

The Third Sunday of Advent

December 17, 2023 at 10:30 AM

We welcome you to worship today. It is a privilege to have you as our guest.

As you join us today, begin to worship quietly with personal prayer.

Please turn off your cell phone and turn your hearts and minds toward God.

We prepare for worship

Take a moment and meditate on this as you prepare for worship...

The second person of the Trinity did not suddenly appear for the first time in the incarnation.

New Bible Commentary

Prelude

Away In The Manger (Cradle Song)

William J. Kirkpatrick

Dr. Kenneth Dean, Jr.; Director of Music Ministries

Please quietly prepare your hearts for worship during the Prelude.

Aisquith Life and Opportunities

We praise our great God

Call to Worship

Psalms 31:1-5

¹ In you, O Lord, do I take refuge;

let me never be put to shame;

in your righteousness deliver me!

² Incline your ear to me;

rescue me speedily!

Be a rock of refuge for me,

a strong fortress to save me!

³ For you are my rock and my fortress;

and for your name's sake you lead me and guide me;

⁴ you take me out of the net they have hidden for me,

for you are my refuge.

⁵ Into your hand I commit my spirit;

you have redeemed me, O Lord, faithful God.

Invocation

Hymn No. 218

Angels, from the Realms of Glory

Regent Square

Angels, from the realms of glory, wing your flight o'er all the earth;
ye who sang creation's story, now proclaim Messiah's birth:

Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the new born King.

Shepherds in the fields abiding, watching o'er your flocks by night,
God with man is now residing, yonder shines the infant Light:

Sages, leave your contemplations, brighter visions beam afar;
seek the great Desire of nations; ye have seen his natal star:

Saints below the altar bending, watching long in hope and fear,
suddenly the Lord, descending, in his temple shall appear:

All creation, join in praising God the Father, Spirit, Son;
evermore your voices raising to the eternal Three in One:

We embrace Christ's Word

Confession of Faith

Westminster Larger Catechism, Question 161

How do the sacraments become effectual means of salvation?

The sacraments become effectual means of salvation, not by any power in themselves, or any virtue derived from the piety or intention of him by whom they are administered, but only by the working of the Holy Ghost, and the blessing of Christ, by whom they are instituted.

The Warning and Grace of God (Responsive)

Romans 11:17-24

¹⁷ But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, although a wild olive shoot, were grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing root of the olive tree,

¹⁸ **do not be arrogant toward the branches. If you are, remember it is not you who support the root, but the root that supports you.**

¹⁹ Then you will say,

“Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in.”

²⁰ That is true. They were broken off because of their unbelief, but you stand fast through faith. So do not become proud, but fear.

²¹ **For if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will he spare [us].**

²² Note then the kindness and the severity of God: severity toward those who have fallen, but God's kindness to you, provided you continue in his kindness.

Otherwise [we] too will be cut off.

²³ And even they, if they do not continue in their unbelief, will be grafted in, for God has the power to graft them in again.

²⁴ **For if [we] were cut from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and grafted, contrary to nature, into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these, the natural branches, be grafted back into their own olive tree.**

Our Confession of Sin

Christ our Hope (Responsive)

Romans 15:8-13

⁸ For I tell you that Christ became a servant to the circumcised to show God's truthfulness, **in order to confirm the promises given to the patriarchs,**

⁹ and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy.

As it is written, “Therefore I will praise you among the Gentiles, and sing to your name.”

¹⁰ And again it is said, “Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people.”

¹¹ **And again, “Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles, and let all the peoples extol him.”**

¹² And again Isaiah says, “The root of Jesse will come, even he who arises to rule the Gentiles; in him will the Gentiles hope.”

¹³ **May the God of hope fill [us] with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit [we] may abound in hope.**

Assurance from God

Ephesians 3:14-19

¹⁴ For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, ¹⁵ from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, ¹⁶ that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, ¹⁷ so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, ¹⁸ may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, ¹⁹ and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Hymn No. 207

Good Christian Men, Rejoice

In Dulci Jubilo

Good Christian men, rejoice, with heart and soul and voice;
Give ye heed to what we say: Jesus Christ is born today;
Earth and heav’n before him bow, and he is in the manger now.
Christ is born today! Christ is born today!

Good Christian men, rejoice, with heart and soul and voice;
Now ye hear of endless bliss: Jesus Christ was born for this!
He hath opened heaven’s door, and man is blessed evermore.
Christ was born for this! Christ was born for this!

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

We acknowledge God’s blessings

The Prayers of God’s People and the Lord’s Prayer (in unison)

RE Mark Werner

We respond in gratitude for God’s blessing

The Giving of God’s Tithes and Our Offerings

Offertory

It Came Upon The Midnight Clear

Richard S. Willis

Duet: Yuki Fisher, Piano & Dr. Kenneth Dean, Jr., Organ

The Doxology (Hymnal, pg. 731) and Prayer of Dedication

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above ye heav’nly host:
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

We are nourished by God’s Word

Scripture Reading

1 Corinthians 10:1-5

Pew Bible pg. 957

¹ For I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, ² and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, ³ and all ate the same spiritual food, ⁴ and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual Rock that followed them, and the Rock was Christ. ⁵ Nevertheless, with most of them God was not pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness.

