

December 15  
Worship | 8:15 and 11am  
Livestream | 11am

**The Christmas  
Songs of Scripture:  
An Exposition of the Canticles  
in Luke 1&2**

**The Gloria in Excelsis Deo:  
A Song of God's Glory and Peace**



# WELCOME

Thank you for joining us for worship this morning. We invite you to experience the meaning of the Gospel through this service, which reflects both ancient and modern elements of Christian worship. When we gather as a worshipping community, we enter into a dialogue with the living God. God calls us into worship, we rejoice in the hope of the Gospel, confess our sins, lament the brokenness of our world, give our offerings, and hear God's Word read and preached. We hope that by worshipping with us, you will experience joy and hope from a community of people who love Jesus.

At Lexington Presbyterian Church, for God's glory, we are making disciples of Jesus as we worship, love, and serve.

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# LORD'S DAY WORSHIP

\* Congregation, please stand if able

Prelude

## PRAISE

Updates | Following Christ Together

\* The Lighting of the Candle of Joy and the Call to Worship |

Isaiah 55:10-13 | Pew Bible pp. 615-616

*Leader: "For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven  
and do not return there but water the earth,  
making it bring forth and sprout,  
giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater,  
so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth;  
it shall not return to me empty,  
but it shall accomplish that which I purpose,  
and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.  
  
"For you shall go out in joy  
and be led forth in peace;  
the mountains and the hills before you  
shall break forth into singing,  
and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.  
Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress;  
instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle;  
and it shall make a name for the LORD,  
an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off."*

## \* Hymn of Joy



1. Joy - ful, joy - ful, we a - dore Thee, God of glo - ry, Lord of love;  
 2. All Thy works with joy sur - round Thee; earth and heav'n re - flect Thy rays.  
 3. Mor - tals, join the hap - py cho - rus which the morn - ing stars be - gan.



Hearts un - fold like flow'rs be - fore Thee, o - p'ning to the sun a - bove.  
 Stars and an - gels sing a - round Thee, cen - ter of un - bro - ken praise.  
 Fath - er love is reign - ing o'er us, Broth - er love binds man to man.



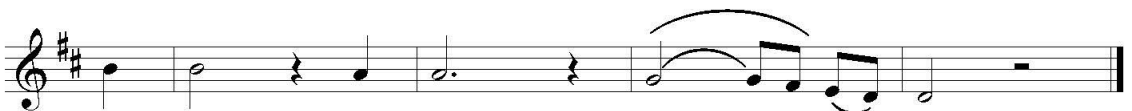
Melt the clouds of sin and sad - ness; drive the dark of doubt a - way.  
 Field and for - est, vale and moun - tain, flow - ry mead - ow, flash - ing sea,  
 Ev - er sing - ing, march we on - ward, vic - tors in the midst of strife.



Giv - er of im - mor - tal glad - ness, fill us with the light of day.  
 sing - ing bird, and flow - ing foun - tain, call us to re - joice in Thee.  
 Joy - ful mus - ic leads us sun - ward in the tri - umph song of life.



**CHORUS**  
 Re - joice, re - joice! Em - man - u - el,



Your love has come here to dwell.

Words by Henry Van Dyke, Chris Tomlin, and Ed Cash  
 Music by Ludwig van Beethoven, Chris Tomlin, and Ed Cash  
 CCLI Song # 7050420  
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## \* Prayer of Invocation

\* **Scripture Reading** | Philippians 4:4-9 | Pew Bible p. 982

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.

## O Little Town of Bethlehem-Trinity Hymnal No. 201



1. O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, how still we see thee lie;
2. For Christ is born of Mar - y; and gath - ered all a - bove,
3. How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly, the won - drous gift is giv'n!
4. O ho - ly child of Beth - le - hem, de - scend to us, we pray;



a - bove thy deep and dream - less sleep the si - lent stars go  
while mor - tals sleep, the an - gels keep their watch of won - d'ring  
So God im - parts to hu - man hearts the bless - ings of his  
cast out our sin and en - ter in; be born in us to -



by: yet in thy dark streets shin - eth the ev - er - last - ing Light;  
love. O morn - ing stars, to - geth - er pro - claim the ho - ly birth!  
heav'n. No ear may hear his com - ing, but in this world of sin,  
day. We hear the Christ - mas an - gels the great glad tid - ings tell;



the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee to - night.  
And prais - es sing to God the King, and peace to men on earth.  
where meek souls will re - ceive him still, the dear Christ en - ters in.  
O come to us, a - bide with us, our Lord Em - man - u - el.

