



Carlisle/Kilbride United Church
Sunday Dec. 12, 2021
Advent Three: White Gift Sunday

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Opening Hymn: VU 36 Angels From the Realms of Glory

This recording features the congregational singing of Grace Community Church in Sun Valley, California, a non-denominational, evangelical megachurch established in 1956.

[Angels from the Realms of Glory - YouTube](#)

- 1 Angels, from the realms of glory,
wing your flight o'er all the earth;
ye who sang creation's story,
now proclaim Messiah's birth:
 come and worship, come and worship,
 worship Christ, the newborn King.

- 2 Shepherds in the field abiding,
watching o'er your flocks by night,
God with us is now residing,
yonder shines the infant Light: R

- 3 Sages, leave your contemplations;
brighter visions beam afar;
seek the great desire of nations;
ye have seen his natal star: R

- 4 Saints before the altar bending,
watching long in hope and fear,
suddenly the Lord, descending,
in his temple shall appear: R

Call to Worship:

One: The Joy of the Lord is all around us!

All: Anywhere and everywhere!

One: We sense Your presence and we are filled with Joy.

All: We believe your word and see it fulfilled.

One: So we are prepared for Joy to break in

All: and show us the wonder of love. Amen.

Hymn: VU 6 A Candle is Burning v.1-3

Steve Johnson at Bethany Presbyterian Church (Tacoma, WA) continues his Advent offering, setting the text to alternate "Away in a Manger" melodies. There is also a musical quotation from the Polish carol "Infant Holy, Infant Lowly" in the guitar accompaniment.

[A Candle Is Burning Advent 3 - YouTube](#)

- 1 A candle is burning, a flame warm and bright,
a candle of hope in December's dark night.
While angels sing blessings from heaven's starry sky,
our hearts we prepare now for Jesus is nigh.
- 2 A candle is burning, a candle of peace,
a candle to signal that conflict must cease:
for Jesus is coming to show us the way;
a message of peace humbly laid in the hay.
- 3 A candle is burning, a candle of joy,
a candle to welcome brave Mary's new boy.
Our hearts fill with wonder, and eyes light and glow
as joy brightens winter like sunshine on snow.

Lighting of the Advent Candle: Week 3: Joy

(light 1st & 2nd purple candle)

Voice 1:

Christmas is coming, it soon will be here,
That wonderful season of joy and good cheer,
The lights are a-twinkle, the wreath's on the door,
The cards have been posted to friends by the score.
The stockings are ready, the holly's been bought,
the mistletoe's waiting —ready or not!

We're wrapping the presents, even one for the dog.
Aunt Edna is making her famous eggnog.
There's glad Christmas music wherever we go

And children are hoping and praying for snow.
So laugh and be merry! Come join in the glee!
Christmas is coming — just you wait and see.

Voice 2:

Bah! Humbug!...

This Christmas fandango, this seasonal frolic,
It gives me a pain in the gut like the colic!
I'm not in the mood for your seasonal cheer.
How can you be merry? How can you, this year?

Your lights all a-twinkle seem garish, not gay,
When I can't see family and friends far away.
And as for your mistletoe, ivy and holly,
Now how can such fripperies make you feel jolly?
Those "fa las" and "rum pa pum pums" you're enjoying
I can't seem to stomach; I find them quite cloying.

And who needs a turkey when dinner's for two?
Empty chairs at the table just make me feel blue.
Why put up a wreath when no one's at the door?
Why bother? I ask you. Why bother? What for?
I don't want any presents and I don't have a dog
And I've always, yes always, detested eggnog.
So be off with your tidings of joy and of glee.
I'm NOT celebrating, NOT THIS year. Not ME!

Voice 1:

No, wait! Just a minute? You've misunderstood!
I'm not making merry 'cause everything's good.
I know there is trouble and people are sad
(Some situations are terribly bad)
But that is WHY Christmas is coming, you see,
To celebrate Jesus — here — with you and me.

