The Worship of God
A Service of Lament and Loss
21 December 2016
Myers Park Baptist Church
Charlotte, North Carolina
The Worship of God
A Service of Lament and Loss
21 December 2016 at Half past six o’clock in the evening

The Community Gathers Before God

This service of Lament and Loss is a time when we name those losses that have changed our lives and the people who are no longer with us. We gather together during the Christmas season as a reminder of the joy that is born among us despite our sadness and the light that shines in the midst of our darkness.

Inspired by the radical hospitality of Jesus, we welcome and affirm all people into the life of the Church regardless of gender, age, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, physical limitation, educational background, economic situation, or religious belief.

The Prelude
“Arioso”  
Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)
Sacha Barlow, violist

The Call to Worship
Leader: The Lord be with you.
People: And also with you.

At this time, everyone is invited to sign the friendship register found at the end of each pew. If you are our guest, we welcome you especially and ask that you include your address, phone number, and email. If you have not yet done so, please silence your cell phone. Childcare is available in Room 107.

*The Opening Sentences  (Based on Psalm 27)
Leader: The Lord is my light and my salvation;
People: whom shall I fear?
Leader: The Lord is the stronghold of my life;
People: of whom shall I be afraid?
Leader: One thing I asked of the Lord, that I will seek after:
People: to live in the house of the Lord all the days of my life,
Leader: to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in the temple.
People: For God will hide me in shelter on the day of trouble;
Leader: the Lord will conceal me under the cover of God’s tent;
People: the Lord will set me high on a rock.
Leader: Hear, O Lord, when I cry aloud,
People: be gracious to me and answer me!
Leader: ‘Come,’ my heart says, ‘seek God’s face!’
People: Your face, Lord, do I seek. Do not hide your face from me.
Leader: Do not cast me off; do not forsake me,
People: O God of my salvation!
Leader: I believe that I shall see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.
People: Wait for the Lord; be strong,
Leader: and let your heart take courage;
People: wait for the Lord!

*The Opening Hymn  See page 6.
“In the bleak midwinter”  Cranham

Ushers will seat anyone waiting.
Please stand if you are able.
*The Prayer of Invocation

The Meditation on Hope

(Lighting the Candle of Hope)

The Reverend W. Benjamin Boswell

Wait for the Lord

Taizé Community 1984

The Meditation on Peace

(Lighting the Candle of Peace)

The Reverend Carrie Veal

“Wait for the Lord”

The Meditation on Joy

(Lighting the Candle of Joy)

The Reverend Joseph D. Aldrich

“Wait for the Lord”

The Meditation on Love

(Lighting the Candle of Love)

Frances L. Morrison

“Wait for the Lord”

The Sharing of the Bread and Cup

All are welcome at this Table. It is open to all who seek to follow Jesus. There are no requirements of creed, denominational affiliation or age. Come, bring all the faith you have to this table of grace. Please come forward to receive Communion by Intinction. A gluten-free station is also available.

The Invitation to the Table

The Prayer of Thanksgiving

The Lord’s Prayer

Our Father/Mother, 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 trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

The Words of Institution

The Sharing of the Bread and Cup
The Music at Communion

The Prayer After Communion (unison)
We thank you, O God, for the table of grace
which brings all people of earth
before your presence.
May we who have been guests at this table
grow in love for one another,
that through us your light may shine in all the world. Amen.

The Meditation on Christ
The Reverend Joseph D. Aldrich

(Lighting the Christ Candle)

The Lighting of Candles of Lament and Loss
The Reverend Carrie Veal

During the lighting of the candles of remembrance, you are invited to
come forward and name those losses that have changed your life.

*The Closing Hymn
“It came upon the midnight clear” See page 7. Carol

The Benediction

The Postlude
Improvisation on “Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silent”

Leading worship this evening with The Reverend W. Benjamin Boswell, Senior Minister,
are The Reverend Joseph D. Aldrich, Associate Minister,
and The Reverend Carrie Veal, Minister of Children.

Worship through music is provided by
Frances L. Morrison, Minister of Music,
Dr. Matthew Manwarren, Organist,
and Sacha Barlow, Violist.

The meditations were written by
The Reverend Lauren Hayes Efird and are used by permission.

The sound technician is Eric Roberts.

