
A Glance at the Week

Monday

7:00 am Men's Discussion (*Zoom*)

6:30 pm Small Group

Church Contact Information

Office Phone: 651-698-3889

Office Hours: Thurs & Fri 1:00-6:00 p.m.

Office Admin (secretary@randolphheights.org)

Session (session@randolphheights.org)

For Pastoral Communication, please call Pastor Ken @ 651-592-3320

Or Email @ ken.highley@randolphheights.org

Looking Ahead

Advent Series-

A Son *Luke 1:26-38*

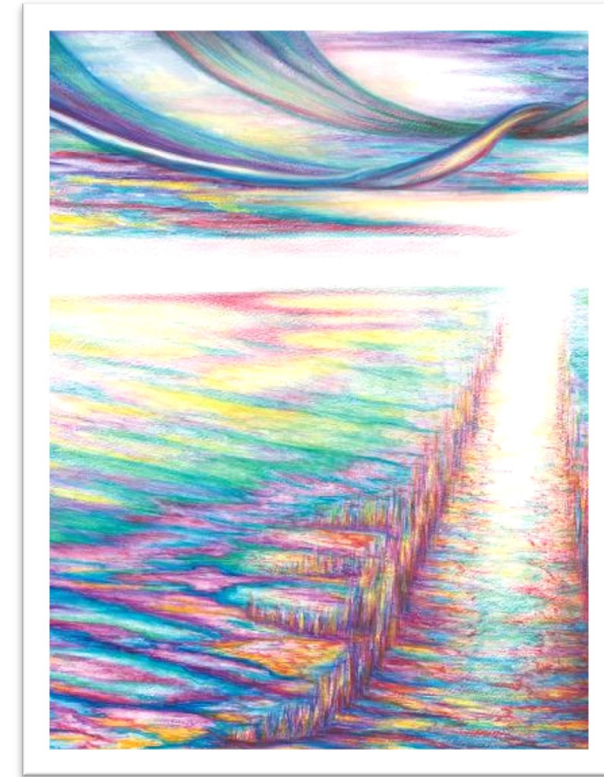
A Song *Luke 1:39-55*

War *Matthew 2:13-23*

& Peace *Luke 2:10-14*

Upcoming ~

Epistle of James



Randolph Heights Presbyterian Church

435 Hamline Ave. South
Saint Paul, MN 55105

December 24, 2023

9:30am Discussion

10:30am Worship

www.randolphheights.org

We are glad you're here!

This is a community which strives to worship and serve God together. Within this community, people freely explore their personal questions about God and the Bible. It's together that we can better learn the breadth and depth of the Gospel and how it works out in our lives. Then, through the grace and hope of the gospel, we serve those in need and work together towards a thriving community.

This program is organized under five headings as described below:

Gathering: We remember God of Creation. The creator is amazing, perfect, powerful, good and is worthy of our worship and praise. This helps center and prepare our hearts for a time of worship.

Confession and Renewal reminds us that this world is not as God originally intended it. We express our grief and sorrow over the brokenness of this world and of our own lives. Our need for grace never goes away, and it is only by faith in Jesus that we can be made right with God. Within these words of renewal we recognize the truth that God's redemption of his people has been accomplished in Jesus.

Thanksgiving is our response to the redemptive plan of God. It is also an opportunity to express our thanks tangibly.

Ministry of the Word is expressed through reading our scripture passage for the day, listening to the Word preached, and responding with words of prayer from the congregation.

The **Benediction** is a good word to be sent out on.

We encourage you to spend some time before the service begins and note how it flows. You are also encouraged to take this bulletin with you to use for personal devotional time throughout the week.

BENEDICTION

- L God has shown you what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.
~ from Micah 6:8, NIV

**Life in the Body*

Send Out

- L Almighty God, you have poured upon us the new light of your incarnate Word: Grant that this light, enkindled in our hearts, may shine forth in our lives, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

A Prayer of Commitment

Lord Jesus Christ, there is nothing I can do that would make you love me more, and nothing I have done that makes you love me less. Your presence and approval are all I need for everlasting joy. As you have been to me, so I will be to others. As I pray, I'll measure your compassion by the cross and your power by the resurrection. Amen.