*Trinity Hymnal No. 201*  
TEXT: Phillips Brooks, 1868  
TUNE (ST. LOUIS): Lewis H. Redner, 1868  
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# RENEWAL

## Call to Confession | Psalm 32:5

*Leader: I acknowledged my sin to you,  
and I did not cover my iniquity;  
I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD,"  
and you forgave the iniquity of my sin.*

## Corporate Confession of Sin

All: O most great, just, and gracious God;  
You are of purer eyes than to behold iniquity.  
You condemn the ungodly, unrepentant, and unbelievers;  
but You have promised mercy through Jesus Christ  
to all who repent and believe in Him.  
Therefore we confess that we are sinful by nature and  
that we have all sinned and come short of the glory of God.  
We have neglected and abused Your holy worship and Your holy name.  
We have not sought first Your kingdom and righteousness.  
We have not been content with our daily bread.  
You have revealed Your wonderful love to us in Christ  
and offered us pardon and salvation in Him.  
Yet, we have often shown ingratitude.  
Hear our prayers of repentance for the forgiveness of our sins.  
We confess that You alone are the source of our hope.  
Fill us with Your Holy Spirit and help us to live in gratitude of Your mercy.  
In Jesus' Name, Amen.

## Silent Confession

**\* Words of Comfort** | Matthew 11:28-30

*Leader: "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."*

**\* Passing of the Peace**

*Leader: The peace of Christ be with you.*

*All: And also with you.*

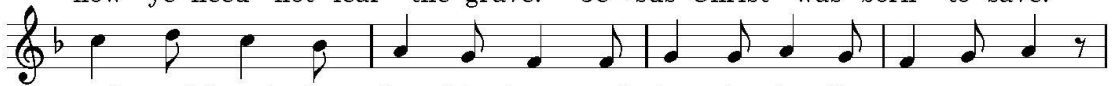
\* Good Christian Men, Rejoice-Trinity Hymnal No. 207



1. Good Chris-tian men, re - joi-ce, with heart and soul and voice;
2. Good Chris-tian men, re - joi-ce, with heart and soul and voice;
3. Good Chris-tian men, re - joi-ce, with heart and soul and voice;



give ye heed to what we say: Je - sus Christ is born to - day;  
 now ye hear of end - less bliss: Je - sus Christ was born for this!  
 now ye need not fear the grave: Je - sus Christ was born to save!



earth and heav'n be - fore him bow, and he is in the man - ger now.  
 He hath o - pened heav-en's door, and man is bless-ed ev - er - more.  
 Calls you one and calls you all to gain his ev - er - last - ing hall.



Christ is born to - day!	Christ is born to - day!
Christ was born for this!	Christ was born for this!
Christ was born to save!	Christ was born to save!

*Trinity Hymnal No. 207*  
 TEXT: Medieval Latin carol; Tr. by John Mason Neale, 1853; alt.: Alt, 1961  
 TUNE (IN DUCLI JUBILO): German melody, 14th cent.; Arr. by W. D., 1918  
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## Friendship Register

Kindly remember to give your neighbor the Friendship Register. Once it reaches the end of the pew, then please pass it back. Making acquaintances with guests and fostering friendships within the larger church family is the goal of this register. Starting from the middle aisle, the register is located at the head of each pew. Please, make sure to write your name legibly.

## Worship Through Giving

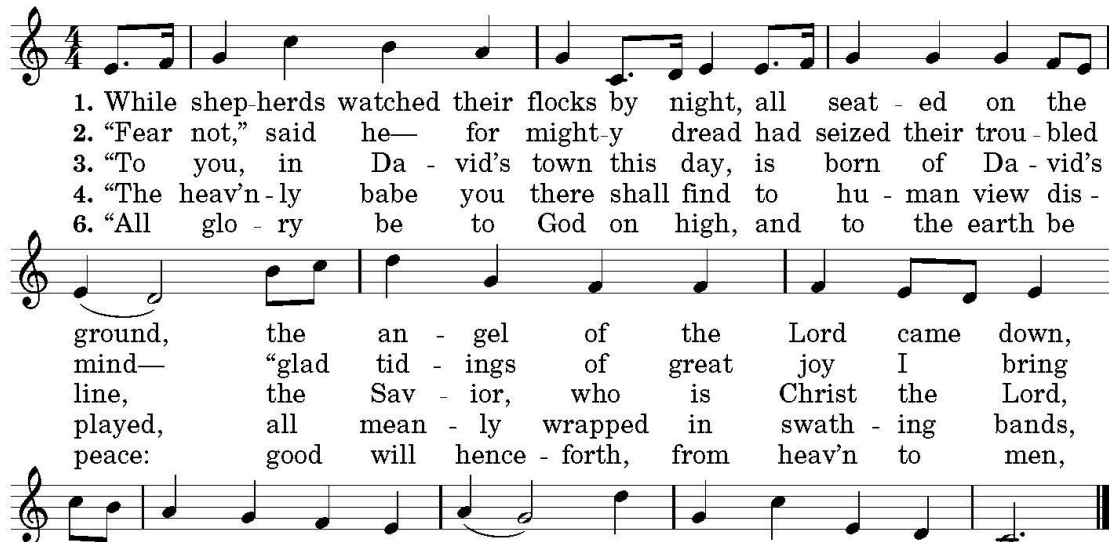
The offering is a way for members and friends of Lexington Presbyterian to present the substance of their whole lives to God. Please feel no pressure to give.

