

Celebration of the Incarnation of Jesus Christ

December 12, 2021
11:00 a.m.

"To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen." (Revelation 1:5b-6)

Welcome and Announcements (**Please turn your cell phone to "silent" mode. Thank you!**)

Call to Worship from Psalm 150

PASTOR: Praise the LORD! Praise God in his sanctuary; praise him in his mighty heavens! Praise him for his mighty deeds; praise him according to his excellent greatness!

ALL: O come, let us adore Him, Christ, the LORD! Thanks be to God for His unspeakable Gift!

Celebration of The Incarnate Word with Harp Music

Praise the LORD! Praise him with lute and harp! (Psalm 150:1, 3b)

Seasonal selections played by Judy Bailey, harpist

Morning Prayers for Christ's Church and the World Ruling Elder Paul Sawyer

Celebratory Preaching of the Incarnate Word

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. (John 1:14)

Scripture Lesson Matthew 1:18-25

Advent Series on the Virgin Birth #3 Rev. Dr. H. Andrew Silman

*The Nicene Creed ([Trinity Hymnal](#), page 846 and projected on the screen)

Celebration of the Incarnate Word in Joyful Song

Let everything that has breath praise the LORD! Praise the LORD! (Psalm 150:6)

***Hymn #208**

O Come, All Ye Faithful (stanzas 1, 2 and 4)

This hymn refers to the personal property of the Son in a similar fashion to the Nicene Creed. The Council of Nicea (A.D. 325) concluded that the Son of God possesses the exact same divine nature as the Father. He is "God of God, Light of Light." He is "begotten, not created." There was never a time when God the Son did not exist. He is co-equal, co-eternal with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit, one God in three Persons forever. (Robert Rothwell)

Hymn #221

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming (stanzas 1, 2 and 5)
The virgin birth has been rejected, even by many professing Christians, for over a century. The example of the human Jesus is said to be a sufficient example to follow, without the need for him to be divine. Essential to orthodox Christology is the hypostatic union – that Christ has two distinct natures, human and divine, united in one person. This hymn, dating to the 1500s in Germany (the time of the Protestant Reformation) speaks of "true man, yet very God" and calls Jesus "child of Mary" and at the same time "King of glory." In Christ we have a Savior who is true God and true man; One "who dost our weakness know;" Who will "bring us at length to the bright courts of heaven and to the endless day." (Kevin Gardner)

Hymn #203

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing
The final stanza of this hymn condenses several aspects of Christology and soteriology and explains their significance for believers in Christ. The hymnwriter, Charles Wesley, connects the incarnation and resurrection of Jesus to the new birth and resurrection of the dead. Christ "lays his glory by" and takes on flesh. He is born that we might be born again, he dies that we might never experience the second death, he rises from the dead that we might be raised to eternal life. The Prince of Peace, our Sun of Righteousness, brings us light and life, was born that we might be born again to a living hope, and whose resurrection assures our own. (Todd Alexander)

Hymn #213

What Child Is This
The hymnwriter poses a question concerning the identity and earthly mission of Jesus and offers two answers: This Child is "Christ the King." The Child is also "the Word made flesh." He is the eternal One who was conceived in the womb of the virgin Mary and born of her without sin. He left behind heavenly glory in order to head to hellish Golgotha, the Place of the Skull, to die for those he was sent to save. The manger makes sense only at the cross. The hymn bids us to enthrone Christ in our hearts, to give Him gifts that are fit for our King, and sing His praises. The Christ of Christmas offers Himself as an all-sufficient Savior to all who feel lost and are without hope. (Sinclair Ferguson)

Hymn #225

Once in Royal David's City (stanzas 1, 2, 4 and 5)
This hymn, by Cecil Frances Alexander was first published in a collection of hymns for children, part of a series of poems on the Apostles' Creed. The hymn addressed the creedal affirmation: "born of the virgin Mary." The earlier stanzas speak of Christ's active and passive obedience. The fifth stanza speaks of the believers' glorification in which at death we join Christ in his estate of exaltation. There, "at last," with renewed "eyes" in a fully renewed heavens and earth, we "shall see him." Only then and there will we be able to see Him properly, no longer in a "poor lowly

stable" but "in heaven, set at God's right hand on high." We shall do so "through his own redeeming love", for the merits and mediation of Christ alone afford us heavenly entrance. It is important to have this hope for and eager anticipation of seeing our Lord Jesus in His glory. This helps us live in the here and now with all its griefs, disappointments, struggles, and even bitterness. When we know, contrary to the world, that we are not constantly pressed to "seize the day" or "having to find all our joy in the here and now," we can actually better enjoy this life. Jesus told us that we would have tribulation in this world, but to be of good cheer because He has overcome the world (John 16:33) At the last we too will overcome when we see Him on His throne and enter the new heavens and earth, there forever to gaze on Him in His glory. (Alan Strange)

*Hymn #195

We can tell everyone that we have joy to offer the world. The Son of God, promised at the very beginning after our first parents fell, as "One who would come to crush the serpent's head," is the "Wonderful Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace." He would be born of a virgin, and His kingdom would spread throughout the groaning world. He would be the Lamb of God who would take away our sin. The chastisement of our peace would be laid on Him and with His wounds we would be healed. God would continue to be a just, sin-hating God, but now He could be merciful to us also because our guilt had been imputed to the Lord Jesus Christ, and his righteousness and wrath-satisfying death imputed to us. The One in charge of our lives has all authority in heaven and earth, loves us with an everlasting love. Joy to the world wherever the curse is found, to all who receive Him as their King. (Geoff Thomas)

PRESENTATION OF CHRISTMAS GIFTS

*Congregation Stands. (Please feel free to be seated at any time.)

WELCOME TO ALL who are spiritually weary and seek rest; to all who mourn and long for comfort; to all who struggle and desire victory; to all who sin and need a Savior; to all who are strangers and want fellowship; to all who hunger and thirst after righteousness; and to whoever will come this church opens wide her doors and offers her welcome in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

CHURCH STAFF

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The explanations of the Christmas hymns have been adapted from the December issue of Tabletalk, "The Theology of Christmas."

...built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the chief cornerstone. Ephesians 2:20



°CORNERSTONE°

° PRESBYTERIAN ° CHURCH ° IN ° AMERICA °
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OUR VISION

Cornerstone Presbyterian Church is a vibrant and unified community of Christians and their covenant children whose sole desire is to glorify God in everything. Because God's grace has won our affections we are wholeheartedly committed to the following: the absolute authority of the Bible because it is the very Word of God; enthusiastic and biblical worship; deeds of mercy and sacrificial service; earnest prayer; deepening relationships with one another; and joyful, intentional proclamation of salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ to all the world beginning in Brevard. We warmly welcome as members all who trust in Jesus Christ alone for salvation and fully share our vision.

OUR MISSION

The mission of Cornerstone Presbyterian Church is to glorify the triune God by exalting Him and by edifying and equipping our members to share the gospel with everyone in both word and deed beginning in Brevard and to the ends of the earth.