

The Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 21, 2025 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 new birth is an imperative necessity because the natural man is altogether devoid of spiritual life. It is not that he is ignorant and needs instruction: it is not that he is feeble and needs invigorating: it is not that he is sickly and needs doctoring. His case is far, far worse. He is dead in his trespasses and sins. The sinner is spiritually lifeless and needs quickening. He is a spiritual corpse, and needs bringing from death unto life. He is a member of the old creation, which is under the curse of God, and unless he is made a new creation in Christ, he will lie under that curse to all eternity. What the natural man needs above everything else is life, he must be born again, and except he be born again, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. This is final.

Arthur Pink

Prelude

In The Bleak Mid-Winter

Gustav Holst

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

Psalm 51:10-12

¹⁰ Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within me.

¹¹ Cast me not away from your presence,
and take not your Holy Spirit from me.

¹² Restore to me the joy of your salvation,
and uphold me with a willing spirit.

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 through His Word

Our Confession of Faith

The Westminster Larger Catechism, Question 67

What is effectual calling?

Effectual calling is the work of God's almighty power and grace, whereby (out of his free and special love to his elect, and from nothing in them moving him thereunto) he does, in his accepted time, invite and draw them to Jesus Christ, by his Word and Spirit; savingly enlightening their minds, renewing and powerfully determining their wills, so as they (although in themselves dead in sin) are hereby made willing and able freely to answer his call, and to accept and embrace the grace offered and conveyed therein.

Our Confession of Our Sinful Estate & God's Saving Grace (Responsive)

Ephesians 2:1-10

¹ And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ² in which you once walked,
following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience

³ among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the flesh and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.

⁴ **But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us,**

⁵ even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ
by grace [we] have been saved

⁶ and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,

⁷ **so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.**

⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith.

And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God,

⁹ not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

¹⁰ **For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.**

We Give Thanks for God's Work of Salvation (Responsive)

1 Peter 1:3-9

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!

According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

⁴ to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you,

⁵ **who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.**

⁶ In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials,

⁷ **so that the tested genuineness of [our] faith—
more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—
may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.**

⁸ Though you have not seen him, you love him.

**Though [we] do not now see him, [we] believe in him and rejoice with joy that is
inexpressible and filled with glory,**

⁹ obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

Hymn No. 203

Hark! the Herald Angel Sings

Mendelssohn

Hark! the herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King;
Peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!”
Joyful, all ye nations, rise, join the triumph of the skies;
With th’angelic host proclaim, “Christ is born in Bethlehem!”

Hark! the herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King.”

Christ, by highest heav’n adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord!
Late in time behold him come, offspring of the Virgin’s womb.
Veiled in flesh the God-head see; hail th’incarnate Deity,
Pleased as man with men to dwell, Jesus our Emmanuel.

Hail the heav’n-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings, ris’n with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by, born that man no more may die,
Born to raise the sons of earth, born to give them second birth.

We respond in gratitude for God’s blessing

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

The Giving of God’s Tithes and Our Offerings

Offertory

It Came Upon The Midnight Clear

Richard Willis
The Aisquith Handbell Choir

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

John 3:1-15

Pew Bible pg. 887

¹ Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. ² This man came to Jesus by night and said to him, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God, for no

one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him.”³ Jesus answered him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.”⁴ Nicodemus said to him, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?”⁵ Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.”⁶ That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.⁷ Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’⁸ The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.”

⁹ Nicodemus said to him, “How can these things be?”¹⁰ Jesus answered him, “Are you the teacher of Israel and yet you do not understand these things?”¹¹ Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know, and bear witness to what we have seen, but you do not receive our testimony.¹² If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you heavenly things?¹³ No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man.¹⁴ And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up,¹⁵ that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

Sermon

“You Must Be Born Again”

Pastor Ceselsky

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

We respond to God's Grace

Hymn No. 9 (HMR)

Alive in Christ

Sola Gratia

I once was rebellious, corrupted by sin, pursuing the devil's dark path,
Oblivious, dead to the state I was in, an object of God's dreadful wrath.