Ways to give:

- You may use the offering plates.
- Go to “Giving” on your Church Center mobile app or [lexpres.churchcenter.com](http://lexpres.churchcenter.com).
- Text2Give: text any dollar amount to 84321.

# While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks-Trinity Hymnal No. 223

(vv. 1-4, 6) [8:15 a.m. service only]



1. While shep-herds watched their flocks by night, all seat-ed on the  
2. "Fear not," said he— for might-y dread had seized their trou-bled  
3. "To you, in Da-vid's town this day, is born of Da-vid's  
4. "The heav'n-ly babe you there shall find to hu-man view dis-  
6. "All glo-ry be to God on high, and to the earth be  
ground, the an-gel of the Lord came down,  
mind—"glad tid-ings of great joy I bring  
line, the Sav-ior, who is Christ the Lord,  
played, all mean-ly wrapped in swath-ing bands,  
peace: good will hence-forth, from heav'n to men,  
and glo-ry shone a-round, and glo-ry shone a-round.  
to you and all man-kind, to you and all man-kind.  
and this shall be the sign, and this shall be the sign:  
and in a man-ger laid, and in a man-ger laid."  
be-gin and nev-er cease, be-gin and nev-er cease!"

*Trinity Hymnal No. 223 (vv. 1-4, 6)*

TEXT: Nahum Tate, 1700

TUNE (CHRISTMAS): From George Frederick Handel, *Siroe*, 1728; Arr. by Lowell Mason, 1821

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## O Holy Night

Choir Anthem [11 a.m. service only]

O holy night, the stars are brightly shining;  
it is the night of our dear Savior's birth.

Long lay the world in sin and error pining  
till He appeared and the soul felt its worth.

A thrill of hope, the weary world rejoices,  
for yonder breaks a new and glorious morn!

Fall on your knees! O hear the angel voices!  
O night divine! O night when Christ was born!  
O night, O holy night, O night divine!

Christ is the Lord! O praise His name forever!  
His pow'r and glory forevermore proclaim!  
His pow'r and glory ever, evermore proclaim!

O holy night.  
O holy night, O night divine.

Words by Cappeau de Roquemaure, 19th Century; Trans. John S. Dwight, 1855

Music by Adolphe C. Adam, 1847

Arranged by Tom Fettke & Thomas Grassi

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## \* The Doxology

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; praise him, all

The first system of musical notation for the Doxology. It consists of a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff, both in 2/4 time and key of D major. The treble staff contains the melody with lyrics underneath. The bass staff provides a harmonic accompaniment. The lyrics for this system are "Praise God from whom all blessings flow; praise him, all".

creatures here below; praise him above, ye heav'nly host:

The second system of musical notation. It continues the melody and accompaniment from the first system. The lyrics for this system are "creatures here below; praise him above, ye heav'nly host:". The treble staff has a fermata over the final note of the phrase.

praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

The third and final system of musical notation. It concludes the piece with a double bar line. The lyrics for this system are "praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.". The treble staff has a fermata over the final note of the phrase.

Text: Thomas Ken, 1674

Tune (OLD HUNDREDTH): Louis Bourgeois, 1551

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## \* Offertory Prayer

# HEARING GOD'S WORD

## Corporate Prayer

## Children's Sermon | God is Glorious!

### \* Scripture Reading | Luke 2:1-14 | p. 857

<sup>1</sup> In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. <sup>2</sup> This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. <sup>3</sup> And all went to be registered, each to his own town. <sup>4</sup> And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, <sup>5</sup> to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. <sup>6</sup> And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. <sup>7</sup> And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

<sup>8</sup> And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup> And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. <sup>10</sup> And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. <sup>11</sup> For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. <sup>12</sup> And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." <sup>13</sup> And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

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

## Sermon | The Christmas Songs of Scripture

### 3. The Gloria in Excelsis Deo: A Song of God's Glory and Peace

Rev. Dr. Curt McDaniel

## Sermon Notes

Many people in the course of time have attempted to describe the wonder of the night in Bethlehem when the Lord Jesus Christ was born. Many works are notable, but the work “That Night” garners special notice:

### That Night

That night when in the Judean skies  
the mystic star dispensed its light,  
a blind man moved in his sleep –  
and dreamed that he had sight.