Because he was born in a stall long ago,
We don't have to face things alone now — Oh no!
There's light in the darkness, there's hope on the way
There's love in the world and it's here to stay.
THAT'S why we are singing of comfort and joy:
A love and a hope that no power can destroy.
Christ IS coming. You'll see. It is true!
It's BECAUSE you are sad. It is coming for YOU!

Voice 2:

I hear what you're saying and it makes me glad
There can be JOY in our hearts, even when things are bad!
So let's light a candle — that now makes three.
The world's looking brighter — definitely!
(The pink candle is lit.)

Advent Song: tune: Silver Bells

It's a story, quite a story,
That began long ago,
When the prophets foretold a messiah
Line of David it was stated
Would bring forth a new son
Who would make the world turn upside down

Angel's words (angel's words)
Angel's wings (angel's wings)
New life is growing, my heart sings!
Peace on earth (peace on earth)
Enough for all (enough for all)
Soon we'll be living God's way.

Prayer of Confession & Words of Assurance:

In this Advent time of waiting, may we be still and let go of expectations that prevent us from experiencing the wonder and grace of your coming. May we let go of the burdens we carry and open our hearts to the hope of God with us, Emmanuel. May we make room for you to enter. Amen.

(silence)

Holy One,
Give us the courage to be open, as we prepare for Christ's arrival,
so that, like the Angels, we can reach out to the "unreachable".
Like Zechariah and Elizabeth and Mary and Joseph, we can receive unexpected messengers;
and like the shepherds make peace with the special role we play in Christ's story.
Help us to know joy, as we prepare. Amen.

Prayer of Illumination:

Speak to us, Lord.
Speak to us in the waiting, the watching,
the hoping, the rejoicing.
Speak to us by your Word in these Advent days,
and walk with us until the day of your coming. Amen.

Scripture: Matthew 1: 18-24

¹⁸Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. ²⁰But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, 'Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.' ²²All this took place to fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:²³ 'Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel', which means, 'God is with us.' ²⁴When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, ²⁵but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

Reflection: Gabriel's Gift to Joseph

Hymn: Angels Come – *Lyrics by Allison Playfair Dec 1, 2015*

– *Written for Violet, my sweet granddaughter, who continues to watch the angels dance*
(*Sung to tune CASSWELL VU 182 music written by Ron Klusmeier*)

I invite you click on Haewook Kim's instrumental recording of the CASSWELL hymn tune so you can sing along using Allison's beautiful lyrics. Please note that you will need to play the link twice in order to sing all four verses.

[#182 Stay with Us through the Night Easter Hymns \(Instrumental\) - YouTube](#)

Angels come in the night
Angels with great delight
touch our minds
in our dreaming
turning sorrow into joy

Angels know peace is near
Angels speak to our fear
An - gels calm
all our trembling
with their song of peace for all

Angels come clothed in light
Angels come shining bright
they bring news
of good tidings
that will set the people free

Angels come to the earth
Angels speak of the birth
An - gels sing
of the promise
that sweet Jesus soon will come

Young at Heart: The Sparkle Box by Jill Hardie

Presentation of Gifts

Prayer of Dedication/Offering:

Oh God, we give you thanks for our community of faith and we give in gratitude for your watchful presence with us throughout the years. Amen.

Hymn: VU 55 In the Bleak Midwinter

The Rise Up Children's Choir from Utah sing their hearts out in their version of this carol by Christina Rossetti, the celebrated Victorian-age poet. Her poem has been set to music many times, but the two most famous settings were composed by Gustav Holst (the tune featured in this recording) and Harold Darke in the early twentieth century.

["In the Bleak Midwinter" - Sung by Rise Up Children's Choir - YouTube](#)

- 1 In the bleak midwinter, frosty wind made moan,
earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone;
snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow,
in the bleak midwinter, long ago.
- 2 Our God, heaven cannot hold him, nor earth sustain;
heaven and earth shall flee away when he comes to reign;
in the bleak midwinter a stable place sufficed
the Lord God almighty, Jesus Christ.
- 3 Enough for him, whom cherubim worship night and day,
a breast full of milk, and a manger full of hay.
Enough for him, whom angels fall down before,
the ox and ass and camel which adore.
- 4 What can I give him, poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;
if I were a wise man, I would do my part;
yet what I can I give him – give my heart.

