



For what we proclaim is not ourselves,
but Jesus Christ as Lord,
with ourselves as your servants
for Jesus' sake.
2 Corinthians 4:5

Christmas, therefore, is the most unsentimental, realistic way of looking at life. It does not say, "Cheer up! If we all pull together we can make the world a better place." The Bible never counsels indifference to the forces of darkness, only resistance, but it supports no illusions that we can defeat them ourselves. Christianity does not agree with the optimistic thinkers who say, "We can fix things if we try hard enough." Nor does it agree with the pessimists who see only a dystopian future.

The message of Christianity is, instead, "Things really are this bad, and we can't heal or save ourselves. Things really are this dark — nevertheless, there is hope." The Christmas message is that "on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned."

Notice that it doesn't say from the world a light has sprung, but upon the world a light has dawned. It has come from outside. There is light outside of this world, and Jesus has brought that light to save us; indeed, he is the Light.

Timothy Keller, from his article,
"Christmas Is The Most Unsensitimental Way Of Looking At Life,"

The Third Sunday of Advent — December 16, 2018 A.D.

Welcome in the name of the Lord Jesus! If you are a guest with us, please be sure to sign our Welcome Pads when they are passed around before the service. Children are welcome in our worship. We have a nursery available for children 3 and under. Children 4 to 6 years of age may be dismissed to Children's Worship prior to the sermon. Thank you for joining us today and may the Lord richly bless you.

Song of Assembly¹

While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks

While shepherds watched their flocks by night, all seated on the ground,
The angel of the Lord came down,
And glory shone around, 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 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, 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, and in a manger laid.
All glory be to God on high, and to the earth be peace;
Good will henceforth, from heaven to men,
Begin and never cease, begin and never cease!

Welcome and Announcements

Responsive Call to Worship

Isaiah 7:14; Luke 2:14

Pastor: The Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

People: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!

Prayer of Adoration & Praise

based on Psalm 121

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Angels, from the realms of glory, wing your flight o'er all the earth;
 Ye who sang creation's story, now proclaim Messiah's birth.
 Come and worship, come and worship, Worship Christ, the newborn King.

Shepherds in the fields abiding, watching o'er your flocks by night,
 God with man is now residing, yonder shines the infant Light:
 Come and worship, come and worship, Worship Christ, the newborn King.

All creation, join in praising God the Father, Spirit, Son;
 Ever more your voices raising to the eternal Three in One.
 Come and worship, come and worship, Worship Christ, the newborn King.

The Reading for the Third Sunday of Advent: Zephaniah 3:14-20

Brian & Joy Hubbard

Sing aloud, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter of Jerusalem! The Lord has taken away the judgments against you; he has cleared away your enemies. The King of Israel, the Lord, is in your midst; you shall never again fear evil. On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem: "Fear not, O Zion; let not your hands grow weak. The Lord your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud singing. I will gather those of you who mourn for the festival, so that you will no longer suffer reproach. Behold, at that time I will deal with all your oppressors. And I will save the lame and gather the outcast, and I will change their shame into praise and renown in all the earth. At that time I will bring you in, at the time when I gather you together; for I will make you renowned and praised among all the peoples of the earth, when I restore your fortunes before your eyes," says the Lord.

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God!

Confession of Sin

O Lord, we want more than anything to enter into your presence and worship you face to face, awed by your majesty, greatness, and glory, encouraged by your love, mercy, and goodness. Yet we know that there is coldness in our hearts and unwillingness to admit our sin and need for you. Forgive us, Father. Come near to us and strengthen us until Christ shall reign supreme within us, in every thought, word, and deed, in a faith that purifies the heart, overcomes the world, works by love, fastens us to you, and always clings to the cross ...Silent & Personalized Confession of Sin... Amen!

He Has Visited And Redeemed His People!

Luke 1:68,69; Matthew 1:21

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has visited and redeemed his people and has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David, to show the mercy promised to our fathers and to remember his holy covenant.... She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.

