Christmas Eve 2015

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 2015 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.

Gluten free Communion wafers are available in the Narthex.

Please silence your cell phone.

THE SILENT MEDITATION

Are there still those who long to hear an angel’s song and touch a star?
To kneel beside some other shepherd in the hope of catching a glimpse of eternity in a baby’s smile?
Are there still those who sing “Peace on earth, goodwill to all”?
If there are – then, O Lord, keep ablaze their flickering candle in the darkness of this world!

Ann Weems, Kneeling in Bethlehem

THE MUSIC OF CHRISTMAS (5:30 p.m.)
Carols for Harp and Organ Betsey Sesler, harp

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 Number 110
“Joy to the world”

*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*  
*Conor, Bridget and Christopher*

**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.

---

**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

THE HEBREW LESSON

George Frideric Handel  
(1685-1759)

**“Comfort Ye My People” from Messiah**

Comfort ye my people, saith your God;  
speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem,  
and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished,  
that her iniquity is pardoned.  
The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness,  
'Prepare ye the way of the Lord,  
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.'

*Isaiah 40:1-3*

Jeffrey Price, tenor

THE GOSPEL READING

Luke 2:1-7

THE CHRISTMAS MEDITATION

The Reverend Robin Paterson Coira

“What Do You Want For Christmas?”

THE CONGREGATION RESPONDS TO GOD’S WORD

*THE CAROL*  
“What child is this?”

Number 122  
*Greensleeves*

THE CHURCH AT 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 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 CHRISTMAS OFFERING

The offering will benefit the Sunshine Fund (The Church Benevolence Fund).

THE ANTHEM

“Christmas Day” (Choral Fantasy on Old Carols)

Good Christian friends, rejoice,
with heart, and soul, and voice:
Give ye heed to what we say:
News! News! Jesus Christ is born today:
Ox and ass before him bow,
And He is in the manger now.
Christ is born today!

God rest you merry, gentle ones,
Let nothing you dismay,
Remember Christ our Saviour
was born on Christmas day,
To save us all from woe and sin,
When we were gone astray.
O tidings of comfort and joy.

In Bethlehem, in Jewry,
This blessed Babe was born,
And laid within a manger,
Upon that holy morn;
The which His Mother, Mary,
Did nothing take in scorn.
O tidings of comfort and joy.

Good Christian friends, rejoice,
with heart, and soul, and voice;
Now ye hear of endless bliss:
Joy! Joy! Jesus Christ was born for this.
He hath oped the heav’nly door,
And we are blessed evermore.
Christ was born for this.

Come ye lofty, come ye lowly,
Let your songs of gladness ring;
In a stable lies the Holy,
In a manger rests the King:
See in Mary’s arms reposing,
Christ by highest heav’n adored:
Sung simultaneously:
The first Nowell, the angels did say,
Was to certain poor shepherds
in fields as they lay;
In fields where they lay, Keeping their sheep,
On a cold winter’s night that was so deep.
Nowell, Nowell, Born is the King of Israel.

The Chancel Choir

Gustav Holst
(1874-1934)

Come, your circle round Him closing,
Pious hearts that love the Lord.
Come, ye poor, no pomp of station
Robes the Child your hearts adore.
He, the Lord of all salvation,
Shares your want, is weak and poor.
Oxen, round about behold them;
Rafters naked, cold and bare,
See the shepherds, God has told them
That the Prince of Life lies there.
Come ye children, blithe and merry,
This one Child your model make;
Christmas holly, leaf, and berry,
All be prized for His dear sake;

Come, ye gentle hearts, and tender,
come, ye spirits, keen and bold;
All in all your homage render,
Weak and mighty, young and old.
High above a star is shining,
And the Wisemen haste from far:
Come glad hearts and spirits pining:
For you all has risen the star.
Let us bring our poor oblations,
Thanks and love and faith and praise:
Come, ye people, come ye nations,
all in all draw nigh to gaze.

