

SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY
Fourth Sunday of Advent
December 19, 2021

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

***LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES/CALL TO WORSHIP**

from Isaiah 2:4

Leader: We light these candles as a sign of the coming light of Christ. As the Lord has promised, in days to come the Lord will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child.

All: She shall bear a son, and name him Emmanuel: "God is with us".

Leader: Let us walk in the light of the Lord.

All: Let us worship God.

***HYMN**

Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah

85, V.1-4

***CALL TO CONFESSION**

A voice is crying out in the wilderness: Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.

Trusting in God's grace, let us confess our sin.

***PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

Faithful God, we know that you are always there to guide us, yet we make plans without listening to you and discover that our human agendas can drown out our ability to hear your will for us. We repent of these faults and turn to you in love. Forgive our offenses and pardon our sins, that our lives may magnify your holy name forever. Amen.

***ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

The wilderness will rejoice; the dry land will blossom. The people of God will rejoice with joy and singing. Believe the Good News of the Gospel: **In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!**

***GLORIA PATRI**

Glory to God, Whose Goodness Shines on Me

582

We encourage you to quietly reflect with joy on God's mercy as the music plays.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Holy God, our hope and strength, by the power of your Spirit prepare the way in our hearts for the coming of your Word, so that we may see glorious signs of your promise fulfilled; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

FIRST READING*Luke 1:26-38*

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

The Word of God for the people of God!
Thanks be to God!

ANTHEM*He Will Be the Love**Gay Piller and Paul Piller***SECOND READING***John 1:1-18*

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. (John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.'") From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

This is the word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God!

MESSAGE

Rev. Ben Shaw

***AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

The Apostles' Creed

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

And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

CALL TO OFFERING

Per COVID-19 safety measures, we will not pass the offering plate for some time. As you feel called, you may leave your offering in the plate in the Gathering Room or donate online at MPChurch.net.

***DOXOLOGY**

In place of singing aloud, we encourage you to ponder God's blessings in your life as the music plays.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

... And now hear as we pray as Jesus taught us:

**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.**

***HYMN**

People, Look East

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CHARGE AND BLESSING

And now may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all this day, and unto your life eternal. Amen.