



GRACE COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Service of Worship January 3, 2021 10:00am
2nd Sunday After Christmas

Gathering

PRELUDE

“Lo, How a Rose ‘Ere Blooming”
Linda Dover, organ

Johannes Brahms

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP *(spoken together)*

People of the world, it is time to celebrate new beginnings.

Let us step into the new year with faith!

People of faith, it is time to look ahead in hope.

Let us step into the unknown with hope!

People of hope, it is time to walk in the footsteps of Jesus.

Let us step forward together as God’s family!

HYMN 147

“The First Nowell”

THE FIRST NOWELL

(st. 1, 2, & 3 Verse Only, No Refrain; – st. 4 & 6 Full Verse & Refrain)

147

The First Nowell

1 The first Now-ell the an-gel did say was to cer-tain poor
 2 They look - ed up and saw a star shin-ing in the
 3 And by the light of that same star three wise men
 4 This star drew nigh to the north-west; o'er Beth - le -

shep-herds in fields as they lay, in fields where they lay keep-ing
 east be - yond them far; and to the earth it gave
 came from coun - try far; to seek for a king was their
 hem it took its rest, and there it did both stop

their sheep, on a cold win-ter's night that was so deep.
 great light, and so it con - tin - ued both day and night.
 in - tent, and to fol - low the star wher - ev - er it went.
 and stay, right o - ver the place where Je - sus lay.

Refrain

Now - ell, Now - ell, Now - ell, Now - ell,

"Nowell" is the English form of the French "noel," a shout of joy formerly used at Christmas (as in Chaucer's "Franklin's Tale"), a clue that the word is older than its first printing. It may have Latin and French roots related to "born" (*natus / né*) as well to "news" (*nova / nouvelle*).

JESUS CHRIST: BIRTH

The image shows a musical score for a hymn. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff on top and a bass clef staff on the bottom. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The melody is written in the treble clef, and the bass line is in the bass clef. The lyrics are: "born is the King of Is - ra - el." The notes are: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), B4-A4 (half), G4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (quarter).

- 5 Then entered in those wise men three, 6 Then let us all with one accord
full reverently upon their knee, sing praises to our heavenly Lord,
and offered there in his presence that hath made heaven and earth of nought,
their gold, and myrrh, and and with his blood our life hath bought.
frankincense. *Refrain*

A TIME WITH STEWART

PRAYER FOR LOVE (*video*)

ASSURANCE OF GOD'S LOVE & SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

One: May the peace of Christ be with you.

All: And also with you and all others!

HYMN 144

"In the Bleak Midwinter"

CRANHAM

In the Bleak Midwinter 144

1 In the bleak mid-winter, frost-y wind made moan;
 2 Our God, heaven can-not hold him, nor earth sus-tain;
 3 An-gels and arch-an-gels may have gath-ered there;
 4 What can I give him, poor as I am?

earth stood hard as i-ron, wa-ter like a stone;
 heaven and earth shall flee a-way when he comes to reign:
 cher-u-bim and ser-a-phim thronged the air;
 If I were a shep-herd, I would bring a lamb;

snow had fall-en, snow on snow, snow on snow,
 in the bleak mid-winter a sta-ble place suf-ficed
 but his moth-er on-ly, in her maid-en bliss,
 if I were a wise man, I would do my part;

‡ in the bleak mid-winter, long a-go.
 the Lord God in-car-nate, Je-sus Christ.
 ‡ wor-shiped the be-lov-ed with a kiss.
 yet what I can I give him: give my heart.

Though this text describes winter weather in England rather than in Palestine, the poet is using familiar surroundings as a means of making the Nativity more immediate and personal. The tune name honors a Gloucestershire village near the composer's birthplace in Cheltenham.