Silent Night

Franz Gruber

Joseph Mohr



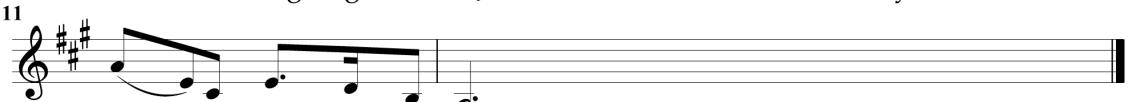
Si - lent night! Ho - ly night! All is calm, all is bright
Si - lent night! Ho - ly night! She - pherds quake at the sight:
Si - lent night! Ho - ly night! Son of God, love's pure light



Round yon vir - gin mo - ther and child; Ho - ly in - fant, so
Glo - ries stream from hea - ven a - far, Heav'n - ly hosts - sing
Ra - diant beams from thy ho - ly face, With the dawn of re -



ten - der and mild, Sleep in heav - en - ly peace,
Al - le - lu - ia! Christ, the Sa - vior is born!
de - em - ing grace, Je - sus, Lord, at thy birth,



Sleep in heav - en - ly peace.
Christ, the Sa - vior is born!
Je - sus, Lord, at thy birth.

Reflections

One of the dangers of living in a constant state of distraction is that we never go to the bottom of our pain, our sadness, our emptiness, which means we never find that rock-bottom place of the peace that passes understanding and rest ourselves there.
~ *Ruth Haley Barton, 1960- , Author/Teacher*

Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.
~ *Luke 2:14*

When the angels show up and say, "Glory to God in the highest," what is being declared is, There is a beauty on earth now that displaces all other beauties. It lessens other beauties because of how beautiful it is, and there is a magnificence now visible in Christ that lessens the magnificence of other magnificent things.
~ *Matt Chandler, 1974- , Pastor/Author*

No one can have the peace of God until they are at peace with God.
~ *Jack Wellman, Pastor/Writer*

We cannot enjoy peace in this world unless we are ready to yield to the will of God in respect of death. Our times are in His hand, at His sovereign disposal. We must accept that as best. ~ *John Owen, 1616-1683, English Non-conformist Leader*

We cannot merely pray to You, O God, to end war; For we know that You have made the world in a way that man must find his own path to peace within himself and with his neighbor. ~ *Jack Reimer, Rabbi*

If every man and woman in the world knew what it was to hunger and thirst after righteousness, there would be no danger of war.
~ *Martyn Lloyd-Jones, 1899-1981, Welsh Minister and Medical Doctor*

The deep truth is that our human suffering need not be an obstacle to the joy and peace we so desire, but can become, instead, the means to it.
~ *Henri Nouwen, 1932-1996, Priest and writer*

PRELUDE

Micah 6:6 – With what shall I come before the LORD and bow down before the exalted God?

- L If our lives are dry and parched, Lord, send the living waters of your Spirit
A To revive us, to enliven us, to bring forth new life. Immanuel, come quickly.

Come, Lord Jesus, Come

Steve Thorngate



Come, Lord Je - sus, come. Come, Lord
Je - sus, come. For what death we've
If death is
left un - done, for fear that leaves us be-
o - ver - come and new life is be-
numb, for all we can't out-
gun, the world will be un-
- run that we need res - cue from.
- done. - Come, Lord Je - sus, come.

Reader:

And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. ⁹ An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. ¹¹ Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

¹³ Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

¹⁴ "Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests."

¹⁵ When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."

¹⁶ So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. ¹⁷ When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, ¹⁸ and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. ¹⁹ But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰ The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

Pastoral Prayer

L Whether we know it or not, we live on the edge of Your advent every moment of every day, often stumbling along, like on a dark path in a thick forest, with only a flashlight at our feet, we see so little ... while You see everything. Help us to trust you, and follow where You lead us.