That night when shepherds heard the song  
of hosts angelic choiring near,  
a deaf man stirred in slumber’s spell –  
and dreamed that he could hear!

That night when in the cattle stall  
slept Child and mother cheek by jowl,  
a cripple turned his twisted limbs –  
and dreamed that he was whole.

That night when o’er the newborn Babe  
the tender Mary rose to lean,  
a loathsome leper smiled in sleep –  
and dreamed that he was clean.

That night when to the mother’s breast  
the little King was held secure,  
a harlot slept a happy sleep –  
and dreamed that she was pure!

That night when in the manger lay  
the Sanctified who came to save,  
a man moved in the sleep of death –  
and dreamed there was no grave. <sup>1</sup>

We come to the 3rd song, or “canticle”, given by Luke the “Evangelist” (Gospel writer), and it is situated in the midst of historical markers that would alert a reader of its credibility as authentic and right.

*Historical and cultural context:*

- 2:1: *Caesar Augustus and his decree:* His original name was Gaius Octavius (Octavian), the grandnephew of Julius Caesar (his mother, Atia, was a daughter of JC’s sister, Julia). His “decree” was long doubted, but in the early 20th century, the research and publications of British archaeologist and biblical scholar Sir William Ramsay <sup>2</sup> (1851-1939) gave convincing proof that Luke’s firsthand documentation was accurate and correct.
- 2:2: *Census:* He issued a decree for a “first” census at this time. Again, for a long time, historians thought that this was not possible, yet the census mentioned in Acts 5:37 (described by Josephus, the Jewish historian) <sup>3</sup> was seen in AD 6, and we know that the Roman cycle for census taking was every 14 years, leaving us a date of AD 8 when this was “first decreed.” Given that since the times of 2 Samuel 24, the Jews were afraid of census taking (because of God’s judgment on David’s census), along with their disgust at the oppressive Roman taxation, it makes sense to see that Herod’s implementation of the census would be difficult and slow, as Acts 5:37 notes the “uprising” that came about from this 2nd census. Octavian was somewhat tolerant with Herod’s carrying out of the registration, but his patience ran thin as he stated in a letter to Herod: “Whereas formerly I treated you as a friend, I will now treat you as a subject... It is better to be Herod’s swine than his own son.” <sup>4</sup> With this in place, it makes perfect sense to see Joseph and Mary getting to Bethlehem anywhere from 6-4 BC, around the time window that most credible scholars point for the birth of Christ.
- 2:2: *Quirinius:* He was the governor of Syria. His full name was Publius Sulpicius Quirinius, and the Latin historian and writer Tacitus noted at his death (AD 21) that Quirinius “was born at Lanuvium, a municipal town, and was nowise related to the ancient patrician family of the Sulpicii; but being a brave soldier, was for his active services rewarded with the consulship under Augustus, and soon after with a triumph, for driving the Homonadenses out of their strongholds in Cilicia; next, when the young Caius Caesar was sent to settle the affairs of Armenia, Quirinius was appointed his principal adviser, and at the same time had paid court to Tiberius, then in his

retirement at Rhodes... But the memory of Quirinius was not agreeable to the rest of the Senate, by reason of the danger he brought upon Lepida, as I have before related, and his sordid meanness and overbearing conduct in the latter part of his life.”<sup>5</sup> This projects the image of a wealthy man who was loyal and who occupied a variety of positions in the Roman regime, including those of senator,<sup>6</sup> duumvir,<sup>7</sup> consul,<sup>8</sup> and legate.<sup>9</sup>