Equipping

GOSPEL LESSON

John 1:1-18

(NRSV)

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. (John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.'") From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

SOLO

"*It Came Upon a Midnight Clear"

arr. David Foster

David Sutherland, tenor

& Sarah Michael Foster

**The "it" of the first line of this text does not refer to the birth of Jesus, but to "that glorious song of old," the angelic tidings of peace on earth.*

SERMON

"Ending/Beginning"

Rev. Mitch Trigger

Sending

A CALL TO STEWARDSHIP

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION

The Great Thanksgiving

Breaking of the Bread

Communion of the People

Prayer after Communion

HYMN 136

“Go, Tell It on the Mountain”

GO TELL IT

136 Go, Tell It on the Mountain

Refrain 

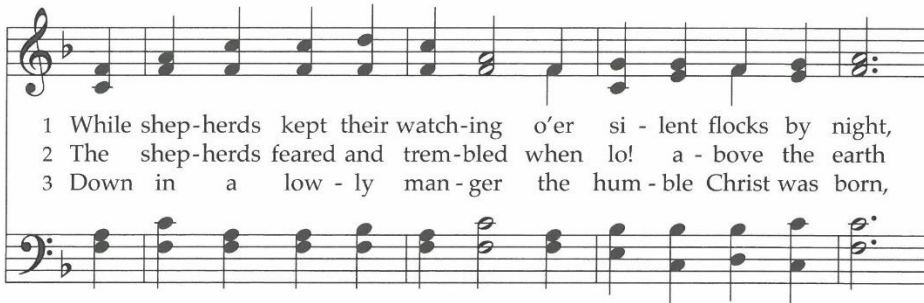


Go, tell it on the moun-tain, o-ver the hills and ev - ery - where;

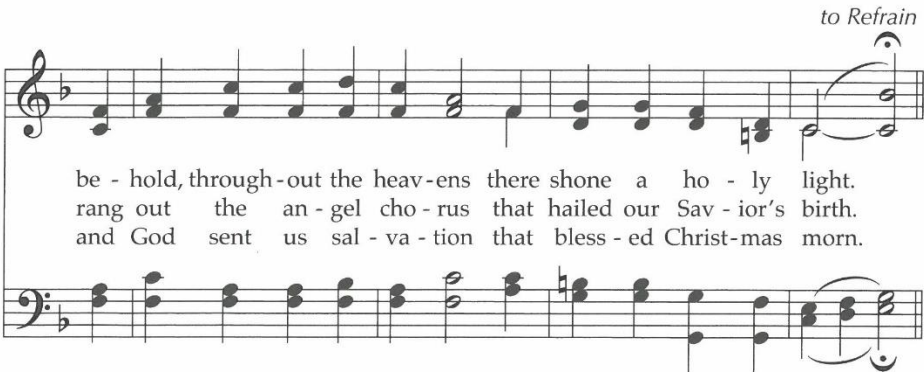


go, tell it on the moun - tain that Je - sus Christ is born!

Fine



1 While shep-herds kept their watch-ing o'er si - lent flocks by night,
 2 The shep-herds feared and trem-bled when lo! a - bove the earth
 3 Down in a low - ly man - ger the hum - ble Christ was born,



to Refrain

be - hold, through-out the heav-ens there shone a ho - ly light.
 rang out the an - gel cho - rus that hailed our Sav - ior's birth.
 and God sent us sal - va - tion that bless - ed Christ-mas morn.

Like other material from oral traditions, 19th-century African American spirituals flourished without being written down. Their refrains were their most stable parts, and narrative stanzas were often improvised to fit. These Nativity stanzas attempt to recall that tradition.

CHARGE & BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

“How Brightly Shines the Morning Star”
Linda Dover, organ

J.S. Bach

GOD’S PEACE TO YOU

Some music is reprinted by permission of CCLI 1154643 and OneLicense A-705105.
Our Church Streaming & Podcast Licenses are CSPL 048834 through CCLI & included in OneLicense A-705105.
Any videos are shown by permission of CVLI #504087502.