The cover art is a watercolor by
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Advent Schedule 2016

Saturday, December 24 – Christmas Eve

Family Worship with Communion
4:00pm in the Sanctuary

The Music of Christmas with Harp and Organ
5:30pm in the Sanctuary

Candlelight Worship with Communion
6:00pm in the Sanctuary

Nativity Tableau with Communion
7:15-8:00pm “drop in” in the Sanctuary

Sunday, December 25

Christmas Day Worship in the Round - Service of Hope
10:00-10:45am in Heaton Hall

Sunday, January 1, 2017

New Year’s Day Worship in the Round – Service of Beginnings
10:00-10:45am in Heaton Hall
In the Bleak Midwinter

1 In the bleak mid-winter, frost-y wind made moan;
   earth stood hard as i-ron, wa-ter like a stone;
   snow had fall-en, snow on snow, snow on snow,
   in the bleak mid-winter, long a-go.

2 Our God, heaven can-not hold him, nor earth sus-tain;
   heaven and earth shall flee a-way when he comes to reign:
   but his moth-er on-ly, in her maid-en bliss,
   the Lord God in-car-nate, Je-sus Christ.

3 An-gels and arch-an-gels may have gath-ered there;
   cher-u-bim and ser-a-phim throned the air;
   if I were a wise man, I would do my part;
   wor-shipped the be-loved with a kiss.

4 What can I give him, poor as I am?
   If I were a shep-herd, I would bring a lamb;
   if I were a maid-en pure and fair,
   yet what I can I give him: give my heart.

Though this text describes winter weather in England rather than in Palestine, the poet is using familiar surroundings as a means of making the Nativity more immediate and personal. The tune name honors a Gloucestershire village near the composer’s birthplace in Cheltenham.

TEXT: Christina Rossetti, c. 1872, alt.
MUSIC: Gustav Hoist, 1906
It Came Upon The Midnight Clear

CAROL CMD

Edmund Hamilton Sears, 1849; alt. Richard Storrs Willis, 1850

1. It came upon the mid-night clear, That glorious song of old,
2. Still through the cloven skies they come, With peaceful wings unfurled,
3. And ye, beneath life's crushing load, Whose forms are bending low,
4. For lo, the days are hastening on, By prophet bards foretold,

From angels bending near the earth, To touch their harps of gold:
And still their heavenly music floats O'er all the weary world:
Who toil along the climbing way With painful steps and slow,
When with the ever-circling years Comes round the age of gold;

"Peace on the earth, good will to all, From heaven's all-gracious King":
Above its sad and lowly plains They bend on hovering wing,
Look now! for glad and golden hours Come swiftly on the wing:
When peace shall over all the earth Its ancient splendors fling.

The world in solemn stillness lay, To hear the angels sing,
And ever o'er its Babylon sounds The blessed angels sing,
O rest beside the weary road, And hear the angels sing,
And the whole world give back the song Which now the angels sing.
The Myers Park Baptist Church Covenant

We, the members of the Myers Park Baptist Church, are a people on a journey of faith. By God’s grace we are experiencing God’s love through Jesus Christ and in the community of the faithful. We are discovering in this experience our freedom to become new creatures and our responsibility to be faithful stewards of our lives and of this world.

We will be open to all new light, strengthened by God and each other in our faith. We will sustain a critical examination of Scripture, belief and ritual as interpreters of God’s active presence in the world. We will accept controversy as a reality of life together and an opportunity for growth toward maturity. We covenant to be a community of God’s new creation and affirm that we are open to all and closed to none.

We covenant to nurture this church as a community of faith and as an instrument for reconciliation in this world: by worship, by Christian education, by the dedication of our personal and material resources and by all the other ways we express the significance of our lives with God and one another.

We covenant together to be priests celebrating God’s presence in community and in the world, believing we are participants in God’s kingdom on earth.

The 2016-2017 Board of Deacons

Janet Miller, Chair • Jay Rivers, Chair-Elect • Bob Thomason, Secretary

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The Myers Park Baptist Church

1900 Queens Road • Charlotte, North Carolina 28207-2582
Office: 704.334.7232 • Website: www.mpbconline.org • CCLI License #1864926

Ministers

As priests to one another, all members of the congregation are ministers. Some are called out for particular places of service:

The Reverend Mr. W. Benjamin Boswell, Senior Minister
The Reverend Mr. Joseph D. Aldrich, Associate Minister
Sharon Bremer, Director of Stewardship
Mariah B. Currin, Director of New Member Ministry
Allen Davis, Interim Director of Youth Ministry
Belinda Geuss, Director of Through-The-Week School
Charlotte Judge, Associate Director of Music
Cher Lindblom, Director of Outreach
Dr. Matthew Manwarren, Organist
The Reverend Mr. Barry Zane Metzger, Church Administrator
Frances L. Morrison, Minister of Music
The Reverend Ms. Carrie Veal, Minister of Children
The Reverend Ms. Chrissy Tatum Williamson, Minister of Faith Formation
Jenny Yopp, Director of The Cornwell Center

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