- 2:4-5: Bethlehem: It was important for Jews to know their line of family descent. Bethlehem is called “David’s city,” for it was here that he was born (1 Samuel 20:6). He tended sheep there (1 Samuel 17:15). It was here that family records were kept. This is somewhat similar to birth and other vital statistics records residing in the county courthouse complexes for each state in the USA. The purpose of “registering” was for the Roman assessment of taxation, somewhat similar to today’s property assessments for taxation.
- 2:6-7: The time came...no place for them in the inn. Despite the large numbers of people who would come for registration, no housing accommodation was available, and this possibly speaks to Joseph’s and Mary’s lowly social status, even though she was great with a child. Also, then and now, word travels quickly, and likely information reached citizens about Mary’s “unusual pregnancy,” and perhaps some people did not want to associate with her or Joseph in any way possible, for they would have received by association some kind of public “branding” that Mary already had in some circles.
- 2:7: Manger: “They had to take up their lodging in a ‘stable,’ a place where animals were kept. The early church father Justyn Martyr (AD 150) states that this ‘stable’ was a cave. About AD 330 Constantine the Great caused a church to be built over this cave, which according to some experts was probably the real place of the nativity. Justinian, some time later, rebuilt this as a more beautiful building, and the church, which today still stands over the cave, is mainly the same as the one erected there at that time, about 1,600 years ago.”<sup>10</sup>
- 2:8: Shepherds and sheep: These were no ordinary shepherds: “That the Messiah was to be born in Bethlehem was a settled conviction. Equally so was the belief, that He was to be revealed from Migdal Eder, ‘The tower of the flock.’ This Migdal Eder was not the watchtower for the ordinary flocks that pastured on the barren sheep ground beyond Bethlehem but lay close to the town, on the road to Jerusalem. A passage in the

Mishnah leads to the conclusion that the flocks that pastured there, were destined for Temple sacrifices, and, accordingly, that the shepherds who watched over them were not ordinary shepherds. The latter were under the ban of Rabbinism on account of their necessary isolation from religious ordinances and their manner of life, which rendered strict legal observance unlikely, if not absolutely impossible. The same Mishnah passage also leads us to infer that these flocks lay out all the year round, since they are spoken of as in the fields thirty days before the Passover—that is, in the month of February, when in Palestine the average rainfall is nearly greatest. Thus, Jewish tradition in some dim manner apprehended the first revelation of the Messiah from the Migdal Eder, where shepherds watched the Temple-flocks all the year round. Of the deep symbolic significance of such a coincidence, it is needless to speak.”<sup>11</sup>

- 2:9: Angel appeared to them... glory of the Lord shone around them: The specific angel is not named, but it likely could have been Gabriel (see 1:19, 26), but what is interesting is that this angel “appeared,” or literally, “stood by them” or “stepped by their side”<sup>12</sup> (Greek verb *e-fis-tay-mē*), and in the midst of their paralyzing terror, this angelic messenger boldly tells them, “STOP FEARING” (negative command in the present tense of verb *fo-be-o-my*, “fear”). That is a message for Advent all on its own! Too many people have too many fears and worries in this season and throughout the year. God’s message is: STOP IT NOW!
- 2:10: Behold, I bring you good news of great joy for all the people: “Behold” is a “heads-up!,” a sudden statement, similar to when a baseball player hits a foul ball that is hurriedly coming towards you. The verb “to bring good news” literally means, “I am evangelizing you with great information.” And this evangelism is not just for the Jews. It is for all the people: “It is just possible that a wider reference is beginning to creep in, since the message echoes Hellenistic announcements affecting the whole world.”<sup>13</sup>
- 2:11-12: The angel’s message: “For unto you” (those of humble-mindedness) is born this day (within hours of this announcement) a baby with three titles, “Savior” (Greek word *sow-tare*), “Christ” (*Kristos*), and “Lord” (*Kur-i-os*). These titles would distinguish Jesus from the “other Jesuses” of His time. The angel gave them a “sign” or a “marker” that would distinguish him: He would be already wrapped (perfect passive participle, indicating past, completed action) and that He would be found lying in a manger (a cave for domestic animals).

These background features help us understand the grandeur and greatness of what happens next. 2:13 begins with “And suddenly.” That is the emphasis of the original text, implying swiftness of action. In the snap of a finger, this one angel was joined with a “host” (literally, “a multitude of the heavenly army”) in continuous worship and voice (“saying” could also be “singing”) with a breathtaking message of overflowing adoration.

1. **A declaration of glory to God (2:14a).** It was God’s plan from the beginning of time to declare His glory in the created universe. What are some of the ways God declared His glory in the biblical record?
  - a. *In the creation:* “And God said” (Genesis 1:3) has all the likings of the script of a drama, and more biblical scholars, looking at the Scriptures from a rhetorical point of view, **see the unfolding of God’s redemptive mission as a sacred drama**, with Jesus serving as the chief actor or centerpiece in it. <sup>14</sup>
  - b. *In the Exodus:* The plagues upon Egypt and in the crossing of the Red Sea.
  - c. *In the giving of the Ten Commandments:* The moral law accompanied thunder and smoke on Mt. Sinai.
  - d. *The pillars of fire and cloud:* The Israelites visibly saw the guidance, shade, protection, and direction of God.
  - e. *The Tabernacle and the Temple:* The Israelites visibly saw the shekinah “glory cloud” descending when God came to visit His people.

