



The Order of Celebration and Worship of God

Fourth Sunday in Advent

December 20, 2020

To all who are spiritually weary and seek rest; to all who mourn and long for comfort; to all who struggle and desire victory; to all who sin and need a Savior; to all who are strangers and want fellowship; to all who hunger and thirst after righteousness; and to all who will come— this church opens wide her doors and offers welcome in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Opening Prayer

Greeting and Call To Worship

Leader: We gather in preparation

People: *For good news is about to be proclaimed.*

Leader: We gather in expectation

People: *For joy is about to explode in our midst.*

Leader: We gather in celebration

People: *For we are those people who have said yes to the manger, yes to love enfleshed, yes to the one incarnate for others, yes to the wholeness of God.*

Leader: With preparation and in expectation, let us celebrate!

—based on Luke 1.46-50

Lighting of the Advent Candles.

Reader: We light these candles as a sign of the coming light of Christ.

A voice cries:

“In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD;
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.” *(Isaiah 40.3)*

The Lord will give you a sign.

A young woman is with child and shall bear a son.
And they shall name him Immanuel,
which means God is with us. *(Isaiah 7.14; Matthew 1.23)*

Every valley shall be lifted up and every mountain and hill be made low;
the uneven ground shall become level,
and the rough places a plain. *(Isaiah 40.4)*

And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,
and all flesh shall see it together,
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.” *(Isaiah 40:5)*

Come, Lord Jesus, our light and our salvation.

People: *Let us walk in the light of the Lord.*

Opening Hymn | God Rest You Merry Gentlemen

English carol, 18th century

*God rest you merry, gentlemen, let nothing you dismay,
Remember Christ our Savior was born on Christmas day,
To save us all from Satan's pow'r when we were gone astray;*

*O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy,
O tidings of comfort and joy.*

*From God our heav'nly Father, a blessed angel came;
And unto certain shepherds brought tidings of the same:
How that in Bethlehem was born the son of God by name.*

*"Fear not, then," said the angel, "let nothing you affright;
This day is born a Savior of a pure virgin bright,
To free all those who trust in him from Satan's pow'r and might."*

*The shepherds at those tidings rejoiced much in mind,
And left their flocks a-feeding, in tempest, storm, and wind:
And went to Bethlehem straightway, the Son of God to find.*

Prayer of Adoration and Invocation

Leader: Purify our conscience, Almighty God, by your daily visitation, that your Son Jesus Christ, at his coming, may find in us a mansion prepared for himself; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

People: Amen.

All Singing: *Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

Leader: Praise the Lord!

People: *The Name of the Lord be praised!*

Hymn of Worship | It Came Upon the Midnight Clear

Words by Edmund H. Sears (1849); Music by Arthur Seymour Sullivan (1874)

*It came upon the midnight clear, That glorious song of old,
From angels bending near the earth, To touch their harps of gold:
"Peace on the earth, good will to men, From heaven's all-gracious King."
The world in solemn stillness lay, To hear the angels sing.*

*Still through the cloven skies they come, With peaceful wings unfurled,
And still their heavenly music floats, O'er all the weary world.
Above its sad and lowly plains, They bend on hovering wing,
And ever o'er its Babel sounds, The blessed angels sing.*

*And ye, beneath life's crushing load, Whose forms are bending low,
Who toil along the climbing way, With painful steps and slow,
Look now, for glad and golden hours, Come swiftly on the wing.
O rest beside the weary road, And hear the angels sing!*

*For lo! the days are hastening on, By prophet seen of old,
when with the ever-circling years, Shall come the time foretold
When peace shall over all the earth, Its ancient splendors fling,
And the whole world send back the song, Which now the angels sing!*

Confession of Sin and Assurance of Pardon

People: *Merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone.
We have not loved you with our whole heart and mind and strength.
We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.
In your mercy forgive what we have been, help us amend what we are, and direct what we shall be, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name.
Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.*

Please take a moment for silent confession.

Leader: Hear the good news!

Who is in a position to condemn? Only Christ, and Christ died for us, Christ rose for us, Christ reigns in power for us, Christ prays for us.

Anyone who is in Christ is a new creation. The old life has gone; a new life has begun.