Where people suffer, make us compassionate and make Yourself known as the Healer and Comforter. Where poverty breeds hopelessness, where hunger causes desperation, where addictions bind the soul and dull the mind, where ignorance destroys opportunity – come Lord!

Come with Your compassion and grace, with Your strength and love, with Your truth and justice. Through Your Holy Spirit, move Your people to be Your ears that listen, Your hands that serve, Your voice that advocates, Your feet that enter in, and Your arms that love. Where families grieve–comfort them with your peace and your presence as the Resurrection and the Life. Where loved ones are fighting illness, recovering from injury, anticipating surgery–heal them in Your power and love. Whenever we are tempted to trivialize Your incarnation in Bethlehem, an adolescence in Nazareth, and an adult who had no home to call His own ... who came to die that we be redeemed: Remind us of Your great love and compassion. Remind us that Christmas red is the crimson blood shed for us and Christmas green is the evergreen of eternal life. This we pray in Your name, Lord Jesus, amen.

Open Petition

After each petition the Leader will say:

L Lord in your mercy

A *Hear our prayer. (Response from Congregation)*

~or~

L *Let us Give God Thanks*

A *We give You thanks O Lord.*

L As our celebration of your coming is here, we give ourselves to You who first gave Yourself for us;

Advent Candle Lighting

L Today we relight the first three candles of the Advent Wreath – the candles of HOPE, PEACE, and JOY. Now we light the fourth candle of Advent. This is the candle of LOVE. Jesus demonstrated self-giving love in his ministry as the Good Shepherd. Advent is a time for kindness, thinking of others, and sharing with others. It is a time to love as God loved us by giving us his most precious gift. As God is love, let us be love also. In the Book of Deuteronomy, we find these words:

A *“For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who is not partial and takes no bribe, who executes justice for the orphan and the widow, and who loves the strangers, providing them food and clothing. You shall also love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.” – Deut. 10:17-19a*

L From the Gospel of John we hear:

A *“I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.” – John 13:34-35*

L Let us pray together:

A *Teach us to love, O Lord. May we always remember to put you first as we follow Christ’s footsteps, that we may know your love and show it in our lives. As we prepare for our celebration of Jesus’ birth, also fill our hearts with love for the world, that all may know your love and the one whom you have sent, your son, our Savior. Amen.*

Prayer of Adoration (followed by Lord’s Prayer)

L Lord God Almighty, King of glory and love eternal, you are worthy at all times to receive adoration, praise, and blessing; we praise you now for sending your Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ, for whom our hearts wait, and to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, be honor and dominion, now and for ever. Amen.

Hear us now as we prayer together, the words you taught your disciples:

A *Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come, thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.*

*Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts,
as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom,
and the power and the glory forever. Amen*

Angels We Have Heard on High

Trad. Carol

James Chadwick



An - gels we have heard on high Sweet-ly sing-ing
Shep-herds, why this ju - bi - lee? Why your joy - ous
Come to Beth - le - hem and see Him whose birth the



o'er the plains And the moun-tains in re - ply
strains pro - long? What the glad-some ti - dings be
an - gels sing, Come, a - dore on bend-ed knee,



E - cho - ing their joy - ous strains Glo-
Which in - spire your heaven-ly song?
Christ the Lord, the new - born King.



- o - o - ri-a, in ex-cel-sis De - o De - o

Good Christian's All Rejoice

tr. John Mason Neale

Medieval Latin Carol



Good Christ-ian's all, re - joice With heart and soul and
Good Christ-ian's all, re - joice With heart and soul and
Good Christ-ian's all, re - joice With heart and soul and



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



Ox and ass be - fore Him bow; And He is in the
He hath o - pened hea - ven's door, And man is blessed for-
Calls you one and calls you all To gain His ev - er-



man-ger now. Christ is born to - day! Christ is born to - day!
- ev - er - more. Christ was born for this! Christ was born for this!
- last - ing hall. Christ was born to save! Christ was born to save!

