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## A Glance at the Week

### Monday

6:30 pm Small Group

### Tuesday

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

## Church Contact Information

*Office Phone:* 651-698-3889

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

Office Admin ([secretary@randolphheights.org](mailto:secretary@randolphheights.org))

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

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## Looking Ahead

Advent Series From Isaiah Chapter 9

- Government
- Wonder

Upcoming 2025:

- Sermon on the Mount (Winter/Spring)
- Parables of Jesus (Late Spring)
- Life of David (Fall)



## Randolph Heights Presbyterian Church

435 Hamline Ave. South  
Saint Paul, MN 55105

## December 15, 2024

9:30am Discussion

10:30am Worship

[www.randolphheights.org](http://www.randolphheights.org)

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## 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.*

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## Scripture Reading Isaiah 9:1-7

Nevertheless, there will be no more gloom for those who were in distress. In the past he humbled the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the future he will honor Galilee of the nations, by the Way of the Sea, beyond the Jordan —

- 2 The people walking in darkness have seen a great light;  
on those living in the land of deep darkness  
a light has dawned.
- 3 You have enlarged the nation and increased their joy;  
they rejoice before you as people rejoice at the harvest,  
as warriors rejoice when dividing the plunder.
- 4 For as in the day of Midian's defeat,  
you have shattered the yoke that burdens them,  
the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor.
- 5 Every warrior's boot used in battle and every garment rolled in blood  
will be destined for burning, will be fuel for the fire.
- 6 For to us a child is born, to us a son is given,  
and the government will be on his shoulders.  
And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
- 7 Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end.  
He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom,  
establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness  
from that time on and forever.  
The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

A *Thanks be to God!*

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## 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—Sending Out

- L May almighty God make you faithful to his calling, cheerful in his service, and fruitful for his kingdom.  
The blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be upon you, and through you with all those to whom he sends you. Amen.

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## Reflect, Resonate, Reevaluate, Respond

*I am a herald of the Great King.  
~ Francis of Assisi*

They are prepared for a God who strikes hard bargains but not for a God who gives as much for an hour's work as for a day's. They are prepared for a mustard-seed kingdom of God no bigger than the eye of a newt but not for the great banyan it becomes with birds in its branches singing Mozart. They are prepared for the potluck supper at First Presbyterian but not for the marriage supper of the lamb. ~ Frederick Buechner

If you have not chosen the Kingdom of God first, it will in the end make no difference what you have chosen instead. ~ William Law, 1686-1761, Anglican Priest

There is not a square inch in the whole domain of our human existence over which Christ, who is Sovereign over all, does not cry, Mine!  
~ Abraham Kuyper, 1837-1920, Dutch Statesman, Theologian

If we live in a denial of the realities of our need and we persist in this, we run the risk of existing in this forever. We will move towards something that's like an asylum. Those in hell are diminished by the fact that they have denied the reality of themselves and the grace of God as well.  
~ Dr. Jerry Root, Professor Emeritus, Wheaton College, CS Lewis Scholar

Jesus beckons me to follow him to that place of weakness where I risk the vulnerability of a child so that I might know how strong my Father is and how much he loves me. But truth be told, I would rather be an adult. I'd rather be in a place where I can still pull things together if God doesn't show up, where I risk no ultimate humiliation, where I don't have to take the shallow breaths of desperation. And as a result, my experience of my heavenly Father is simply impoverished.  
~ Gary Haugen, 1963- , founder of International Justice Mission

"It is fatal to let people suppose that Christianity is only a mode of feeling; it is vitally necessary to insist that it is first and foremost a rational explanation of the universe." "None of us feels the true love of God till we realize how wicked we are. But you can't teach people that - they have to learn by experience." "If men will not understand the meaning of judgement, they will never come to understand the meaning of grace."  
~ Dorothy L. Sayers, 1893-1957, English writer and poet

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

L The mighty God summons the earth from the rising of the sun to the place where it sets. Our God comes and will not be silent.  
A *God calls, and we respond to his love. The heavens declare God's righteousness. We tell of God's glories!*

*In the Bleak Mid Winter*

Gustav Holst

Christina Rossetti



- In the bleak mid-winter, frosty wind made moan,  
Our God, heaven can't hold him, nor earth sustain;  
- Angels and arch-angels may have gathered there,  
- What can I give him, poor as I am?



earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone;  
heaven and earth shall flee away when he comes to reign.  
cherubim and seraphim thronged the air;  
if I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;



snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow,  
In the bleak midwinter a stable place sufficed the  
but his mother only, in her maiden bliss,  
if I were a Wise-Man, I would do my part; yet



in the bleak midwinter, long ago.  
Lord - God Almighty, Jesus Christ.  
worshipped the beloved with a kiss.  
what can I give him: give my heart.

