

*Virtual Worship Service for the Lord's Day
The Fourth Sunday of the Advent Season,
December 19, 2021
Crossnore Presbyterian Church
200 Chapel Drive, P.O. Box 386
Crossnore, NC 28616*



Prelude: *Still, Still, Still*

Sung by the Winchester Cathedral Choir: <https://youtu.be/ONWLNofWtwc>

Welcome and Church Family News (PDF attachment)

Lighting of the Advent Candles of Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love

*...the people dwelling in darkness have seen a great light,
and for those dwelling in the region and shadow of death, on them a light has dawned. Matthew 4:16*

The Advent candles seem especially poignant this year. The idea that we move from darkness to light is a powerful one, and one that we need to be reminded of over and over again. We live in a world today where the darkness sometimes seems overwhelming. Darkness can be completely overpowering.

However, we know the antidote to darkness. We know what can completely overcome darkness. We know how powerful the light is. We also know, that if we are also working to be the light together, there would be no way the darkness could overcome us.

We are called not only to look towards God's kingdom in heaven, but to help bring about God's kingdom right here and now. That requires us to reflect and shine God's love and light into the world.

*The Word gave life to everything that was created, and his life brought light to everyone.
The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness can never extinguish it. John 1:4-5*

We light the Advent Candles of Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love and we remember that the Light of the World, Jesus Christ, is being born once again in our lives and in God's world.

***Call to Worship:**

God of grace, we come with all we have;
bodies, souls, minds, all here to worship you.
We have come for a glimpse of your kingdom of kindness--
a world where love rules over all, a world where enemies embrace,
distinctions between friend and foe evaporating in the light of your love.
We dedicate this hour of worship to you and to your kingdom come. Amen.

Hymn of Praise # 119 *Hark the Herald Angels Sing

Sing along with Radio France Children's Choir: <https://youtu.be/s1BPxZombgw>

WINCHESTER OLD

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 hosts proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
Refrain:

Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn 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 Godhead see; hail the incarnate Deity,
pleased with us in flesh to dwell, Jesus, our Immanuel. [Refrain]

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. [Refrain]

Call to Confession:

As God's beloved children, we are invited to come to our God with the fullness of our lives, to admit our love and our hate, to admit our faith and our fear. Trusting in God's mercy, let us make our confession before God and each other.

Unison Prayer of Confession:

Holy and gracious God, at times we feel so frail and fragile, getting blown about by the latest crisis, by bad news, by our own short tempers and failings. You call us to hold fast to what is good, but so often we flounder, unable to find that solid thing that will center us again. Help us, we pray. Help us to see you as our center, and to cling to the good that you create in the world. Help us to set aside all our jealousies and prejudices, all of our betrayals and lies, all that adds to the world's hurt. Help us to grow even more into Christ's likeness, that we will bear his love and truth to the world (moment of silent confession). We pray in his name. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon:

Hear the Good News: we are forgiven! We are set free to go out into the world and be the loving, gracious, hopeful people of God! Alleluia! Amen.

Response to God's Grace and Mercy # 95 *Prepare the Way of the Lord*

PREPARE THE WAY

<https://youtu.be/FDHX8evCCcA> - The Courtyard Choir, First Presbyterian Church - Stillwater, OK

**Prepare the way of the Lord Prepare the way of the Lord,
And all people will see the salvation of our God. (Repeat)**

First Lesson: Psalm 96

O sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the earth.
Sing to the Lord, bless his name; tell of his salvation from day to day.
Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous works among all the peoples.
For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; he is to be revered above all gods.
For all the gods of the peoples are idols, but the Lord made the heavens.
Honor and majesty are before him; strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.
Ascribe to the Lord, O families of the peoples, ascribe to the Lord glory and strength.
Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name; bring an offering, and come into his courts.
Worship the Lord in holy splendor; tremble before him, all the earth.
Say among the nations, "The Lord is king! The world is firmly established; it shall never be moved.
He will judge the peoples with equity."

Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; let the sea roar, and all that fills it; let the field exult, and everything in it. Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy before the Lord; for he is coming, for he is coming to judge the earth. He will judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with his truth.