Know that you are forgiven, and be at peace.

People: *Thanks be to God!*

—based on Romans 8:34; 2 Corinthians 5:17

Passing of the Peace

Leader: May the peace of the Lord be with you.

People: *And also with you.*

Leader: Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

Parents may take children 3-5 (pre-Kindergarten) to Redeemer Kids at this time.

New Testament Reading | Romans 16:17–27

[17] I appeal to you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and create obstacles contrary to the doctrine that you have been taught; avoid them. [18] For such persons do not serve our Lord Christ, but their own appetites, and by smooth talk and flattery they deceive the hearts of the naive. [19] For your obedience is known to all, so that I rejoice over you, but I want you to be wise as to what is good and innocent as to what is evil. [20] The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

[21] Timothy, my fellow worker, greets you; so do Lucius and Jason and Sosipater, my kinsmen.

[22] I Tertius, who wrote this letter, greet you in the Lord.

[23] Gaius, who is host to me and to the whole church, greets you. Erastus, the city treasurer, and our brother Quartus, greet you.

[25] Now to him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages [26] but has now been disclosed and through the prophetic writings has been made known to all nations, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith—[27] to the only wise God be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ! Amen.

Hymn of Worship | All Things New

Words by Horatius Bonar (1846), music by Clint Wells (2009)

*Come, Lord, and tarry not;
Bring the long looked for day;
O why these years of waiting here,
These ages of decay?*

*Come, for Thy saints still wait;
Daily ascends their sigh;
The Spirit and the Bride say, "Come";
Does Thou not hear the cry?*

*O come and make all things new!
Come and make all things new!
O come and make all things new!
Build up this ruined earth
Come and make all things new.*

*Come, for creation groans,
Impatient of Thy stay,
Worn out with these long years of ill,
These ages of delay.*

*Come, for love waxes cold,
Its steps are faint and slow;
Faith now is lost in unbelief,
Hope's lamp burns dim and low.*

Responsive Reading | Luke 1.46-55

Leader: My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

People: *For he has looked on the humble estate of his servant.*

Leader: For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed;

People: *For he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name.*

Leader: And his mercy is for those who fear him

People: *From generation to generation.*

Leader: He has shown strength with his arm;

People: *He has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts;*

Leader: He has brought down the mighty from their thrones

People: *And exalted those of humble estate;*

Leader: He has filled the hungry with good things,

People: *And the rich he has sent away empty.*

Leader: He has helped his servant Israel,

People: *In remembrance of his mercy,*

Leader: As he spoke to our fathers,

People: *To Abraham and to his offspring forever."*

Ministry of the Word | The LORD of the Blessed Rest

Rev. Benjamin Wheeler

Sermon Text | Exodus 20:1-21

[1] And God spoke all these words, saying, [2] "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.

[3] "You shall have no other gods before me.

[4] "You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. [5] You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, [6] but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments.

[7] "You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain.

[8] "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. [9] Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, [10] but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. [11] For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

[12] "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you.

[13] "You shall not murder.

[14] "You shall not commit adultery.

[15] "You shall not steal.

[16] "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

[17] "You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor's."

[18] Now when all the people saw the thunder and the flashes of lightning and the sound of the trumpet and the mountain smoking, the people were afraid and trembled, and they stood far off [19] and said to Moses, "You speak to us, and we will listen; but do not let God speak to us, lest we die."

[20] Moses said to the people, "Do not fear, for God has come to test you, that the fear of him may be before you, that you may not sin." [21] The people stood far off, while Moses drew near to the thick darkness where God was.

Sermon Notes

Confession of Faith

We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of his Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father; by whom all things were made; who for us and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary, and was made man; and was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate; he suffered and was buried; and the third day he rose again, according to the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father; and he shall come again, with glory, to judge both the living and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end.

And we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified; who spoke by the prophets; and we believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church; we acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins, and we look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen."

—*The Apostle's Creed*

Prayers of the People, Concluded with 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, for ever and ever. Amen.

This is a great time for parents to go pick up their children for communion.