But God who is rich in compassion and love, not leaving my soul to the grave,
Has given me life; born again from above, by God's sovereign grace I've been saved.

God lifted me up to the heavenly realms where seated with Christ I am free;
In ages to come he will show me more grace—so great is his kindness to me.

Since grace is the source of the life that is mine—and faith is a gift from on high—
I'll boast in my Savior, all merit decline, and glorify God 'til I die.

Yet now I am living with work to be done for I am God's workmanship too,
Created in Christ with a race to be run, which God has ordained me to do.

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

Danish

Postlude

Joy To The World

G.F. Handel
The Aisquith Handbell Choir

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

Announcements

We welcome Mr. Raymond Green as he plays the trumpet for us this morning.

The Christmas Card box is in the narthex for you to drop off Christmas cards for members of the congregation (Please do not include cards for former members or shut-ins). Please deposit cards in the box. Pastor Ceselsky will arrange the cards each week (**do not sort cards yourself!**). Please check each week to see if you have any cards.

2026 Giving Envelopes are available with the Christmas cards in the narthex. If you do not currently have envelopes but would like them in 2026, please speak to Pastor Ceselsky.

We will be holding a Cookie Exchange TODAY to raise money for the roof project. After worship, anyone may purchase a tin of the cookies of your choice for \$10 each. It's a great way to support the church and to get a variety of cookies for Christmas.

Our Christmas Offering this year will once again go to the Ministerial Relief Fund of the PCA. This fund is used to assist widows of pastors and missionaries, as well as retired pastors and missionaries, who face difficult financial circumstances.

In the case of bad weather on days when we have Bible studies, or on Sundays; notifications of cancellations or schedule changes will be made via blast email, text alerts, a bar at the top of the main page of our website, and on the church's answering system.

Donations for the Roof repair can be made through the ARC Fund. Please use a pink envelope and label it "ARC" or "Roof."

Birthdays and Anniversaries this week: Tuesday (December 23) is Joe Eisenmeier's Birthday and next Sunday (December 28) is both Pastor Ceselsky and Diane Eisenmeier's Birthdays.

Prayer Requests

1. Missions Prayer Request for the Week: John & Gwen Cicone – Rafiki Foundation (Tanzania) – Please be in prayer for John & Gwen as they are home for the Christmas holidays. Please pray for safety as they travel and that they have a blessed time celebrating our Savior with friends and family.
2. Please continue to be in prayer for those in our congregation who have on-going health concerns: Yoshio Amano (Yuki Fisher's father), Drew Calhoun (Mark Fisher's father), Joyce Donohue, Evelyn King, Betty Jo Norris, Libby Soule, Robert Willis (Rick's brother) & Ken Wilson.
3. 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:	10:30 AM	Lord's Day Worship Service
	12:00 PM	Cookie Exchange – Room 11
	2:00 PM	Choir & Musician Practice – Sanctuary
Wednesday:	6:30 PM	Musical Prelude
	7:00 PM	Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship Service
NEXT Sunday	10:30 AM	Lord's Day Worship Service
	12:00 PM	Choir Practice – Rooms 26-27

Church Officers

Ruling Elders: Riley B. Franklin, Jeff Soule & Mark Werner (Clerk)

Deacons: Andrew Bell, Gus DeFord, Jonathan Frank, Ken Schumann (President), and Rick Willis

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

Sermon Notes

Date: December 21, 2025

Text: John 3:1-15

Sermon Title: “You Must Be Born Again”

Delivered By: Pastor John Ceselsky

Proposition: You must be born again.

Main Point 1: We require rebirth. (vv. 1-5)

Point 1: We are in darkness.

Point 2: Jesus provides the means out of darkness and into light.

Point 3: Our helplessness to understand these things on our own.

Main Point 2: The Spirit alone provides our needed rebirth.

Point 1: The work of the Spirit that gives us new life. (vv. 6-10)

Point 2: Through the Word of God. (vv. 11-13)

Main Point 3: Jesus himself is the basis of rebirth. (vv. 14-15)