Special Music: *What Child Is This*

English ballad- 16th century

Sung by Carrie Underwood: <https://youtu.be/eOA-rUic-A8>

Second Lesson: Luke 2:8-15

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!" When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

Sermon: "God's Birth Announcement" (PDF attachment)

Rev. Kathy Campbell

Affirmation of Faith: Apostles Creed

**I believe in God the Father Almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth,
And in Jesus Christ, his only Son our Lord:
who was conceived by the Holy Ghost,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, dead, and buried;
he descended into hell;
the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty;
from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic church;
the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins;
the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Hymn of Meditation # 118 *While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks

OLD WINCHESTER

Sing along with King's College Choir: <https://youtu.be/TvegJ3wRLFE>

**While shepherds watched their flocks by night all seated on the ground,
the angel of the Lord came down and glory shone around.**

**"Fear not", said he, for mighty dread had seized their troubled mind.
"Glad tidings of great joy I bring to you and all mankind."**

**"To you, in David's town this day is born of David's line
the Savior who is Christ the Lord and this shall be the sign:**

**"The heavenly babe you there shall find to human view displayed
all meanly wrapped in swathing bands and in a manger laid."**

**"All glory be to God on high and on the earth be peace;
goodwill henceforth from heaven to men begin and never cease."**

Prayers of the People:

God most high, God with us,
we praise you with every word we speak
and with every moment we fall silent.
You hear our prayer
and sustain us along with all living things.
You forgive our sins and bring us close
to live in the goodness of your holy presence.

This morning as we prepare for Christmas,
we pray for the Light that cannot be extinguished,
we pray for your presence in the dark places
in our lives and in your world.

With the strength that raised mountains
and the love that was made manifest through a vulnerable baby in Bethlehem,
calm the roaring seas of conflict;
calm the waves of violence and oppression;
draw all nations and peoples close to each other.

We pray for everyone who longs for your joy:
for those who are sick or in pain from morning to night;
for those whose grief weighs them down;
for those who hunger and thirst
for guidance, righteousness, or food.

Let your love be born once again, O God, in our hearts and in our living.
Soften our hearts, so our lives can reflect your love and light
especially in the dark nights and dark places.
Crown our lives with your goodness,
and let everything we do overflow with blessings for your people.
We join with the choirs of angels, singing "Glory to God in the Highest
and peace, goodwill towards all people."
We pray in the name of Love, the One who brings us joy,
Jesus the Christ, who taught us to pray: Our Father...

Presentation of Our Tithes and Offerings:

With the shepherds of long ago, let us make haste to proclaim the good news and to share the blessings God
has bestowed upon us. Let us receive this morning's offering.

Offertory: *Silent Night*

Franz Gruber, 1818

Pentatonix sing: <https://youtu.be/sme8N2pzRx8>

***Doxology # 606**

OLD HUNDREDTH

<https://youtu.be/joCinBhj4a4> Acappella Cover - Isaac Robert

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; praise him all creatures here below;
Praise him above ye heavenly host; praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

***Unison Prayer of Dedication and Thanksgiving:**

Generous God, we thank you for guiding us through this season of hope, peace, joy, and love. As we look at our lives, we see evidence of the countless ways that you have provided for our needs. Let gratitude well up in our hearts and overflow in generosity to others. Draw us outward to see ways that we can joyfully share what you have given. Let our acts of kindness as a church bear good fruit in the world. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Closing Hymn # 116 *The Snow Lay on the Ground

VENITE ADOREMUS

Sing along with the Children's Chorus of Washington: https://youtu.be/_xllIZDDKY

The snow lay on the ground; the stars shone bright,
when Christ our Lord was born on Christmas night.
Venite adoremus Dominum. Venite adoremus Dominum.

Refrain:

Venite adoremus Dominum. Venite adoremus Dominum.

'Twas gentle Mary maid, so young and strong,
who welcomed here the Christ-child with a song.
She laid him in a stall at Bethlehem;
the ass and oxen shared the roof with them. [Refrain]

Saint Joseph too was by to tend the child,
to guard him, and protect his mother mild.
The angels hovered round and sang this song:
Venite adoremus Dominum. [Refrain]

And thus that manger poor became a throne;
for he whom Mary bore was God the Son.
O come, then, let us join the heavenly host
to praise the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. [Refrain]

***Charge and Benediction:**

Be people of love.

Let love live in your heart and share the love of Christ with all you meet.

Share love by loving those you see regularly.

Start by loving your community.

Share love by loving those you do not know.

Share love by praying for our world.

In this Advent season, we need to see, feel, and share love.

As you go out into the wonder of God's creations,

share love, joy, peace, and hope with those you meet.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
be with you now and forever. Amen.

Postlude: *Joy to the World

Isaac Watts, 1719 / George Fredric Handel, 1742

Performed by Portland Choir and Orchestra and the Fired-Up Dance Academy: <https://youtu.be/7HtyDqc15-A>