



MOUNT VERNON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Online Order of Worship

Third Sunday of Advent

December 13th, 2020

— GATHERING —

Welcome & Announcements

Rev. Barrett Abernethy

Prayer of Invocation

Lighting of the Advent Candle

Jeff Schneider, Donna Neumann, Mia, & Piper

Advent is a time when we eagerly anticipate the coming of Christ from the heavenly to the worldly. It's a joyous occasion because it provides a redemptive vision of this broken world, and a glimpse of what wholeness can look like. The song of the Angels proclaims glory to the God of the highest heaven and peace to the people of earth. It is a moment of sheer joy when the heavenly and the worldly collide, and a rush of excitement fills the heart of all humanity.

We light this third candle with a **joy** that longs to witness the heavenly heights in the lowest valleys.

Hymn

“Angels We Have Heard on High”

The Virtual Choir

GLORIA

Angels we have heard on high
Sweetly singing o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply
Echoing their joyous strains.

Refrain

Gloria, in excelsis Deo;
Gloria, in excelsis Deo.

Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be
Which inspire your heavenly song? *(to refrain)*

Come to Bethlehem and see
Him whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee
Christ the Lord, the newborn King. *(to refrain)*

Prayer of Confession

Malinda Holmes

Merciful God, we feel the pressure of living each day, and it wears us down. Problems rise up, challenges meet us head on, and the unknown grips us when we least expect it. Too often we are scared, and we hide. We hide from you, we hide from our neighbors, and we hide from ourselves. Merciful God, forgive us. Invite us into a life without fear, a mindset that excites with curiosity. Nurture an honesty within us that adds depth to our lives. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

One: Friends, the Good News of the Gospel is this:

All: In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven! Amen.

Response

“Our God, Our Help in Ages Past”

ST. ANNE

Our God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Be Thou our guard while life shall last,
And our eternal home.

— THE WORD —

Prayer for Illumination

Rev. Barrett Abernethy

Scripture

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.”

Sermon

The Songs of Advent: The Song of the Angels

Hymn

“While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks”

RESIGNATION

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 humankind.

"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 humbly wrapped in swathing bands,
And in a manger laid."

— RESPONSE —

Prayers of the People

Rev. Isaac Toney-Schmitt

*After each petition, the Pastor will say, "...Lord, In Your Mercy,"
Respond with "Hear Our Prayer."*

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.

— SENDING —

Hymn

**"In the Bleak Midwinter"
CRANHAM**

The Virtual Choir

In the bleak midwinter,
Frosty wind made moan,
Earth stood hard as iron,
Water like a stone;
Snow had fallen, snow on snow,
Snow on snow,
In the bleak midwinter,
Long ago.

Our God, Heaven cannot hold Him,
Nor earth sustain;
Heaven and earth shall flee away
When He comes to reign:
In the bleak midwinter
A stable place sufficed
The Lord God incarnate,
Jesus Christ.

Benediction

Christy Hill

Announcements Transcript

Good morning! Grace, mercy, and peace in the name of Jesus Christ our Risen Lord, welcome to Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church. We are delighted that you have chosen to worship with us this day. Please take a moment to fill out our virtual friendship pad located right there on the webpage you are viewing this service on. We look forward to connecting with you, whether this is your first time to visit us, or if you are a church member.

Today a couple of deadlines are taking place if you are a church member. First, if you would like to sign-up for our outdoor Christmas Eve Service taking place at 4:30pm you still have time before we open it up to the public. We are capping seating for this service at 125, and as of this recording (Saturday morning) there are a few spots remaining. If you are unable to reserve a spot, we encourage you to still come to the service and worship from the comfort of your car as we will have an FM radio transmitter setup for you to hear the audio. You can also worship with us right here on our website as we will livestream the service as well.

Between now and then, another opportunity to worship in person is to join us next Sunday at 11am for our Outdoor Service as we celebrate the last Sunday of Advent.

The second ask we have for you is if you have not yet sent in your pledge for this year, please do so today as tomorrow your Finance and Administration Team will commence work on the 2021 budget starting tomorrow. You can do this by filling out our virtual pledge card, dropping your pledge off at the church office, or you can even call or email Yvonne White, our financial secretary. We also thank you for your continued support of MVPC as well as our Covid-19 fund which you can learn more about from Christy Hill at the end of today's service.

Finally, let us continue to be in prayer for our world and country. We lift up those whose names are listed on the screen and those who go unnamed. These are incredibly difficult times and we want you to know that we at Mount Vernon are committed to bringing the church home this season, and that means we want to walk alongside, support, and pray with you. We know several of you are either infected or quarantined due to the virus and our prayers are for a speedy recovery. If you have a concern you would like to share, please contact the church office, or simply email one of the pastors or Elder Joy Carden.

And now friends, let us prepare our heart to worship God.