Worship with Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs

Midnight Clear (Love Song)

Myrin/Tomlin/Cash

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 men from heaven's all-gracious King."
The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come with peaceful wings unfurled,
And still their heav'nly music floats o'er all the weary world:
And man at war with man hears not the love song which they bring,
O hush the noise and cease the strife and hear the angels sing.

Glory to God in the highest, glory to God evermore. Good news, great joy for all.

Melody breaks through the silence, Christ the Savior is born.

Jesus, the love song of God. (Chorus 2x)

Jesus, the love song of God.

It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old.
From angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold.

We Three Kings

We three kings of Orient are, bearing gifts we traverse afar
Field and fountain, moor and mountain, following yonder star.

O star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright,
Westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to Thy perfect light.

Born a King on Bethlehem's plain, Gold I bring to crown Him again,
King forever, ceasing never, over us all to reign.

Frankincense to offer have I, incense owns a Deity nigh;
Prayer and praising all men raising, worship Him, God on high.

Myrrh is mine, its bitter perfume breathes a life of gathering gloom:
Sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying, sealed in the stone-cold tomb.

Glorious now behold Him arise, King and God and Sacrifice;
Alleluia, Alleluia! Sounds thru the earth and skies.

Away in a Manger

Anonymous

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

The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes, But little Lord Jesus no crying He makes;
I love thee, Lord Jesus! Look down from the sky, And stay by my cradle till 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.

His Tithes & Our Offerings

Sermon²

Series: Let Not Your Hearts Be Troubled (John 14:1)
IV. The "Final Discourse" Now Begins
John 13:31-38 (page 900)

Pastor Tommy Lee

We Respond By Confessing Our Faith: The Apostles' Creed³

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Sacrament of the Lord's Supper

Communion, also called The Lord's Supper or Eucharist, is the family meal of Christians. We invite all committed followers of Jesus Christ to share in this sacrament: those who are baptized members of a congregation that proclaims the gospel, who are at peace with God and their neighbor, and who seek strength to live in a deeper communion with Jesus. If you are not a Christian, or you are not prepared to share in this meal, we encourage you to spend this time in prayer. We hope that this time is helpful to you as you consider your relationship with Jesus Christ and with his people, the Church.

(Gluten free communion bread is available upon request; please speak to the pastor before the service or alert your server during communion.)

Once in Royal David's City

Alexander

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.

² 4, 5, & 6 year-old children may be dismissed before the sermon to Children's Worship in room 132.

³ The Apostle's Creed is a concise summary of Christian belief. As early as the second century it served as a baptismal confession. It developed and reached its current form by the ninth century. It is the most popular creed used in worship by Western Christians. The word "catholic" means universal.

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 mean, and lowly, lived on earth our Savior holy.
And, through all His wondrous childhood, He would honor and obey,
Love and watch the lowly maiden, in whose gentle arms He lay:
Christian children all must be, mild, obedient, good as He.
And our eyes at last shall see Him through His own redeeming love;
For that child so dear and gentle is our Lord in heav'n above,
and He leads his children on, to the place where He is gone.
Not in that poor lowly stable, with the oxen standing by,
We shall see Him, but in heaven, set at God's right hand on high;
When like stars His children crowned, all in white shall wait around.

Benediction⁴

Philippians 4:4-7

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Song of Faith

Let There Be Light

Let there be light, let it shine bright,
Piercing the darkness with dazzling white.
Hope for the hopeless was born on that night
When God sent His Son and said let there be light.

This Week

Tuesday 6:30pm

Women's Bible Study @ NCC (Armor of God)

Friday 6:30am

Men's Bible Study @ Temple, Inc. (Mansfield's Book of Manly Men)

⁴ Just as God called us into His presence at the beginning, so now He commands His blessing upon us as we depart. We look up and extend our hands in a posture of thanksgiving as we receive this great gift. Our final response to God's assurance of His peace and presence upon those who are in Christ is a chorus of joyful song.

DPC Announcements

Midweek Ministries: will resume January 9th.