MINISTRY OF THE WORD

Preparation

L Immanuel, as we wait for your return, help us see your glory and love through the reading and preaching of your Word. We pray in your name. Amen.

Scripture Luke 2:14

“Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.”

Series Advent 2023

Sermon Christmas Peace

Profession of Faith

A *We declare to you what was from the beginning,
what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes,
what we have looked at and touched with our hands,
concerning the word of life – this life was revealed,
and we have seen it and testify to it,
and declare to you the eternal life that was with the Father
and was revealed to us –
we declare to you what we have seen and heard
so that you also may have fellowship with us;
and truly our fellowship is with the Father
and with his Son Jesus Christ.
We are writing these things so that our joy may be complete.
– 1 John 1:1-4, NRSV*

CONFESSION & RENEWAL

L It is easy for us to lose sight of what the birth of Jesus means to this dark and dying world. Let us be reminded that Christ came to free us from our sin and reunite us with our Creator. Let's pray:

A *God of love,
You came in weakness, as a child. All season long we want more stuff, more for us, but you alone offer what is lasting. Through the work of our Lord Jesus, who comes among us full of grace and truth, forgive us, heal us, correct us. Then open our lips, that we may sing your praise with the angels.*

When we allow darkness to overcome the light, forgive us, Lord. When we reduce Christmas to plastic and tinsel, have mercy on us, Father.

When hardness of heart keeps us from seeing and believing in Your Song, let your grace fill us, O God. Renew our hopes in Christ, that we may watch and wait and once more hear the glad story of our Savior, Jesus Christ, God with us.

In His name we pray, Amen.

Silent and Personal Confession

Sing We Now of Christmas

Trad. French Carol



Sing we now of Christ-mas, No - el, sing we here!
An An - gel called to shep - herds, "Leave your flocks at rest,
In Beth-le - hem they found him; Jo - seph and Mar - y mild,



Hear our grate-ful prais - es to the babe so dear. Sing we No-
journ-ey forth to Beth le-hem, find the lamb-kin blest."
seat - ed by the man - ger, watch-ing the ho - ly child.



- el, the King is born, No-el! Sing we now of Christ-mas, sing we now No-el!

RENEWAL

L I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people.
Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the
Messiah, the Lord. – *Luke 2:10-11, NIV*

A *Thanks be to God!*

Doxology

L *God of wonder, we offer you these humble gifts, signs of your goodness
and mercy. Receive them with our gratitude.*

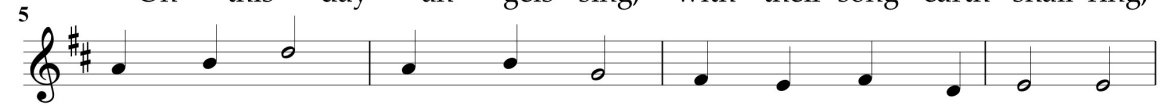
On This Day

Personent Hodie

Piae Cantiones, 1582



On this day earth shall ring with the song child - ren sing;
His the doom, ours the mirth, when he came down to earth;
God's bright star, o'er his head, wise men three to him led;
On this day an - gels sing; with their song earth shall ring,



To the Lord, Christ our King, born on earth to save us;
Beth - le - hem saw his birth; ox and ass be - side him,
kneel they low by his bed, lay their gifts be - fore him,
prai - sing Christ, hea - ven's King, born on earth to save us;



Him the Fa - ther gave us.
from the cold would hide him Glo-ry to the Fa-ther, glo-ry to the
praise him and a - dore him.
peace and love he gave us.



Son, Glo-ry to the Ho-ly Ghost, to the three in one.

Prayer of Dedication

A *God of hope, you gave your Son to free a lost world.
You give your Spirit to comfort and encourage.
You give us hope for a future free of pain, sorrow, and tears.
You promise us a future with you.
In gratitude, we bring you our time, talents, and tithes.
May our gifts be used so that many others will taste and see
the goodness of knowing you. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.*