this carol, we do know that the song was originally French, written in the 18th century. The carol speaks of hearing the angel’s song echoing in the mountains, and then questions the shepherds about why they are so happy.

God could have sent Jesus’ birth announcement to kings and queens all over the world, but instead God sent it to shepherds. In song, this carol encourages us to praise the God who keeps God’s promises, and who cares about everybody, whether they are shepherds or kings or you and me.

“Angels We have Heard on High”

verses 1 and 2 NCH #125

**Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o’er the plains.
And the mountains in reply, echoing their joyous strains.
Gloria in excelsis Deo. Gloria in excelsis Deo.**

**Shepherds why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
Say what may the tidings be, which inspire your heavenly song?
Gloria in excelsis Deo. Gloria in excelsis Deo.**

MEDITATION and HYMN

Many centuries after the birth of Jesus, a young Episcopal preacher from Philadelphia visited the Holy Land. On Christmas Eve in 1865, he rode from Jerusalem to Bethlehem passing through the fields where the shepherds had kept their sheep. He attended a service not far from the place where the Holy Child had been born. Phillips Brooks wrote to his Sunday school class "I remember. . . when the whole church was ringing hour after hour with the splendid hymns of praise to God, how again and again it seemed as if I could hear voices that I knew well, telling each other of the wonderful night of the Savior's birth."

Two years later, his Sunday school needed a Christmas carol for their annual program. With memory of that earlier night still vivid in his mind, Brooks wrote the words of this carol. He asked the church organist to set the words to a simple tune. On the night before the Sunday School program, the organist woke from his sleep singing the tune we know as "O Little Town of Bethlehem."

If anyone is under the misconception that kid's music is not as influential as a more adult genre, consider the fact that both "Jingle Bells" and "O Little Town of Bethlehem" had their start in kid's Christmas programs!!

"O Little Town of Bethlehem"

verses 1 and 3

NCH #133

**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.**

MEDITATION and HYMN

Isaac Watts wrote our next Christmas hymn. It is Watt's interpretation of Psalm 98 that we read responsively earlier in this worship. The Psalm calls us to sing a new song to God, who has promised to judge the world with righteousness and the people with equity. Isaac pondered the real reason for singing joyfully to the Lord: the Messiah, King of Kings, the Christ-child has come to us.

Although this is great hymn, which is the most popular Christmas Hymn, is a great hymn to sing year round, it's also a great one to sing at Christmas. It reminds us of the joy that Christians can have as we celebrate this season, and every day, that God has come to us in God's son, Jesus. It is a message that we might know just how much God truly loves and desires each of us.

"Joy to the World" **verses 1 and 2** **NCH #132**

**Joy to the world! The Lord is come; Let earth receive her King!
Let every heart, prepare Him room, And heaven and nature sing,
And heaven and nature sing, And heaven and heaven and nature sing.**

**Joy to the world, the Savior reigns, Let men their songs employ!
While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains, Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy, Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.**

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

One: Together let us confess our faith. Do you believe in God, our creator?

All: I believe in God, creator of all things, whose heavenly song sent the planets into motion. Even when we go astray, God calls us back, showing us the fullness of life and giving us new songs of praise for each and every day.

One: Do you believe in Jesus Christ?

All: I believe in Jesus Christ who lived for us and among us, healing the sick, easing the burden of all people, and teaching us the new song of God's kingdom. He showed his love for all God's children in his death and the hope for eternal life in his resurrection.

One: Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?

All: I believe in the Holy Spirit, the breath of life who sings God's grace through all time and space. I listen for the Holy Spirit through the history of songs sung by all the communion of saints and through the unwritten songs of all who are to come in the future. I believe that God has a song for my life as well. Amen.

PRAYERS of the PEOPLE

CALL TO OFFERING

The greatest gift of all, Jesus the Christ, has been given to us and all creation. The blessing is indescribable! God calls us into a ministry of stewardship. Sharing all with all. Let us bring a gift back to God that shows our great love and appreciation for what God has given to us.

OFFERTORY RESPONSE

"Dona Nobis Pacem"

1 *Canon*



Do-na no-bis pa - cem, pa-cem. Do - na no - bis pa - cem.

The first canon of the offertory response is written on a single treble clef staff. It begins with a common time signature and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody consists of quarter and eighth notes, with some notes beamed together. The lyrics are written below the staff, with hyphens indicating syllables that span across multiple notes.

2



Do - na no - bis pa-cem. Do-na no-bis pa - cem.

The second canon of the offertory response is written on a single treble clef staff. It begins with a common time signature and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody consists of quarter and eighth notes, with some notes beamed together. The lyrics are written below the staff, with hyphens indicating syllables that span across multiple notes.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Giver of all things great and small, we humbly bring our gifts, our offerings to you in gratitude. Bless and lead us in sharing what we bring, with your world. May mission be our call and love be our response. In the name of the Christ Child, Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER (sung to the tune: "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing," NCH 144)

**God, Creator, God of fame, Hallowed be your saving name;
Everywhere your kingdom come, far away from here at home;
May we to your will comply as the angels do on high;
Grant that we, our sin's forgiv'n, follow in the way of heav'n
Grant that we, our sins forgiv'n, follow in the way of heav'n**

**May we, even at our worst, show forgiveness shown us first,
Guard us from the tempting devil, and deliver us from evil.
Yours the kingdom so sing we, pow'r and glory ever be.
Unto you while ages run. Yea, Amen! So be it done!
Unto you while ages run. Yea, Amen! So be it done!**

BENEDICTION

One: Christ is born! Go tell it on the mountain and everywhere.

All: Thanks be to God

SENDING FORTH HYMN

***"Go Tell it on the Mountain"* verses 1 and 3 NCH #154**

**Go, Tell It On The Mountain, Over the hills and everywhere;
Go, Tell It On The Mountain, That Jesus Christ is born.**

**Down in a lowly manger, Our humble Christ was born,
And God sent us salvation, That blessed Christmas morn.**

**Go, Tell It On The Mountain, Over the hills and everywhere;
Go, Tell It On The Mountain, That Jesus Christ is born.**

POSTLUDE

Sandy Wentzloff