Prayers of the People:

God of Hope,

you hear our silent prayers and urgent cries. Hear us now as we pray for your world and its people.

God of Hope, hear our prayer.

God of Peace, on this day we pray for the people of Bethlehem, of Israel and Palestine; for (other places suffering conflict); for refugees who have nowhere to lay their heads; and for those who feel alone, lost, tired and frightened.

We pray for those who suffer at the hands of systemic racism, bigotry and misogyny. Restore us in right relationship, we who are created in your image, which is plural and good.

We pray for those who live your peace with justice and who, by example and at risk to themselves, shine a light on the chasms that divide us.

Grant your people strength and patience as, together, we seek your promise of life renewed. God of the morning star, guide us in the ways of mercy and justice.

God of Peace, hear our prayer.

God of Joy, on this day we pray for those who will spend this day alone; for those whose tables will have an empty place this year; for those in care home and hospital; and for our loved ones who live now in your eternal joy.

We pray also for those working in hospitals and research facilities who, daily, work to keep us safe in the midst of the COVID pandemic.

Grant your people courage and wisdom, as we seek your promise of wholeness. God of heaven and earth, of anticipation and promise, be with us and heal us.

God of Joy, hear our prayer.

God of Love, open our hearts, that we might receive you and hear your voice. Open us to the possibility of true change, in us and in others. Remind us of your promise, made again to every generation, of your enduring love. May things on earth be as they are in heaven.

God of Love, hear our prayer. Amen.

Hymn: VU 59 Joy to the World

I don't think I've witnessed a more incredible and uplifting performance of "Joy to the World"! The Mormon Tabernacle Choir (now The Tabernacle Choir at Temple Square) is joined by the Gabriel Trumpet Ensemble and accompanied by full orchestra and pipe organ. I invite you to sing out with joy! Note that this performance uses different lyrics for verse 4... and adds a special instrument for the finale (shout out to Frances Quarrington!). You are going to want to click "full screen" for this one!

[Joy to the World \(2017\) - Gabriel Trumpet Ensemble & the Mormon Tabernacle Choir - YouTube](#)

- 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 Saviour reigns:
let all 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.
- 4 He rules the earth 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.

Benediction

Online Postlude: Carol of the Bells

It is interesting that, in different contexts, bells can become a symbol of joy and celebration (a peal of bells) but also a symbol of mourning and remembrance (a bell toll). It seems appropriate to feature bells on this Sunday morning when we light the Advent candle of Joy but also prepare to gather for a Blue Christmas service this afternoon. In this recording, the Bethel Handbell Ensemble from Bethel University in St Paul, Minnesota, delivers a magical performance of "Carol of the Bells."

[Carol of the Bells \(Guebert\) - Bethel Handbell Ensemble - YouTube](#)

Announcements:

Blue Christmas Service: Today at 3 pm at Carlisle. To attend, register by email secretary@carlisleuc.ca or by phone 905-689-8630.

Bethlehem Experience: Sun Nov 19 2-4 pm. To attend, register by email secretary@carlisleuc.ca or by phone 905-689-8630. We are looking for volunteers! If

you can help with set-up on Saturday, take-down on Sunday, be a Shepherd, an Angel or a Centurion for the event, please be in touch with Janet, Joan Eagle or Rev. Allison.

Christmas Eve Services:

4:30 pm Family Service at Carlisle; 6:30 pm at Kilbride; 10 pm Candlelight at Carlisle

Dec 26 Service: Joint Service at 10 am at Carlisle United

Jan 2 Service: Joint Service at 10 am at Carlisle United

Sunday Zoom Coffee Time: Every Sunday at 1 pm. Link is on the webpage. * **Cancelled for Sunday December 12 only** *

Men's Coffee Time: Meet each Wed at 10 am in the parlour at Carlisle church.

UCW: Meet each Wed at 9:30 in the Gathering Room.

Devotional group: Meet 1st and 3rd Thurs of each month at 9:30 at Carlisle.