Christmas Eve 2014

The Nativity of our Lord

Myers Park Baptist Church
Charlotte, North Carolina
THE WORSHIP OF GOD

THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD - CHRISTMAS EVE
24 DECEMBER 2014 AT SIX O'CLOCK IN THE EVENING

THE COMMUNITY GATHERS BEFORE GOD

The Music in Preparation for Worship is intended to draw the people from the outside world into the presence of God. You are invited to remain silent during this time.

If you need to leave during worship, the service may be heard from the Narthex (foyer of the front entrance).

Please silence your cellphone.

THE SILENT MEDITATION

Lord, the inn of life each of us keeps is confused by many anxieties and its joy smothered by unseen haste. Better to keep a humbler place, with room and shelter for the nameless Word become flesh, for innocence which has no reputation, and for peace known only by the angels above and lonely shepherds watching in quiet fields. Prepare our hearts for Christmas, and if we can become like little children, with eyes for the stars and ears for heavenly anthems, grant us such joy through the grace of our Redeemer, born of Mary in Bethlehem. Amen. Samuel H. Miller, What Child Is This?

THE MUSIC OF CHRISTMAS (5:30 p.m.)

Selections for Violin/Viola, Flute and Organ
Sacha Barlow, violin/viola; Erinn Frechette, flute;
Emily Urbanek, piano; Matthew Manwarren, organ

THE WELCOME TO WORSHIP

*OPENING SENTENCES (from Isaiah 7 and 60)
Leader: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.

People: Those who lived in a land of deep darkness on them light has shined.

Leader: For unto us a child is born, to us a son is given.

People: Authority rests upon his shoulders and he is named,

Leader: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

People: Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.

*THE PROCESSION AND OPENING OF THE BIBLE
“Joy to the world” Number 110 Antioch

*THE COLLECT
Leader: Let us pray.

People: O God, you have caused this holy night to shine with the brightness of true light: grant that this same light enkindled in our hearts may shine forth in our lives. Amen.
**THE LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE**

Allen, Sr. and Hilda Hull
Allen, Jr., Dawn, Joshua, Ian, and Addison Hull
Christine Hull and Michael McDowell

Leader: We have celebrated God’s gifts of hope, peace, joy and love,
looking to Christ who comes to us as God’s greatest gift.

People: We celebrate that God comes to us in human form,
bringing light to all the world.

Leader: May every knee bow before the newborn Savior.
With the angels, may every tongue sing:

People: “Glory to God in the highest.”

Leader: Let us light the Christ Candle.

*(Lighting the Christ Candle)*

**THE GLORIA IN EXCELSIS DEO**

Gloria

Come to Bethlehem and see
Him whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee
Christ the Lord, the Newborn King.

*Gloria in excelsis Deo!*

**THE WORD OF GOD IS PROCLAIMED AND HEARD**

Leader: For the word of God in scripture,
for the word of God among us,
for the word of God within us,

People: Thanks be to God.

**THE SOLO**

“Gesu Bambino”

Todd Geer, tenor

**THE CHRISTMAS MEDITATION**

“Mary”

The Reverend Dr. Everett C. Goodwin

**THE CONGREGATION Responds TO GOD’S WORD**

**THE CAROL**

“What child is this”

**THE CHURCH AT PRAYER**

**THE LORD’S PRAYER**

**THE CHRISTMAS OFFERING**

*The offering will benefit the Sunshine Fund (The Church Benevolence Fund).*
The Chancel Choir
Cindy Johnston Favreau
(Contemporary)

The Chancel Choir
“Chill of the Nightfall”

Chill of the nightfall, lamps in the windows,
letting their light fall clear on the snow;
bitter December bids us remember
Christ in the stable long, long ago.
Silence of midnight, voices of angels,
singing to bid night yield to the dawn;
darkness is ended, sinners befriended,
where in the stable Jesus is born.
Splendour of starlight high on the hillside,
faint is the far light burning below;
kneeling before him, shepherds adore him,
Christ in the stable long, long ago.
Glory of daybreak! Sorrow and shadows,
suddenly they break forth into morn;
sing out and tell now all shall be well now,
for in the stable Jesus is born!