Get More Connected: Sign up for the weekly email by emailing Tonya at tonya@decaturpca.org.

Next Up! The next four books of Scripture that we'll be reading together via the Cultivate daily readings will be Philemon, Zechariah, Romans, & Malachi. Sign up today by emailing Tonya at tonya@decaturpca.org

Christmas Tree Sale! Help Young Life by purchasing your Fraser Fir - all sizes - at the Young Life Life House, 425 Moulton St., Mon-Thurs 4-8pm, Fri 11am-8pm, Sat 9am-8pm, Sun 1-8pm.

Candlelight Christmas Eve Service: A Festival of Lessons and Carols, "Joy to the World! The Lord is Come!", Monday, December 24, 5:00 pm.

Secret Sister: will be starting again in January. If you would like to participate, there is a sign up form on the desk in the gathering room. Please return your form by December 30. For more information about Secret Sister, see Elizabeth Lee or the secret sister letter on the desk.

Baby Shower: A Table Baby Shower for Jonathan and Megan Davis on the birth of their son, John Grady. A table will be set up on Sunday, January 5. Feel free to bring your gift or some diapers or other practical gifts and leave them on the table. See Elizabeth Lee with questions.

Women's Bible Study: This winter and spring, the Women's Bible Study will meet on Tuesdays, 9:30-11:00 a.m., beginning January 15th. It will be facilitated by Teresa Quinn and Annah Joseph. Childcare provided. *In His Image: 10 Ways God Calls Us to Reflect His Character*, by Jen Wilkin. Available in the DPC Book Nook!

Missions Sunday: Plan to join us on Sunday, February 3 to hear Dr. Paul Kooistra preach on "Missions: The Heart of God". Dr. Kooistra will be speaking for both the worship service and a joint Sunday school.

Life Groups! The Wednesday night adult small groups ("doing life together in the context of the Word, prayer, fellowship and mission") will be multiplying and/or reshuffling, then relaunching in January. If you're not in a LG and want to be or are interested in leading one, please contact Rick Stark.

DPC 2019 Christian Faith & Life Conference: Pastor Sandy Willson will return! To hear another sermon from him, visit: <https://tinyurl.com/y894cbr4> Recommendation: Our Chief End. Our conference will be February 22-24.

Sermon Outline Notes: for adults and children are available on the back table.

ADULT CHRISTIAN EDUCATION CLASSES

FALL 2018

SUNDAYS @ 9:30 AM

The Fun Adult Class! Join us as we study the Westminster Confession of Faith, a study of the doctrinal foundation of the Presbyterian Church. We discuss the daily spiritual implications of good theology. Led by Kent Quinn, Mike McMahan, Blake Temple and Scott Mayo. We meet down & across the hall from the church office.

Foundations of the Faith: Join us as we study 1 Samuel, where God raises up a great prophet and priest in Samuel and a great king in David. God was preparing his people for a much greater King, who would conquer sin and death forever! This class, led by Stuart Smith, meets in the Parlor and is open to everyone.

Young Adult Class: The Young Adult class, led by Nathan White, is going through the book of Jude. Join us in the choir room, down the back hallway from the sanctuary.

Sedona Class: Led by George Godwin, we are currently studying through the Book of Acts. The class meets in the classroom down the back hallway from the sanctuary, across from the choir room. Guests are always welcome!

Ladies Sunday School Class: We are studying Galatians in the library at 9:30 am. This is a discussion based Bible study, facilitated by Barbara Brownlee, Elizabeth Lee, Julie Missildine and Holly Vinson. Open to all ladies, please join us!

Session

George Godwin
Jeff Keith
Mike McMahan
Kent Quinn

Greg Smith
Blake Temple
Chip Walraven

Diaconate

James Fudge
Wade Littrell
John Lyons
Scott Missildine
Bill Nelson

Steve Sasser
Sam Thompson
Michael Vinson
David Whitcomb
David Zajic

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Service Times

9:30am Sunday School
10:45am Worship

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