



*A Child is Born*

## Longview Evangelical Presbyterian Church

*We are a faith family walking together to know Christ and to make him known by engaging in dynamic worship, pursuing spiritual wisdom, investing in deep relationships, and affecting social renewal.*

### THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT.....DECEMBER 17, 2017

#### GATHERING

#### GATHERING MUSIC

*Creation Sings Words and Music by Stuart Townend  
Keith and Kristyn Getty  
Arr. by Lloyd Larson*

#### \*CALL TO WORSHIP

Shelley Kral

Pastor: The Christian life is full of ordinary things that together work for the extraordinary purpose of glorifying God. We rejoice in the promises of God and yet at times our hearts are sad.

**People: Even David, Israel's great king, at times was downcast and disturbed within his soul.**

Pastor: Despite the problems we face in this world, we are called to be a people of rejoicing. The Scriptures call us to "rejoice in the Lord always."

**People: Why so downcast, O my soul? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God!**

*\*Come Thou Long Expected Jesus*

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 every nation Joy of every longing heart

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

*\*It Came Upon the Midnight Clear*

It came upon the midnight clear That glorious song of old  
From angels bending near the earth To touch their harps of gold  
Peace on the earth good will to men From heaven's all gracious King  
The world in solemn stillness lay To hear the angels sing

Still through the cloven skies they come With peaceful wings unfurled  
And still their heavenly music floats Through all the weary world  
And man at war with man hears not The love song which they bring  
O hush the noise and cease the strife And hear the angels sing

*[continued next page]*

#### Welcome to Advent at Longview EPC!

It is our prayer that no matter where you may be in your spiritual journey, during your time with us this morning you will receive a taste of the expectant waiting, reflection, and hope-filled wonder that is the season of Advent.

*Hearing devices are available in the Narthex.*

*Please sign the attendance register located at the end of each pew.*

#### What Does Advent Have To Do With Worship?

From the time of Israel's enslavement in Egypt, God has been calling his people to gather together to worship him (e.g. Exodus 5:1). Yet the Old Testament shows us that through the centuries, despite prophet after prophet and revelations of who God is and his promises to Israel, Israel continually struggles to worship God. They prefer worshipping other things. As worship theologian and pastor Bob Kauflin writes, "The Old Testament ends not with jubilant celebration but with the painful realization that all our efforts to bring glory to God result in failure and condemnation. If God is to have a people who will worship him with all their heart, soul, mind and strength, he will have to bring it about himself. After four hundred years, he does. Jesus is born, in an act of unfathomable love, Deity becomes dust, the Maker becomes the maligned, the Creator becomes the cursed. God comes in Christ to restore the relationship we rejected in the garden. We learn that the great gift God gives us is himself. Jesus is God's ultimate statement that he will provide a way for us to worship him..." (True Worshipers: Seeking What Matters to God. 2015).

“What Child Is This?” About 1865 Scottish Insurance sales manager William C. Dix was stricken with a serious illness at age 29. Bedridden and deeply depressed, Dix cried out to God and experienced a spiritual renewal. Out of this renewal came many poems. The lyrics of *What Child Is This?* are taken from his longer poem “The Manger Throne” and set to the popular English folk tune Greensleeves.

Glory to God in the highest  
Glory to God evermore  
Good news great joy for all  
Melody breaks through the silence  
Christ the Savior is born  
Jesus the love song of God

It came upon the midnight clear  
That glorious song of old  
From angels bending near the earth  
To touch their harps of gold

## PRAYER OF CONFESSION

*Holy God, we sing familiar Christmas songs and they warm our hearts. Yet, we confess, they nearly always fail to influence how we relate to one another. Too often the events of Christmas become a battlefield where we seek to be loved more than we determine to love. Forgive us, and continue your process of flooding grace into our lives in order that we may be turned from little brats into little Christs.*

(Please take a few moments to confess personal sins privately to the Lord)

## ASSURANCE OF PARDON

But I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and I am convinced that he is able to guard until that day what has been entrusted to me (2 Timothy 1:12)

Pastor: Friends, believe the gospel!