**Pastoral Prayer**

L O Key of David, scepter over the house of Israel, your covenant people, you open our hearts, our lives, our futures. Set free all who are imprisoned, all those who live in the valley of the shadow of death. Maranatha. Come, Lord Jesus.

O Ruler of all nations, Lord of all time and space, you hold humanity together. As you lovingly formed us from the dust of the earth, lovingly reform, save, and renew us, we pray. Maranatha. Come, 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 Hear our prayer, O LORD; give ear to our supplications in your faithfulness; answer us in your righteousness. – *Psalm 143:1, NRSV*

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## The Lord's Table *(Offered 1st Sunday of Month)*

### *Invitation to the Table*

- L Congregation of Jesus Christ, the Lord has prepared his table for all who love him and trust in him alone for their salvation. All who are truly sorry for their sins, who sincerely believe in the Lord Jesus as their Savior, and who desire to live in obedience to him as Lord are now invited to come with gladness to the table of the Lord. The gifts of God for the people of God.
- A *We receive this food gladly, believing, as we eat, that Jesus is our lifegiving food and drink and that he will come again to call us to the wedding feast of the Lamb.*

L Let us give thanks together:

### *Prayer of Thanks*

- A *Remembering your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we take from your creation this bread and this wine and joyfully celebrate his dying and rising, as we await the day of his coming. With thanksgiving we offer our very selves to you to be a living and holy sacrifice dedicated to your service.*

All Sing: *Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of Power and Might,  
Heaven and Earth are filled with Your Glory. (2x)  
Hosanna! Hosanna! In the highest! (2x)*

### *Words of institution*

- L The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me." In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this in remembrance of me." For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. 1 Cor 11:23-26,

### *Distribution of the Elements*

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## Call to Worship / Advent Candle Lighting

- L God of Israel, with expectant hearts we your people await Christ's coming.  
A *As once he came in humility, so now may he come in glory, that he may make all things perfect in your everlasting kingdom. For he is Lord for ever and ever.*

### *Candle Lighting*

- L We light these candles as a sign of the coming light of Christ.  
A *In the wilderness prepare the way of our Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. ~based on Isaiah 40:3, NRSV*  
L The Lord will give you a sign. A young woman is with child and shall bear a son  
A *And they shall name him Immanuel, which means "God is with us."*  
L Every valley shall be lifted up and every mountain and hill be made low;  
A *The uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. ~ Is 40:4*

### *Prayer of Adoration (followed by Lord's Prayer)*

- L In anticipation we gather. We gather to watch for the coming of the good news into our world and into our lives. We wait to see the fullness of God's vision. Make us ready, we pray, for his royal coming, open the doors to our hearts, that this year we may have room for the birth of Jesus. O God, as we marvel over all that you are doing, overwhelm us with so much wonder that words of praise spring forth from our lips! In this time of waiting, let true worship begin in our hearts. Let our praises rise up to the heavens! Let our celebrations spread new hope over a tired world! Let us gather together all our dreams and lives to worship our God! Amen.

Hear us now, as we pray together, the words Jesus taught his 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*

All Sing: Canticle of the Turning

My soul cries out with a joyful shout that the God of my heart is great,  
And my spirit sings of the wondrous things  
that you bring to the one who waits.  
You fixed your sight on the servant's plight,  
and my weakness you did not spurn,  
So from east to west shall my name be blest. Could the world be about to turn?

Though I am small, my God, my all, you work great things in me.  
And your mercy will last from the depths of the past  
to the end of the age to be.  
Your very name puts the proud to shame,  
And to those who would for you yearn,  
You will show your might, put the strong to flight, for the world is about to turn

My heart shall sing of the day you bring.  
Let the fires of your justice burn.  
Wipe away all tears,  
For the dawn draws near,  
And the world is about to turn.

From the halls of power to the fortress tower, not a stone will be left on stone.  
Let the king beware for your justice tears  
every tyrant from his throne.  
The hungry poor shall weep no more,  
for the food they can never earn;  
There are tables spread, ev'ry mouth be fed, for the world is about to turn *refrain*

Though the nations rage from age to age, we remember who holds us fast:  
God's mercy must deliver us  
from the conqueror's crushing grasp.  
This saving word that our forbears heard  
is the promise that holds us bound,  
Til the spear and rod can be crushed by God, who is turning the world around  
*refrain*

Joy to the World

Isaac Watts

Andy Bast



Joy to the world; the Lord is come; Let Earth re - ceive her  
No more let sins and sor - rows grow, Nor thorns in - fest the  
To our al - might - y ma - ker, God, How won - drous is your



