

The Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 24, 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 Son of God became a man to enable men to become sons of God.

C.S. Lewis

Prelude

Coventry Carol

Robert Cruo
The Aisquith Handbell Choir

Please quietly prepare your hearts for worship during the Prelude.

Aisquith Life and Opportunities

We praise our great God

Call to Worship

Luke 2:10-14

¹⁰ The angel said to [the shepherds], "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. ¹¹ For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹² And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." ¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

¹⁴ "Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!"

Invocation

Hymn No. 201

O Little Town of Bethlehem

St. Louis

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie;
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by:
Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting Light;
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary; and gathered all above,
While mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wond'ring love.
No ear may hear his coming, but in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive him still, the dear Christ enters in.

How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is giv'n!
So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of his heav'n.
No ear may hear his coming, but in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive him still, the dear Christ enters in.

O holy child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin and enter in; be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel.

We embrace Christ's Word

Confession of Christ (Responsive)

Philippians 2:5-11

⁵ Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus,
⁶ **who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped,**
⁷ but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant,
being born in the likeness of men.
⁸ And being found in human form,
he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.
⁹ Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name,
¹⁰ **so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,**
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
¹¹ **and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.**

Confession of Faith

Westminster Shorter Catechism, Question 22

How did Christ, being the Son of God, become man?
Christ, the Son of God, became man, by taking to himself a true body, and a reasonable soul, being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost, in the womb of the virgin Mary, and born of her, yet without sin.

Assurance of The Incarnation

John 1:1-3, 14, 16-18

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.
¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.
¹⁶ For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. ¹⁷ For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.

Hymn No. 194

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

Veni Emmanuel

O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here, until the Son of God appear.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, O come, thou Lord of might, who to thy tribes on Sinai's height,
In ancient times didst give the law in cloud and majesty and awe.

O come, thou Rod of Jesse, free thine own from Satan's tyranny;

From depths of hell thy people save, and give them vict'ry o'er the grave.

O come, thou Day-spring from on high, and cheer us by thy drawing nigh;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night, and death's dark shadows put to flight.

O come, thou Key of David, come and open wide our heav'nly home;
Make safe the way that leads on high and close the path to misery.

We acknowledge God's blessings

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

We respond in gratitude for God's blessing

The Giving of God's Tithes and Our Offerings

Offertory

Silent Night, Holy Night

Franz Gruber

The Aisquith Handbell Choir & Mrs. Yuki Fisher, piano

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

Matthew 2:1-2

Pew Bible pg. 807

¹ Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, ² saying, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him."

Sermon

"It's THE Person, Not The Place"

Pastor Ceselsky

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

We respond to God's grace

Hymn No. 196

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

Hyfrydol

Come, thou long expected Jesus, born to set thy people free;
From our fears and sins release us; let us find our rest in thee.
Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art,
Dear Desire of ev'ry nation, joy of ev'ry longing heart.

Joy to those who long to see thee, Dayspring from on high, appear;
Come, thou promised Rod of Jesse, of thy birth we long to hear!
O'er the hills the angels singing news, glad tidings of a birth:
"Go to him, your praises bringing; Christ the Lord has come to earth."

Come to earth to taste our sadness, he whose glories knew no end;
By his life he brings us gladness, our Redeemer, Shepherd, Friend.
Leaving riches without number, born within a cattle stall;
This the everlasting wonder, Christ was born the Lord of all.

Born thy people to deliver, born a child and yet a king,
Born to reign in us forever, now thy gracious kingdom bring.
By thine own eternal Spirit rule in all our hearts alone;
By thine all sufficient merit, raise us to thy glorious throne.

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

Danish

Postlude

Meditation On – O Little Town of Bethlehem (St. Louis) – Dennis Janzer
Dr. Kenneth Dean, Jr.; Director of Music Ministries

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

Announcements

The cover photo is of the spot, under the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, noted to be the place of Jesus' birth. Photo taken by Mrs. Julie Ceselsky.

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.)

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).

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 to be in prayer for Sylvia Barfield as she continues to recover from surgery to deal with the cancer on her lung.

2. Please continue in prayer for Anna Graham as she deals with severe back pain. Anna will have outpatient surgery on Friday and then will have a number of follow-up procedures to deal with other aspects of the issue she is dealing with.
3. Please continue in prayer for Libby Soule, who was able to return home this week. Pray as well for Jeff and Sarah as they seek to care for her many needs.
4. 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.

Poinsettias for Christmas 2023

<u>From</u>	<u>Memorial</u>
Angela & Noe Andrade	In memory of Giovanni Andrade
Angela & Noe Andrade	In memory of Adrian Andrade
Lisa Baker	In memory of Mother, Betty Baker
Sylvia Barfield	In memory of Husband Darl & Loved Ones
George & Ruth Ellen Beerli	In memory of Mr. & Mrs. Charles Gronenthal
The Beerli & Barfield Families	In memory of Mr. & Mrs. Gebhard Beerli
John & Christine Clark	In memory of our Grandparents
John & Christine Clark	In memory of John Clark Sr.
Gus & Debbie DeFord	In memory of Gus' Parents & Siblings
Gus & Debbie DeFord	In memory of Debbie's Parents & Brother, Butch
Joe & Diane Eisenmeier	In memory of Ed & Alvina Eisenmeier
Anna, Andrew & Bruce Graham	In memory of Pastor Thomas Graham
George & Janet Johnson	In memory of Love Ones
Bryan & Lorna Lee	In memory of Leslie & Rosalyn Lee
Bryan & Lorna Lee	In memory of Andrew & Elizabeth Serrao
Bryan & Lorna Lee	In memory of Bettie Thomson
Norm & Betty Jo Norris	In Memory of Norm's Parents
Norm & Betty Jo Norris	In Memory of Betty Jo's Parents
Alice Orie	Giving Thanks for God's Amazing Grace & Love!
George & Fran Oswinkle	In loving memory of parents, Andy & Francis Zebrowski
George & Fran Oswinkle	In loving memory of parents, John & Anna Oswinkle
George & Fran Oswinkle	In living memory of brother, Joseph Zebrowski
George & Fran Oswinkle	In honor of George M. Weinecke, USNR, WWII
George & Fran Oswinkle	In honor of Charles B. Boynton, USN, Vietnam
John Schaller	In loving memory of Sandy
John Schaller	In loving memory of Sandy
John Schaller	In loving memory of Sandy
Betty & Mark Werner	To the Glory of Our Lord
The Wickham Family	In memory of Joseph

Weekly Calendar

TODAY:	10:30 AM	Worship Service (Nursery available in Room 25)
	6:30 PM	Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
Saturday	10:00 AM	Choir Practice – Room 27

NEXT Sunday 10:30 AM Lord's Day Worship Service

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 24, 2023

Text: Matthew 2:1-2

Sermon Title: "It's THE Person, Not the Place"

Delivered By: Pastor John Ceselsky

Proposition: We must come to Christ to worship Him.

Main Point 1: Prophecies of the place.

Point 1: Bethlehem. (Micah 5:2)

Point 2: Egypt. (Hosea 11:1; Matthew 2:18; Jeremiah 31:15)

Point 3: Nazareth (Matthew 2:23)

Main Point 2: Prophecies of His presence. (Matthew 1:23; Isaiah 7:14; John 14:16-17)

Main Point 3: Prophecy of our presence in His place. (Revelation 21:2-4; John 1:14; 2 Timothy 1:14)