Now, in the angels’ declaration, God chooses to reveal the ultimate expression of His redemptive plan in a permanent way: His own Son has now come “in the fullness of time” (Galatians 4:4). The angels’ song parallels what the apostle John states, “And the Word became flesh and dwelt (“tabernacled”) among us, and we have seen His glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth” (John 1:14). **Advent is a declaration of God’s glory.** It is a call for all believers to return to their spiritual roots and to commit themselves to declaring God’s glory to the whole world.

2. **A declaration of peace (2:14b).** “And on earth peace among those with whom He is pleased!” Literally, it reads, “And on earth, peace among men of goodwill.” Advent reminds us that the gospel is a message of peace. In His mercy, God sent Christ our Savior to be the peace offering (Ephesians 2:14) that “propitiates” (Romans 3:25) or “satisfies God’s justice” against our sin, rebellion, and lawlessness against Him. By

nature, we were sinners, separated and alienated from God and at odds with Him. We were rebellious, wandering away from Him like disobedient sheep. But in His mercy, God became human for us so that we might have peace with Him.

Oh, the world so desperately needs to know this message and declaration of peace! People are crying for peace in America, Europe, Africa, Russia, Ukraine, North and South Korea, China, and South America, and in the Middle East, especially Israel, Lebanon, Syria, Iran, Iraq, and the Persian Gulf. Yet in all their calls for peace, they will not find it until they meet the One who is called “The Prince of Peace” (Isaiah 9:6).

*Personal Application: What the song of the angels teaches us:*

- The message of Advent is one of God’s glory and God’s peace. It is the song of the angels, the Gloria in Excelsis Deo, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom He is pleased!”
- Whatever is going on in your life:
  - ◇ If your world is dark, the glory of God will shine through the gloom.
  - ◇ If your world is filled with trouble, the peace of God will rule and overrule it.
  - ◇ If your world is dim, the glory of God will bring hope and light to it.
  - ◇ If your world is uncertain, the peace of God will bring direction and assurance to it.

So, SING!

Sing with the angels! Sing with God’s people!

Sing in worship! Sing with faith! Sing with hope!

God has done great things! His glory and peace give us a great future!

*Reflection:*

“A Savior is born. These words show us, first, that, until men have peace with God, and are reconciled to Him through the grace of Christ, all the joy that they experience is deceitful, and of short duration. Ungodly men frequently indulge in frantic and intoxicating mirth; but if there be none to make peace between them and God, the hidden stings of conscience must produce fearful torment. Besides, to whatever extent they may flatter themselves in

luxurious indulgence, their own lusts are so many tormentors. The commencement of solid joy is, to perceive the fatherly love of God toward us, which alone gives tranquility to our minds...Let us learn to be so delighted with Christ alone, that the perception of His grace may overcome, and at length remove from us, all the distresses of the flesh.”<sup>15</sup>

### *Study and Discussion Questions:*

- Review the historical and cultural background of Luke 2:1-14, focusing on Luke’s detail and the “markers” that show its reliability and accuracy. Why is this important?
- What themes and lessons emerge when you realize that Jesus was born in a cave where domestic animals were fed and that he appeared to shepherds on the “lower strata” of society?
- Review the song of the angels in 2:14. The first theme is the glory of God. Recall and discuss some instances where you see the glory of God displayed in biblical history.
- Review the second theme in 2:14: peace among men of goodwill. What kind of peace is talked about here? Why is the Advent message of peace among men such a desperately needed message today?

### *Footnotes:*

1. <https://christmasstories.org/that-night/>
2. W.M. Ramsay, Was Christ Born at Bethlehem?, Luke the Physician, The Bearing of Recent Discovery on the Trustworthiness of the New Testament, St. Paul the Traveler and Roman Citizen are several of his outstanding contributions to biblical scholarship.
3. Josephus, Jewish War VII:253, Antiquities XVIII:26, XVII:355, XVIII:1.
4. William Hendriksen, New Testament Commentary: The Gospel of Luke. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1978, 141.
5. Tacitus, Annals, III:48.
6. Josephus, Antiquities, 18.1.1.
7. Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae, 9502–9503.
8. Pliny, The Natural History, 5.23.4; Cassius Dio, 54.28; Res Gestae, 6; Tacitus, Annals, III.48; Suetonius, Tiberius, 49.

9. Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae, 2683.
10. Norval Geldenhuys, The Gospel of Luke. The New International Commentary on the New Testament. Tenth Printing. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977, 101.
11. Alred Edersheim, The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah. Sixth Printing, One Volume Edition. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977, 186-187.
12. A.T. Robertson, Word Pictures in the New Testament. 6 Volumes. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1910. II:23.
13. I. Howard Marshall, Commentary on Luke. New International Greek Testament Commentary. Eds. I. Howard Marshall and W. Ward Gasque. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978, 109.
14. One of the best modern works discussing this concept is Kevin J. Vanhoozer, The Drama of Doctrine: A Canonical-Linguistic Approach to Christian Theology. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005. I highly recommend this resource, and in my own writings, I have elaborated on “Theo-Dramatic Hermeneutics” as a standpoint to interpret Scripture in a forthcoming homiletics book.
15. John Calvin, Commentary on the Bible. 22 Volumes. Trans. William Pringle. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996, XVI: 115.

## \* Joy Has Dawned



1. Joy has dawned up - on the world, pro - mised from cre - a - tion:  
 2. Sounds of won - der fill the sky with the songs of an - gels;  
 3. Shep - herds bow be - fore the Lamb, gaz - ing at the glo - ry;  
 4. Son of A - dam, Son of Heav'n Gi - ven as a ran - som;



God's sal - va - tion now un - furled hope for ev - 'ry na - tion.  
 As the migh - ty Prince of Life shel - ters in a sta - ble.  
 Gifts of men from dis - tant lands pro - phe - sy the sto - ry.  
 Re - con - cil - ing God and man, Christ our migh - ty cham - pi - on!



Not with fan - fares from a - bove, not with scenes of glo - ry,  
 Hands that set each star in place, shaped the earth in dark - ness.  
 Gold, a King is born to - day; In - cense, God is with us;  
 What a Sav - ior, what a Friend, What a glo - rious mys - t'ry!



but a hum - ble gift of love: Je - sus born of Ma - ry.  
 Cling now to a moth - er's breast, vul - n'ra - ble and help - less.  
 Myrrh, His death will make a way, by His blood He'll win us.  
 Once a babe in Beth - le - hem, now the Lord of his - t'ry.

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\* Sending

\* Benediction | John 15:9-11

*Leader: “As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and abide in his love. These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.”*

\* Postlude

## Poinsettias in Memory of:

Jack and Grace McAulay, George and Vive Wessel, Jim and Dot Parler,  
Bob Hooper, Erica Yaman  
by John, Rhonda, Jack and Matthew McAulay

Our parents and siblings  
by Jim and Kathy Sketo

Larry and Fran Becker  
by Jeff Becker

Jack and Grace McAulay, George and Vive Wessel, Jim and Dot Parler,  
by Ray and Everose Alexander

Jim and Dot Parler, George and Vive Wessel, Carol Williams,  
Don, Frankie and Lindsey Tomlin, Jack and Grace McAulay,  
Dr. Barney and Claudette Austin, Harry and Mary Horner, Bob Hooper, Erica Yaman  
by Doug and Pat Reedy

David and Steven Adam, Loving husband and son  
by Ruth Adam

In memory of deceased spouses, Johnny E. James, and Karen P. McDaniel  
by Elizabeth and Curt McDaniel

Shawn Sandlin and Rex Marsh  
by Chad and Sharmin Barrett

Skylar Haws, Marlene Gaston and Jim Gaston, Chirs Boland and Lib Boland  
by Vernon, Keith and Anita Boland

Margaret Wilson  
by Maggie Dittmar

My husband, Vern Eaton  
by Nancy Eaton

Bob Hooper  
by Natalia Petrenko

In loving memory of Jack Wilkie  
by Joan Player

In loving memory of my wife Alyce Player  
by Jimmie Player

Bob Hooper  
by Reggie and Andrea Fuller

David and Elizabeth Scales  
by Dave and Judy Scales

My mom, Joan Coleridge  
By Steve Coleridge

Our 4 parents and 1 special step-parent  
by McKie and Vicki Green

(Our mother and grandmother) Nicoletta Madeline Tildsley,  
and also (our uncle), Christian Parella  
by Jim, Carrie, Gwen, Heidi, Abram and Claire Chapman

## In Honor of:

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Barrett  
by Chad and Sharmin Barrett

The Lakeside Small Group, the Romans  
by Deborah and Harry Brown

Alexander and Mildred Armstrong  
by Dave and Judy Scales

My parents, Jim and Phyllis Braden  
By Heather Coleridge

Everose and Ray Alexander, Doug and Pat Reedy, Vicki Kohler  
by John and Rhonda McAulay

DJ, Kassia, Trey, Noah Reedy and Ryan, Mary, Eliza and Lucy Reedy  
by Doug and Pat Reedy