Timothy Dudley-Smith
(b. 1926)

Erinn Frechette, flute

The Sharing of the Bread and Cup

The Invitation to the Table

The Words of Institution

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.

You are invited to come forward to receive communion as indicated by ushers.
Two stations near the Transepts will serve the outer two aisles. Two central stations will serve the center aisle.
The individual small cups contain juice; the large chalice contains wine.
Before returning to your seat, please deposit empty juice cups in one of the baskets.
If you prefer to receive communion at your seat, please indicate by raising your hand so a deacon may serve you.

The Music at Communion

Instrumental Christmas Selections

The Prayer after Communion

We give you thanks, O God,
that you have come to us through Jesus the Christ,
both in the midst of time and history,
and in the timeless presence of Christ's spirit
as we receive the gifts of bread and wine.
Send us out into the world rejoicing,
enabled to share your love with all people we meet;
through the grace of Jesus the Christ. Amen.

The Christmas Gospel in Festival Procession

People: Thanks be to God.
THE LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

THE CAROL WITH LIGHTS (seated)
“Silent night, holy night!”

Silent night, holy night! All is calm, all is bright, 
Round yon Virgin mother and child, Holy Infant so tender and mild, 
Sleep in heavenly peace, Sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night! Shepherds quake at the sight, 
Glories stream from heaven afar, Heavenly hosts sing: Alleluia. 
Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born.

Silent night, holy night! Son of God, love’s pure light 
Radiant beams from thy holy face, With the dawn of redeeming grace, 
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

Silent night, holy night! Wondrous star, lend thy light; 
With the angels let us sing, Alleluia to our King; 
Christ the Savior is born. Christ the Savior is born.

THE CHRISTMAS BLESSING AND BENEDICTION
The congregation extinguishes their candles.
The ushers will receive your candles as you leave.

THE CLOSING VOLUNTARY
“Sing We Now of Christmas”

The Nativity Tableau will begin shortly after the conclusion of this service.
The Holy Family is portrayed by Randall, Katherine and Margaret Hoose.

* Those who wish may stand.
+ The ushers will seat those who are waiting.
Leading worship today with The Reverend Dr. Everett C. Goodwin, Interim Senior Minister, are The Reverend Mr. Joseph D. Aldrich, Associate Minister, The Reverend Ms. Robin P. Coira, Executive Minister, Mariah B. Currin, Director of New Member Ministry, The Reverend Mr. Chris Hughes, Minister of Youth, Cheri Lindblom, Director of Outreach, The Reverend Mr. Barry Z. Metzger, Church Administrator, Frances L. Morrison, Associate Minister of Music, and The Reverend Ms. Chrissy Tatum Williamson, Minister of Faith Formation.

The Chancel Choir leads worship through music with The Reverend Dr. Jonathan E. Crutchfield, Minister of Music, and Dr. Matthew Manwarren, Organist.

The acolytes are Rebecca Long, Hannah Long and McLean Campbell.

The sound technician is Eric Roberts. The webcast technician is Rich Wheeler.

The flowers on the altar are given to the Glory of God and in loving memory of Mr. and Mrs. W. Frank Dowd by the Frank Dowd, Jr. family and Mr. and Mrs. Roddey Dowd, Sr. and family; also in loving memory of Sally Carson Dowd by Frank Dowd, Jr. and family.

Deacon of the Week for December 21-27 is Charley Faulkenberry, 803.493.2821, LCF120@comporium.net.

The cover artwork is Nativity by Sandro Botticelli (1445-1510), oil on canvas, Columbia Museum of Art, Columbia, SC.
THE READING FOR CHRISTMAS EVE, DECEMBER 24, 2014

LUKE 2:1-7 (NRSV)

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.
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.

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THE MYERS PARK BAPTIST CHURCH

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

THE REVEREND DR. EVERETT C. GOODWIN, Interim Senior Minister
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