Now to the Lord sing praises,
All you within this place,
And with true love and brotherhood
Each other now embrace;
This holy tide of Christmas
All others doth deface.
O tidings of comfort and joy.

Good Christian friends rejoice,
With heart, and soul, and voice;
Now ye need not fear the grave:
Peace! Peace!
Jesus Christ was born to save!
Calls you one and calls you all,
To gain his everlasting hall.
Christ was born to save.
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.

Gluten-free Communion wafers are available in the narthex.

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
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 BENEDICTION

* The congregation extinguishes their candles.
* The ushers will receive your candles as you leave.

THE CLOSING VOLUNTARY

“Toccata on Picardy”

Albert Zabel
(b. 1935)

* Those who wish may stand.
+ The ushers will seat those who are waiting.

The Nativity Tableau will begin shortly after the conclusion of this service.
The Holy Family is portrayed by Charlie, Katie and Reaghan Bahnson.
Shepherds and Magi will be portrayed by members of the Youth Group.

Leading worship this evening with The Reverend Ms. Robin P. Coira, Executive Minister,
are The Reverend Mr. Joseph D. Aldrich, Associate 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,
The Reverend Ms. Carrie Veal, Minister of Children,
and The Reverend Ms. Chrissy Tatum Williamson, Minister of Faith Formation.

The Chancel Choir leads worship through music with
Dr. Jeffrey Price, Guest Conductor,
and Dr. Matthew Manwarren, Organist.

The acolytes are Elliott Campbell, McLean Campbell, Christian William and Taylor Lawing.

The sound technician is Eric Roberts.
The webcast technician is John Bambach.

The poinsettias 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 20-26 is
Gary Morrison, gmorrison7483@gmail.com, 704.541.3525.

The cover artwork is Nativity by Sandro Botticelli (1445-1510),
oil on canvas, Columbia Museum of Art, Columbia, SC.
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.

THE 2015-2016 BOARD OF DEACONS
TODD RUBENSON, Chair • JANET MILLER, Chair-Elect • LYNN TRENNING, Secretary

CLASS OF 2016
Dale Allison
Britt Canady
George Currin
Gene Doar
Vikki Hunley
Barbara Linney
Lisa Rubenson
Jeanne Steele
Marji Tate
Lynn Trenning
Ed Williams

CLASS OF 2017
Kathy Bahnsom
Nancy Culp
Scott Haenni
Richard Harris
Tom Jones
Patsy Kinsey
Debby Love
Regan Miller
Cathryn Rivers
Chris Skardon
Tobie Steele
Steve Woodard

CLASS OF 2018
Judy Bratton
Leslie Clark
Koren Cranford
Lalla Dabbs
Dave Dougherty
Doug Driggers
Charlie Elberson
Gary Morrison
Susan Salvin
Chebbie Shoemaker
Cam Wester
Chris William

ACTIVE LIFE DEACONS
Bonnie Banks
Gloria Gibson
Tom Holmes
Barbara Linney
Jane Lucas
Ted Lucas
Barbara Mishoe
Ray Owens
Carol Pearsall
Richard Pearsall
Bob Thomason
Tillie Tice
Dan White

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. JOSEPH D. ALDRICH, Associate Minister
SHARON BREMER, Director of Stewardship
THE REVEREND MS. ROBIN PATTERSON COIRA, Executive Minister
MARIAH B. CURRIN, Director of New Member Ministry
BELINDA GEUSS, Director of Through-The-Week School
THE REVEREND MR. CHRIS HUGHES, Minister of Youth
CHERI LINDBLOM, Director of Outreach
DR. MATTHEW MANWARREN, Organist
THE REVEREND MR. BARRY ZANE METZGER, Church Administrator
FRANCES L. MORRISON, Associate Minister of Music
DEBORAH A. STEINER, Music Associate for Children
THE REVEREND MS. CARRIE VEAL, Minister of Children
THE REVEREND MS. CHRISY TATUM WILLIAMSON, Minister of Faith Formation
JENNY YOPP, Director of The Cornwell Center

Printed on recycled paper