Genie Graham, Sue Dittmar, Erie Brown  
by Maggie Dittmar

Our children and grandchildren, and to the glory of God  
by Jim and Kathy Sketo

LPS Staff  
by Natalia Petrenko

Larry and Rhonda Moody  
by Nancy Eaton

Our 4 beautiful grandchildren; Sophia, Ben, Collin and McKenna  
by McKie and Vicki Green

Nick, Kerry, & Cadence Esposito  
by Laura Stout

Vernon Boland  
by Keith and Anita Boland

## **Serving This Morning:**

Updates: Andrea Fuller

Liturgist and Pastoral Prayer: Owen McCullough

Readers: Eddie and Karen Williams, Frances McFarland, Vicki Accordini

Musicians: Abigail Baarendse, Butch Bost, Dianne Britton, Theron and Katie Drayton, Barb Howell, and Josiah Rogers

Audio/visual and livestream: Chris Hollis, Jeff Becker, and Vitaliy Petrenko

## Faith Promise Giving:

LPC fiscal budget year is July 1st to June 30th.

Through the end of November 2024:

General Fund transfer to missions	\$54,165
Transfer from 2023/2024 surplus*	\$44,702
Faith Promise Giving:	\$36,445
Missions Disbursements	\$76,283

\* The Elders and Deacons transferred one-half of last year's operating surplus to missions.

## Stewardship

Through the end of November, 2024:

Budget FYTD	\$508,864
Received FYTD	\$461,909
Expenditures FYTD	\$420,256

## Updates

### **The Christmas Songs of Scripture** | An Exposition of the Canticles in Luke 1 & 2

Exclusive to Luke's Gospel account are the appearances of four great songs or "canticles" that declare the gospel story by portraying specific attributes of God in the redemptive narrative and plan. Each canticle unfolds a beautiful picture and declaration of God's intention in the bringing of salvation in the person of Christ to this earth. Join us for a fresh picture of the gospel in the exposition of these picturesque songs in Luke's Gospel.

- December 1: "The Magnificat: A Song of God's Faithfulness" (Luke 1:46-56).
- December 8: "The Benedictus: A Song of God's Salvation" (Luke 1:56-80).
- December 15: "The Gloria in Excelsis Deo: A Song of God's Glory and Peace" (Luke 2:1-20).
- December 22: "The Nunc Dimittis: A Song of God's Sovereignty" (Luke 2:21-35).
- December 24: Annual Christmas Eve Service of Lessons and Carols

## Christmas Eve Service of Lessons and Carols

December 24<sup>th</sup>  
6:00pm Coffee, Cocoa & Conversations  
6:30pm service

Find invitations on  
sanctuary tables to share



The Pastor Search Committee  
is taking recommendations for  
Senior Pastor

Please, fill out a form and place in the box at the back of the sanctuary



### INQUIRERS CLASS

LEARN MORE ABOUT LPC'S  
MISSION AND HOW YOU CAN BE  
PART OF OUR COMMUNITY!  
STARTING JANUARY 19TH  
DURING CE HOUR | 5 WEEKS



Register Here



Christmas Worship Schedule  
December 22<sup>nd</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup>  
One Service at 10am  
No CE classes

## Christmas Eve Offering

# look/after

Care for Widows and  
Pastors in Need



Give Today!

GENEVA  
RELIEF FUND

A Ministry of  
The PCA



Immediate Need for  
One Adult Nursery Volunteer  
during 8:15 am Worship Service  
2nd Sunday of each Month

This is a great opportunity snuggle babies  
and bless our LPC Moms!

Scan here to email Rebecca Becker



50th Anniversary Cookbooks  
are still available.  
Come to the church office  
to purchase!



# LEXINGTON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

## EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Director of Music and Worship

[lexpreschurch.com/jobs](http://lexpreschurch.com/jobs)

## Connect Card

Thanks for joining us today.  
We would love to come alongside you in your walk with Jesus, whether you're new to our community or you've been here a while.

Visit [lexpreschurch.com/connect](https://lexpreschurch.com/connect) or scan the QR code to fill out our Connect Card!

If you're not familiar with QR codes, we're here to help!

1. Open your smartphone's camera and point it at the QR code so that it shows clearly on your screen.
2. Wait for the camera to recognize and scan the QR code.
3. Click the link banner or notification when it pops up on your screen. Our Connect Card will automatically load in your browser.



## Women's Ministry website and Facebook group:

<https://lexpreschurch.com/womens-ministry/>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/LPCWomen>

## Youth Ministry Newsletter Subscription

Please, scan this QR Code with your phone camera.



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