



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.

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT.....DECEMBER 24, 2017 9:30 AM

Parents: Please pick up candles/glowsticks for you and your children from foyer prior to worship.

PROCESSIONAL CAROL

Angels from the Realms of Glory

Angels from the realms of glory, wing your flight o'er all the earth;
Once you sang creation's story now proclaim Messiah's birth.
Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn King.

Shepherds, in the field abiding, watching o'er your flocks by night,
God with us is now residing; yonder shines the infant light:
Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn King.

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Doug Ashley

Pastor: The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands.

People: The whole earth is full of his glory!

Pastor: When Christ was born, the glory of the Lord shone around them and they were terrified.

People: But the angel said to them: Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy.

**Hark the Herald Angels Sing*

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 the angelic hosts 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 Godhead see hail the incarnate Deity
Pleased in flesh with us to dwell Jesus our Emmanuel
Hark the herald angels sing glory to the newborn King

READING

The Time Was Right

Love Has Come

BRING A TORCH French carol melody
Text by Ken Bible

READING

Luke 1-2: "The Nativity"

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 meet Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Hearing devices are available in the Narthex.

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

Who Is Christmas For? Consider these thoughts from Pastor Matt Redmond:

Not too long ago, I heard from someone about how difficult Christmas would be because of some heartbreak in their family. There was utter hopelessness and devastation. Christmas would be impossible to enjoy because of the freshness of this pain. It's been a story very hard to forget.

I get it. I mean, it makes sense on the level of Christmas being a time in which there is a lot of heavily concentrated family time. The holidays can be tense in even the best of circumstances. Maneuvering through the landmines of various personalities can be hard even if there is no cancer, divorce or empty seat at the table. What makes it the most wonderful time of the year is also what makes it the most brutal time of the year. My own family has not been immune to this phenomenon.

But allow me to push back against this idea a little. Gently. I think we have it all backwards. We have it sunk deep into our collective cultural consciousness that Christmas is for the happy people. You know, those with idyllic family situations enjoyed around stocking-strewn hearth dreams. Christmas is for healthy people who laugh easily and at all the right times, right? The successful and the beautiful, who live in suburban bliss, can easily enjoy the holidays...We live and act as if this is who should be enjoying Christmas.

But this is backwards. Christmas—the great story of the incarnation of the Rescuer—is for everyone, especially those who need a rescue. Jesus was born as a baby to know the pain and sympathize with our weaknesses. Jesus was made to be like us so that in his resurrection we can be made like him; free from the fear of death and the pain of loss. Jesus' first recorded worshipers were not of the beautiful class. They were poor, ugly shepherds, beat down by life and labor. They had been looked down on over many a nose.

[continued next page sidebar]

O Little Town of Bethlehem

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.

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!

READING

Luke 1-2: "The Nativity (continued)"

Christmas Medley (It's Christmas)

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

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

It's Christmas the angels are singing
And I know the reason the Savior is born
It's Christmas the bells are ringing
And I feel like shouting joy to the world

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

READING

Luke 2: "The Light of the Whole World"

**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.

*LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

Pastor: Joy to the world! The Lord is come.

People: Let earth receive her king!

Pastor: Let every heart prepare Him room!

People: And heaven and nature sing!

Pastor: Now that Christ had been born, we light this white candle as a visible sign that Jesus Christ is at the center of our lives and at the heart of this church.

All: He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary.

**He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to Hell. The third day, he rose again from the dead.**

He ascended to heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

**Joy to the World*

Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare Him room, and heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n and nature sing, and heav'n, and heav'n, and nature sing.

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 of His love, and wonders, wonders, of His love.

READING

Matthew 2: "The King of All Kings"

A Child This Day

David Luna

Angels We Have Heard on High

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Isaiah 9:6-7

Shelley Kral

A Child Is Born: "Prince of Peace"

CANDLELIGHTING

**Silent Night*

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.

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!

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.

**Go Tell It on the Mountain*

Go, tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere
Go, tell it on the mountain, that Jesus Christ is born.

While shepherds kept their watching o'er silent flocks by night
Behold throughout the heavens there shone a holy light.

The shepherds feared and trembled, when lo! above the earth,
Rang out the angels chorus that hailed the Savior's birth.

Down in a lowly manger the humble Christ was born
And God sent us salvation that blessed Christmas morn

***BENEDICTION**

**Please stand as able*

[continued from previous page sidebar]

Jesus came for those who look in the mirror and see ugliness. Jesus came for daughters whose fathers never told them they were beautiful. Christmas is for those who go to "wing night" alone. Christmas is for those whose lives have been wrecked by cancer, and the thought of another Christmas seems like an impossible dream. Christmas is for those who would be nothing but lonely if not for social media. Christmas is for those whose marriages have careened against the retaining wall and are threatening to flip over the edge. Christmas is for the son whose father keeps giving him hunting gear when he wants art materials. Christmas is for smokers who cannot quit even in the face of a death sentence. Christmas is for prostitutes, adulterers, and porn stars who long for love in every wrong place. Christmas is for college students who are sitting in the midst of the family and already cannot wait to get out for another drink. Christmas is for those who traffic in failed dreams. Christmas is for those who have squandered the family name and fortune—they want "home" but cannot imagine a gracious reception. Christmas is for parents watching their children's marriage fall into disarray. Christmas is really about the gospel of grace for sinners. Because of all that Christ has done on the cross, the manger becomes the most hopeful place in a universe darkened with hopelessness. In the irony of all ironies, Christmas is for those who will find it the hardest to enjoy.

(<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/christmas-is-for-those-who-hate-it-most/>)

Thank you to readers Marshall Daugbjerg, Aidan Frazier, and Lauren Stoddard, and to cast Kyle Ashley, Asher Bond, Katie Grace Carlisle, Tommy Carlisle, Hayes Daugbjerg, Blanton Hale, Elizabeth Hale, Joel Hale, Baxter Holloway, Hazel Holloway, Phoebe Holloway, Jason Hubbard, Josiah Hubbard, Lauren Hunt, Elijah Johnson, Anna Kate Metzler, Christian Sullivan, Daniel Sullivan, Molly Salmon, Thomas Salmon, Savannah Walker.

NURSERY VOLUNTEERS:

Sunday, December 24, 9:30 a.m. service— Infants: Kathy Watson & Phyllis Leath; Toddlers: encouraged to attend worship

Sunday, December 24, 7 p.m. service— Infants: volunteers needed; Toddlers: volunteers needed

Sunday, December 31 — Infants: Mary, Allison & Makenzie Goll; Toddlers: Glenda Bays

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Today at 7 p.m.—Candlelight/Communion Worship service

Dec. 25-26—Church offices closed

Dec. 31—Worship at 9:30 a.m.; no other activities

Jan. 1-2—Church offices closed

Jan 7—Worship at 9:30 a.m.; potluck lunch following



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

Rev. Doug Ashley — Lead Pastor / dashley@epclongview.org

Rev. Shelley Kral — Associate Pastor / skral@epclongview.org

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