Sermon

“The Solid Rock”

Pastor Ceselsky

Sermon Outline can be found on the back page of the bulletin.

We respond to God’s grace

Hymn No. 521

My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less

Solid Rock

My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus’ blood and righteousness;
I dare not trust the sweetest frame, but wholly lean on Jesus’ name.

On Christ, the solid rock, I stand; all other ground is sinking sand.

When darkness veils his lovely face, I rest on his unchanging grace;
In every high and stormy gale, my anchor holds within the veil.

His oath, his covenant, his blood support me in the whelming flood;
When all around my soul gives way, he then is all my hope and stay.

When he shall come with trumpet sound, O may I then in him be found;
Dressed in his righteousness alone, faultless to stand before the throne.

Benediction and Three-Fold Amen (**Hymnal, pg. 740**)

Danish

Postlude

The First Noel

English Melody – Gilbert M. Martin

Duet: Yuki Fisher, Piano & Dr. Kenneth Dean, Jr., Organ

Please be seated and quietly reflect upon the Lord’s grace during the Postlude.

Announcements

This Year’s Christmas Offering will again go to the Ministerial Relief Fund of the PCA. This fund is used to help retired pastors and widows of pastors who struggle with economic hardship. Please give generously as you are able. You can use your “Christmas Offering” envelope or use one of the pink envelopes in the pew racks (please label them for the Christmas Offering).

Christmas Cards may be placed in the box in the narthex. Please put the cards **only** in the box. And then look each week for your cards, which will be sorted alphabetically, on the back table. (Please do not include cards for folks who do not regularly attend worship at Aisquith.)

The Men’s and Women’s Bible Studies will be taking a break after their Christmas gatherings this week. The studies will resume on January 10 with 2 weeks remaining in the current study on James.

Beginning on January 24, we will start a new study on the three epistles of John. If you would like to participate, there is a sign-up sheet in the narthex to order the study guides. Guides are \$10 each and money should be given directly to John or Julie. The deadline to order the study guides is December 31.

Winter Weather Plans. As we enter now into Winter, here's how we will inform you of any changes to our Lord's Day schedule (or Bible Studies) if there is inclement weather. A statement will be posted on the front page of our website, we will send out a blast email (you can sign up for our emails on the front page of the website), and we will send out a text alert (if you want to sign up for text alerts please let Pastor Ceselsky know). This will all be done prior to 8 AM.

Prayer Requests

1. Please continue in prayer for Candy Short as she struggles with medication and other health issues. Please pray as well that her brother-in-law, Michael, will be healthy enough to attend Christmas Eve worship with his wife, and that the Lord would touch his heart.
2. Please continue to be in prayer for Sylvia Barfield as she continues to recover from surgery to deal with the cancer on her lung.
3. Please continue in prayer for Anna Graham as she deals with sever back pain and tries to work with various doctors to deal with the issue.
4. Please continue in prayer for Libby Soule and for Jeff and Sarah as they seek to care for her many needs.
5. Please be in prayer for Aisquith members, family members and friends of the Aisquith Community who are currently struggling with various illnesses and other physical and emotional issues.

Weekly Calendar

TODAY:	9:00 AM	Video Conference Call with John & Gwen Cicone
	10:30 AM	Worship Service (Nursery available in Room 25)
	12:00 PM	Handbell Choir Practice - Sanctuary
Monday	6:15 PM	Handbell Choir Practice – Sanctuary
Saturday	10:00 AM	Choir Practice – Room 27
NEXT Sunday	10:30 AM	Lord's Day Worship Service (Fourth Sunday of Advent)
	6:30 PM	Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

(Please note the time change!)

Church Officers

Ruling Elders: Jeff Soule & Mark Werner (Clerk)

Deacons: Andrew Bell (on sabbatical), Gus DeFord, Ken Schumann (President), and Rick Willis

Deaconesses: Christine Clark, Debbie DeFord, Fran Oswinkle, & Jeanne Williams (Moderator)

Sermon Notes

Date: December 17, 2023

Text: 1 Corinthians 10:1-5

Sermon Title: “The Solid Rock”

Delivered By: Pastor John Ceselsky

Proposition: There is a common bond between believers of all time.

Main Point 1: Ritual is important, but cannot save.

Point 1: Baptism does not save.

1. Cloud. (v. 1b)

2. Sea. (v. 1c)

3. Moses. (v. 2)

Point 2: The Lord’s Supper does not save.

1. Spiritual food. (v. 3)

2. Spiritual drink. (v. 4a)

3. The Rock. (v. 4b)

Main Point 2: Heartless ritual only brings death. (v. 5)

Main Point 3: Only a true faith in the Rock can save. (v. 4c)