The Holy Communion

(For those watching at home, I encourage you to take this time to watch and pray with us. Remember this all along: Jesus is not more present with us who are gathered than he is with you at home! The Lord's Supper is a sign and seal of his blessing to us, and a great gift, but it does not mean you are missing out on his presence or his blessing. We all participate by faith in Christ whether physically receiving the Supper or not.)

Prayer of Dedication

Leader: Almighty God, unto whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Hear what our Lord Jesus Christ says: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.

Leader: Lord, have mercy upon us.

People: *Christ, have mercy upon us.*

Leader: Lord, have mercy upon us.

The Great Thanksgiving

Leader: Lift up your hearts!

People: *We lift them up to the Lord!*

Leader: Let us give thanks unto the Lord our God!

People: *It is right to give him thanks and praise!*

Leader: It is very good and right that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to you, O Holy Lord, Father Almighty, Everlasting God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Therefore with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we praise and magnify your glorious name, evermore praising you and saying:

People: *Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the Highest! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the Highest!*

Words of Institution

Prayer of Consecration

Leader: Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

People: *Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.*

Leader: Christ, our Passover, has been sacrificed for us.

People: *Therefore, let us keep the feast.*

Leader: The gifts of God for the people of God.

The Feast

Communion Hymn | Come Light Our Hearts

Words and music by Sandra McCracken (2015)

For you, O Lord, our souls in stillness wait

For you, O Lord, our souls in stillness wait

Truly our hope is in You

Truly our hope is in You

O Lord of life, our only hope

Your radiance shines

On all who look -- to You in the dark

Emmanuel come, come light our hearts

For you, O Lord, our souls in stillness wait

For you, O Lord, our souls in stillness wait

Truly our hope is in You

Truly our hope is in You

O Joy above all other loves

In you we find more than enough

We come as we are, O heal and restore

Come light our hearts

Concluding Prayer

One More Hymn and the Offering | Joy to the World

Words by Isaac Watts, 1719, Music by Lowell Mason, 1848

Joy to the world! the Lord is come;

Let earth receive her King.

Let every heart prepare him room,

And heaven and nature sing,

And heaven and nature sing,

And heaven, and heaven and nature sing!

Joy to the earth! the Savior reigns:

Let men their songs employ,

While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains

*Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy!*

*No more let sins and sorrows grow
Nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make his blessings flow
Far as the curse is found,
Far as the curse is found,
Far as, far as the curse is found.*

*He rules the world with truth and grace,
And makes the nations prove
The glories of his righteousness
And wonders of his love,
And wonders of his love,
And wonders, wonders of his love!*

Benediction & Dismissal

Leader: May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely;
and may your spirit and soul and body
be kept sound and blameless
at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.
The one who calls you is faithful,
and he will do this.

People: *Amen!*

— 1 Thessalonians 5.23-24

CCLI # 11299454

Announcements

Christmas Eve Worship:

We will be having our annual candlelight service on Christmas Eve at 5:30 pm at OneRealtor Center. This is a great time to gather as God's people and reflect upon his great grace to us!

Small Group Meetings:

Small groups are an important part of our ministry at Redeemer. They offer opportunities to deepen relationships and to love, serve, and pray for one another and our city. If you are interested in joining a group, please email Ben Wheeler: ben@redeemertyler.com.

Monthly Youth Meeting:

All junior high and high school students are invited to join us on the third Sunday of the month for a time of fellowship, dinner, and Bible Study.

Bible and Book Studies:

- Men's study meets over breakfast, 7:00 am on Fridays. They are studying the gospel of Luke. Contact Konrad Kern (714-658-4972).

- The women's group is studying the gospel of Matthew on Friday mornings. Contact Patti Babin (361-215-0065) for information.

Prayer Suggestions:

Topic: our church and mission

- Monday
That God would prepare us to be his ambassadors, welcoming to those who visit and reaching out to friends and neighbors and those in need; for healthy marriages and families.
- Tuesday
For authentic community, healthy small groups, deep friendships.
- Wednesday
That we would grow in prayer; for God to bless our corporate worship.
- Thursday
Physical and material needs of the body; that we would see opportunities to love and serve the destitute, ill, imprisoned, orphaned, and widowed.
- Friday
Passion for ministry; Sabbath rest; discernment.
- Saturday
Perspective, faith, contentment.