**People: In Jesus Christ we are made new!**

*Good Good Father*

I've heard a thousand stories of what they think You're like  
But I've heard the tender whisper of love in the dead of night  
You tell me that You're pleased and that I'm never alone

I've seen many searching for answers far and wide  
But I know we're all searching for answers only You provide  
Because You know just what we need before we say a word

You're a Good Good Father  
It's who You are It's who You are It's who You are  
And I'm loved by You  
It's who I am It's who I am It's who I am

Love so undeniable I can hardly speak  
Peace so unexplainable I can hardly think  
As You call me deeper still  
As You call me deeper still  
As You call me deeper still Into love love love

You are perfect in all of Your ways  
You are perfect in all of Your ways  
You are perfect in all of Your ways to us

You're a Good Good Father  
It's who You are It's who You are It's who You are  
And I'm loved by You  
It's who I am It's who I am It's who I am

## PROCLAIMING

### CHILDREN'S LESSON

Shelley Kral

#### *What Child Is This*

What Child is this who, laid to rest On Mary's lap is sleeping?  
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet, While shepherds watch are keeping?  
This, this is Christ the King, Whom shepherds guard and angels sing;  
Haste, haste, to bring Him laud, The Babe, the Son of Mary.

Why lies He in such mean estate, Where ox and ass are feeding?  
Good Christians, fear, for sinners here The silent Word is pleading.  
This, this is Christ the King, Whom shepherds guard and angels sing;  
Haste, haste, to bring Him laud, The Babe, the Son of Mary.

So bring Him incense, gold and myrrh, Come peasant, king to own Him;  
The King of kings salvation brings, Let loving hearts enthrone Him.  
This, this is Christ the King, Whom shepherds guard and angels sing;  
Haste, haste, to bring Him laud, The Babe, the Son of Mary.

### PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

Doug Ashley

### SERMON LESSON

Isaiah 9:6

### SERMON

“A Child Is Born: Everlasting Father”

*And the Glory of the Lord*

*G. F. Handel*

## SENDING

### THE LORD AT WORK THROUGH LONGVIEW EPC

Beau Sullivan

### FINANCIAL UPDATE

Gordon Northcutt

*\*Rise Up, Shepherd, and Follow*

[Leader] There's a star in the East on Christmas morn,

[All] Rise up, shepherd, and follow;

[Leader] It will lead to the place where the Christ was born,

[All] Rise up, shepherd, and follow.

[All] Follow! Follow! Rise up, shepherd, and follow!

Follow the Star of Bethlehem; Rise up, shepherd, and follow!

[Leader] If you take good heed to the angel's words,

[All] Rise up, shepherd, and follow;

[Leader] You'll forget your flocks, you'll forget your herds;

[All] Rise up, shepherd, and follow.

### \*BENEDICTION

Doug Ashley

### \*POSTLUDE

Worship Band

*\*Please stand as able*

Are you a "Connoisseur of Sermons" or a Receiver of the Word of God? "According to [modern sensibilities], every sermon or lesson from the Bible must chiefly be "interesting." But what biblical support could we give for this assertion? If teaching and preaching have as one of their main goals to effect change in the lives of the listeners, would all of those apostolic or Old Testament prophetic calls for change be welcomed at first blush as being "interesting" by all listeners? In fact, the criteria of "interest" may be linked to more modern values, such as the brevity of the message or the number of memorable illustrations peppered throughout its short duration. This matter of "interest" also may indicate that our contemporaries are becoming more like connoisseurs of listening to messages rather than being those who are moved in their hearts to act and become doers of the word (James 1:22). Rather than making "interest" the key test for a good sermon, we would suggest as an alternative the double tests of: (1) does the lesson or sermon accurately reflect what I am being taught by the author of the text? and (2) has that text been applied to our modern and contemporary contexts of living and acting so that I am called to change for the glory of God? (Walter Kaiser, *The Majesty of God in the Old Testament*, 2007)

**REHEARSAL SCHEDULE FOR CHILDREN FOR CHRISTMAS EVE 9:30 AM SERVICE:**

- Sunday, Dec. 17: 5:15-6:15 p.m.
- Wednesday, Dec. 20: 5:15-6:15 p.m.
- Sunday, Dec. 24: 8:45 a.m.