King; Let ev' - ry Heart pre - pare him room, And  
ground; He comes to make his bless - ings flow Far  
name Your great sal - va - tion shines a - broad, And



Heav'n and na - ture sing. Joy to the Earth, the Sa - vior reigns, Let  
as the curse is found. He rules the world with truth and grace, And  
all our hearts be praise Let the world His love pro - claim, With



all our Songs em - ploy, While fields and floods, rocks, hills and  
makes the na - tions prove The glo - ries of his righ - teous -  
all her diff - rent tongues, And spread the ho - nor of His



plains, Re - peat the sound - ing joy. Re - peat the sound - ing joy.  
- ness, And won - ders of his love. And won - ders of his love.  
name In mel - o - dy and songs. In mel - o - dy and songs.



Re - peat the sound - ing joy.  
And won - ders of his love.  
In mel - o - dy and songs.

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## MINISTRY OF THE WORD

### Preparation

L Make us to know your ways, O LORD; teach us your paths. Lead us in your truth, and teach us, for you are the God of our salvation; for you we wait all day long. Amen. – *from Psalm 25:4-5, NRSV*

**Scripture** Isaiah 9:1-7 (*beginning on Page 15*)

**Series** Advent

**Sermon** Government

### Response

A *As followers of Jesus Christ, living in this world – which some seek to control, and others view with despair – we declare with joy and trust: Our world belongs to God!*

*Remembering the promise to reconcile the world to himself, God joined our humanity in Jesus Christ – the eternal Word made flesh. He is the long-awaited Messiah, one with us and one with God, fully human and fully divine, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary.*

*We long for that day when our bodies are raised, the Lord wipes away our tears, and we dwell forever in the presence of God. We will take our place in the new creation, where there will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, and the Lord will be our light. Come, Lord Jesus, come.*

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## CONFESSION & RENEWAL

L While we claim to celebrate your lordship, the way we live proclaims our lack of faith in your power to deal with the world. Let us confess the inconsistency between our faith and practice. Let us pray.

A *Righteous God, you have crowned Jesus Christ as Lord of all. We confess that we have not bowed before him and are slow to acknowledge his rule. We give allegiance to the powers of this world and fail to be governed by Him. We confess our lack of trust. While we sing of His lordship over all creation, we have too often acted as though He is powerless in the face of today's events.*

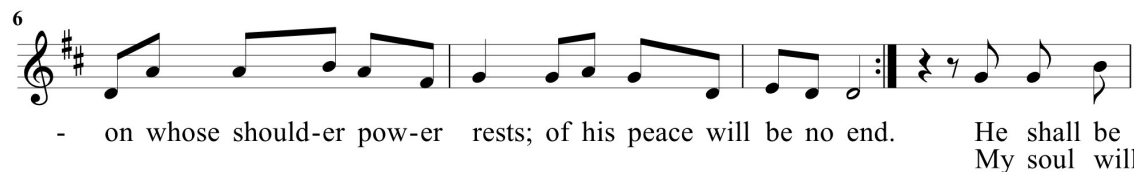
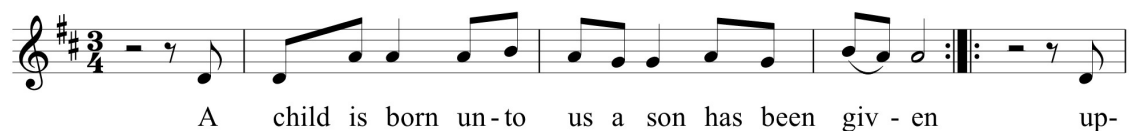
*In your mercy, forgive us. Help us to live with confidence in his presence today and in hope for life with Him tomorrow. Raise us to acclaim Him as ruler of all, that we may be loyal ambassadors, obeying the commands of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

### Silent and Personal Confession

## Puer Natus Est - A Child is Born

Daniel Justice Snoke

♩ = 110



## Renewal

L The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. And this is the name by which it will be called: "The Lord is our righteousness." People of God: Jesus Christ, our Lord, whose coming we announce in this season, is our righteousness. In Christ, we are made right with God. — based on Jeremiah 33:14-16, NRSV

A Thanks be to God!

## Doxology

L Lord God, heavenly King, we offer these our gifts as a sign of love, devotion, and praise. Through these, as through our praises, we acknowledge that you are our Lord.

A *Glory to the Father, Glory to the Son, Glory to the Holy Ghost...  
Praise God, from Whom all blessings flow.  
Praise Him, all creatures here below.  
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host.  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen*

## 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.*