

CELEBRATION OF WORSHIP

December 24, 2006 Christmas Eve Candlelight and Carols Service 5:00 & 7:30 P.M.

WELCOME AND INVOCATION.....The Rev. Dr. Clay J. Brown, Pastor

PRELUDE: *Silent Night*.....Held
Joanne Daykin, Organist

LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH..... (5:00) Mark and Jen McNeely and family
(7:30) Bob and Dot Campbell and family

Leader: The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

People: And also with you.

Leader: The last four Sundays, we have lit candles of hope, peace, joy, and love. We light these candles again to show that hope, peace, joy, and love, come only through Jesus Christ.

People: Jesus Christ is the hope of the world. Jesus Christ is the Prince of Peace.

Jesus Christ brings true joy. Jesus Christ reveals God's perfect love.

Leader: The last candle on the wreath is the Christ candle. We light this candle to show that our waiting is over, that Jesus Christ, the Light of the world, has come.

People: We rejoice that the days spoken of by the Apostle John are here. In Jesus Christ, the Word of God became flesh and dwelt among us. We have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son of the Father, full of grace and truth.

Leader: Tonight we light the Christ candle. As we look at this candle, we celebrate the coming of Jesus Christ to the world.

People: We are the people of hope, peace, joy, and love. We are Christ's people, gathered in his name. Let us worship God!

*CAROL: *The First Noel*..... No. 229

1. The first Noel the angel did say, was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay; In fields where they lay tending their sheep, On a cold winter's night that was so deep.

Refrain: Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, Born is the King of Israel.

2. They look-ed up and saw a star Shining in the east, beyond them far; And to the earth it gave great light, And so it continued both day and night. (Refrain)

3. Then let us all with one accord Sing praises to our heavenly Lord; That hath made heaven and earth of naught, And with His blood mankind hath bought. (Refrain)

*UNISON PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING..... The Rev. Dr. Fred Coates, Associate Pastor

Great God of power, we praise you for Jesus Christ, who came to save us from our sins. We thank you for the prophets' hope, for the angels' song, and for the birth in Bethlehem. We thank you that in Jesus, you joined us, sharing our hurts and pleasures. Glory to you for your wonderful love. Glory to you, eternal God, through Jesus Christ, Lord of Lords, and King of Kings, forever and ever. Amen.

*RESPONSE: Chorus from *Angels We Have Heard on High*..... No. 188

Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!

ANTHEM (5:00):..... Cherub Choir, accompanied by Nancy Smith
Twinkle, Twinkle Special Star
Shepherd, Shepherd
Go, Tell It on the Mountain

ANTHEM (7:30): *In the Bleak Midwinter*..... arr. Sledge
Graham Sledge, french horn

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON: Luke 2:1-20

*CAROL: *Away in a Manger*..... No. 205

1. Away in a manger, no crib for a bed, The little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head. The stars in the sky looked down where He lay, The little Lord Jesus, asleep on the hay.

2. The cattle are lowing the Baby awakes, But little Lord Jesus, no crying He makes; I love Thee, Lord Jesus, look down from the sky And stay by my cradle til morning is nigh.

3. Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask Thee to stay Close by me forever, and love me, I pray; Bless all the dear children in Thy tender care And fit us for Heaven to live with Thee there.

PRESENTATION OF CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING

OFFERTORY (5:00): *Still, Still, Still*..... Traditional Austrian Carol

OFFERTORY (7:30): *Were You There On Christmas Night*..... Sleeth
Carson Bridges

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

SERMON

John 1:1-14 (Insert)

Myth Becoming Fact: The Grand Miracle

Dr. Brown

*CAROL: *Go, Tell It on the Mountain*..... No. 218

Refrain: Go, tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere; go, tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born

1. While shepherds kept their watching o'er silent flocks by night, behold, throughout the heavens there shone a holy light. (Refrain)

2. The shepherds feared and trembled when, lo! above the earth rang out the angel chorus that hailed our Savior's birth. (Refrain)

3. Down in a lowly manger the humble Christ was born, and God sent us salvation that blessed Christmas morn. (Refrain)

LIGHTING THE CONGREGATION'S CANDLES

Scripture Readings

Lighting of Candles.....(Please tip only unlighted candles)

Carol: *Silent Night*.....No. 186

1. Silent night, holy night, All is calm, all is bright, Round yon virgin mother and Child. Holy Infant, so tender and mild, Sleep in heavenly peace, Sleep in heavenly peace.

2. Silent night, holy night, Shepherds quake at the sight; Glories stream from heaven afar, Heavenly hosts sing Alleluia! Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born!

3. Silent night, holy night, Son of God, love's pure light; Radiant beams from Thy holy face With the dawn of redeeming grace, Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.

4. Silent night, holy night, Wondrous star, lend thy light; With the angels let us sing, Alleluia to our King; Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born!

Prayer

*CAROL: *Joy to the World* (Verses 1-3).....No. 179

1. 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

2. 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.

3. 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.

*INVITATION AND BENEDICTION

*RESPONSE: *Joy to the World* (Verse 4).....No. 179

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, wonders, of His love.

POSTLUDE: *Good Christian Men, Rejoice*.....Held

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* Those who are able will please stand.

If you are our guest tonight, Merry Christmas and welcome to First Presbyterian! We're so glad you're worshipping with us. For more information, please indicate your interest on the Friendship Pad and speak with one of the pastors following the service. God bless you! Please return to worship with us again.

Christmas Joy Offering: This annual offering is split 50-50 to assist retired or other church workers in the Presbyterian Church USA with needs and to assist the eight PCUSA racial ethnic schools and colleges.



Christmas Eve Worship

5:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.

First Presbyterian Church

249 West McLelland Avenue
Mooresville, North Carolina

The Lord is in His holy temple; let all the earth be silent before Him...

Habakkuk 2:20

SERMON TEXT

John 1:1-14 (ESV)

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. ⁴In him was life, and the life was the light of men. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. ⁸He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.

⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. ¹⁰He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. ¹²But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

¹⁴And 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.

SERMON OUTLINE

Myth Becoming Fact: The Grand Miracle

I. 1ST KEYWORD: WORD (1:1-3)

II. 2ND KEYWORD: LIGHT (1:4-11)

III. 3RD KEYWORD: FLESH (1:14)

IV. 4TH KEYWORD: BELIEVE (1:12-13)

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