**NURSERY VOLUNTEERS:**

**Sunday, December 17** — Infants: Kathie Ramey & Mary White; Toddlers: Emily & Rob Holloway  
**Sunday, December 24 9:30 a.m. service**— Infants: Kathy Watson; Toddlers: encouraged to attend worship  
**Sunday, December 24 7 p.m. service**— Infants: volunteers needed; Toddlers: volunteers needed

**NURSERY WORKERS NEEDED FOR CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES:**

Please contact Emily Holloway if you are available to work in our nursery with infants or toddlers at either of our 12/24 services since our paid nursery workers are away on Christmas break from LETU..

**NEW TO LONGVIEW EPC? Please check the foyer for an EPC mug and brochure for you!**

*Coffee, cookies, and fellowship* are available in Trinity Hall each Sunday morning.

*Prayer Ministry:* Confidential prayer requests may be made by emailing [prayerteam@epclongview.org](mailto:prayerteam@epclongview.org) or by using the cards located in the attendance registers. Current monthly prayer calendars are located in the foyer.

*Tithes and Offerings* are received through the wooden boxes found at each entrance to the sanctuary, or checks mailed to the office, and electronically via the website. The website also offers a credit/debit card option.

*Sermons and bulletins:* Available on the website

**ADVENT DEVOTIONALS:** Our 2017 Advent devotional booklets are still available to pick up in the church foyer or in Trinity Hall or see online or our website.

**GRATEFUL FOR YOU!** At Longview EPC we continue to be encouraged by what God is doing: creating a community of people committed to changing lives through his gospel. We are very thankful for your continuing prayers, service, and financial commitment—the earthly fuel of this creation. As a reminder, financial giving can be made via 1) the tithe and offering boxes in the sanctuary, 2) electronic giving (automatic withdrawal or credit/debit card), 3) hard mail. Please contact Treasurer Gordon Northcutt or Finance Deacon Henry Salmon if you have any questions.

11/30/17	Tithes, Gifts, Income, (+)	Operating Expenses, (-)	Capital Exp (-)	Difference
Monthly (Nov.)	\$ 54,595	\$ 74,735	-0-	\$-20,140
Year to Date	\$738,819	\$796,013	\$29,596	\$-86,790

Unrestricted Cash Balance \$165,314

**CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP, SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24:**

- \* Family Service 9:30 a.m.; no Sunday School
- \* Carols, Candlelight, & Communion 7 p.m.

**Christmas Day, Monday, December 25:** Church Offices closed through Tuesday, 12/26

**New Years Eve, Sunday, December 31:** Worship at 9:30 a.m. No other activities.

**New Years Day, Monday, January 1:** Church Offices closed through Tuesday, 1/2/18

**Sunday, January 7:** Worship at 9:30 a.m. with communion; potluck lunch following worship



**Longview Evangelical Presbyterian Church**    **Worship 9:30 • Sunday School 10:45**

Rev. Doug Ashley — Lead Pastor / [dashley@epclongview.org](mailto:dashley@epclongview.org)  
 Rev. Shelley Kral — Associate Pastor / [skral@epclongview.org](mailto:skral@epclongview.org)  
 Rev. Beau Sullivan — Assistant Pastor / [bsullivan@epclongview.org](mailto:bsullivan@epclongview.org)  
 Tim Konvalin — Director of Music Ministry / [tkonvalin@epclongview.org](mailto:tkonvalin@epclongview.org)  
 Jason Hubbard — Director of Youth Ministry / [jhubbard@epclongview.org](mailto:jhubbard@epclongview.org)  
 Emily Holloway — Director of Children’s Ministry / [eholloway@epclongview.org](mailto:eholloway@epclongview.org)  
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