

THE EVE OF THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD

December 24, 2021 | 8:00 pm



St. Stephen Presbyterian Church

Fort Worth, Texas

PRELUDE

Greensleeves (1999)

Timothy Albrecht (b. 1951)

Jesus Christ the Apple Tree (1967)

Elizabeth Poston (1905–1987)

Faith Adams, soloist

*The tree of life my soul hath seen, laden with fruit, and always green:
The trees of nature fruitless be compared with Christ the apple tree.*

*His beauty doth all things excel: by faith I know, but ne'er can tell
The glory which I now can see in Jesus Christ the apple tree.*

*For happiness I long have sought, and pleasure dearly I have bought:
I missed of all; but now I see 'tis found in Christ the apple tree.*

*I'm weary with my former toil, here I will sit and rest awhile:
Under the shadow I will be, of Jesus Christ the apple tree.*

*This fruit doth make my soul to thrive, it keeps my dying faith alive;
Which makes my soul in haste to be with Jesus Christ the apple tree.*

Poème Mystique (1985)

Richard Purvis (1913–1994)

E'en So, Lord Jesus, Quickly Come (1954)

Paul Manz (1919–2009)

*Peace be to you and grace from him Who freed us from our sins,
Who loved us all and shed his blood That we might saved be.
Sing holy, holy to our Lord, The Lord, Almighty God,
Who was and is and is to come; Sing holy, holy, Lord!
Rejoice in heaven, all ye that dwell therein, Rejoice on earth, ye saints below,
For Christ is coming, is coming soon, For Christ is coming soon!
E'en so, Lord Jesus, quickly come, And night shall be no more;
They need no light nor lamp nor sun, For Christ will be their All!*

Reflections on 'E'en So, Lord Jesus, Quickly Come' (1997)

Paul Manz

And the Glory of the Lord from Messiah (1741)

George Frideric Handel (1685–1759)

*And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed,
and all flesh shall see it together;
for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.*

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing (1970)

Gordon Young (1919–1998)

God Rest You Merry Gentlemen (1961)

David Willcocks (1919–2015)

*God rest you merry, gentlemen, Let nothing you dismay,
Remember Christ our Saviour Was born on Christmas day,
To save us all from Satan's power When we were gone astray:
O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy, O tidings of comfort and joy.*

*From God our heavenly Father A blessed angel came,
And unto certain shepherds Brought tidings of the same,
How that in Bethlehem was born The Son of God by name:
O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy, O tidings of comfort and joy.*

*The shepherds at those tidings Rejoiced much in mind,
And left their flocks a-feeding, In tempest, storm and wind,
And went to Bethlehem straightway This blessed babe to find:
O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy, O tidings of comfort and joy.*

*But when to Bethlehem they came, Whereat this infant lay,
They found him in a manger, Where oxen feed on hay;
His mother Mary kneeling, Unto the Lord did pray:
O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy, O tidings of comfort and joy.*

*Now to the Lord sing praises, All you within this place,
And with true love and brotherhood Each other now embrace;
This holy tide of Christmas All others doth deface:
O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy, O tidings of comfort and joy.*

God Rest You Merry Gentlemen (2017)

Aaron Shows (b. 1989)

Climb to the Top of the Highest Mountain (1981)

Carolyn Jennings (b. 1936)

Nathan Gapanaga & Tristan Olvedo, soloists

*Climb to the top of the highest mountain, Joyous tidings proclaim to the world,
Lift up your voice, Shout the good news: Behold, your Lord comes to you.*

*He will feed his flock like a shepherd, He will carry the lambs in his arms,
He will ever keep them safe from harm. Behold, your Lord comes to you.*

*He who made the stars in the heaven, He who fashioned the earth and the sea,
From time eternal he was God, the Alpha and Omega, He. Behold, your Lord!*

*He will come in power and glory, He will rule with mercy and truth,
Hope of all the nations, Light of the world, of all the world.*

*He will love the little children, He will hold them in his arms.
Love and trust him as a little child, Behold, your Lord comes to you.*

Away in a Manger (2007)

David Lasky (b. 1957)

Once in Royal David's City (1970)

David Willcocks

Debra Nyul, soloist

*Once in royal David's city stood a lowly cattle shed,
Where a mother laid her baby in a manger for his bed:
Mary was that mother mild, Jesus Christ her little child.*

*He came down to earth from heaven who is God and Lord of all,
And his shelter was a stable, and his cradle was a stall;
With the poor and mean and lowly lived on earth our Saviour holy.*

*And through all his wondrous childhood he would honour and obey,
Love and watch the lowly maiden, in whose gentle arms he lay:
Christian children all must be mild, obedient, good as he.*

*For he is our childhood's pattern, day by day like us he grew,
He was little, weak, and helpless, tears and smiles like us he knew:
And he feeleth for our sadness, and he shareth in our gladness.*

*And our eyes at last shall see him, through his own redeeming love,
For that child so dear and gentle is our Lord in heaven above;
And he leads his children on to the place where he is gone.*

*Not in that poor lowly stable, with the oxen standing by,
We shall see him; but in heaven, set at God's right hand on high;
Where like stars his children crowned all in white shall wait around.*

† Please stand, if able

PEAL OF THE TOWER BELLS

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Glory to you, almighty God, for you sent your only begotten Son that we might have new life.

All: **Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ, for you became flesh and dwelt among us that we might become your people.**

Leader: Glory to you, Holy Spirit, for you have come upon us to unite us to one another and to God as the body of Christ.

All: **Glory to you, almighty God, and to your Son, Jesus Christ, and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever!**

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT AND CHRIST CANDLES

Betty Arvin, Mark, Jack & Sam Thielman

Leader: We light this candle as a sign of the coming Light of Christ. As the Lord has promised, in days to come, the nations will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks.

All: **Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.**
(First candle is lit.)

Leader: The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid.

All: **The calf and the lion and the fatling shall lie down together, and a little child shall lead them.** *(Second candle is lit.)*

Leader: The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom.

All: **Like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing.**
(Third candle is lit.)

Leader: The Lord will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child.

All: **She shall bear a son and name him Emmanuel, which means "God with us."**
(Fourth candle is lit.)

Leader: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.

All: **Those who lived in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined.**
(Christ candle is lit.)

Leader: Let us walk in the Light of the Lord.

All: **Amen.**

†HYMN: 133 O Come, All Ye Faithful

ADESTE FIDELES

PRAYER OF ADORATION

Leader: Good and gracious God, on this holy night you gave us your Son, the Lord of the universe, wrapped in swaddling clothes, the Savior of all, lying in a manger. On this holy night draw us into the mystery of your love.

All: **Jesus Christ, holy child, glory of God revealed, by starlight we first saw your face; now by candlelight we sing your praise. Though the night is long, you are our hope. Though the path is dark, you lead the way. By your Spirit, help us to shine with the brightness of your truth and share the warmth of your great love, so that all may believe, rejoice, and give thanks, for you are the light of the world. Amen.**

LITANY FOR CHRISTMAS

Leader: The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all.

All: **Glory to God in the highest!**

Leader: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.

All: **Glory to God in the highest!**

Leader: For a child has been born to us, a Son has been given for us.

All: **Glory to God in the highest!**

Leader: He is Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

All: **Glory to God in the highest!**

Leader: To us is born in the city of David a Savior, the Messiah, the Lord.

All: **Glory to God in the highest!**

Leader: And the Word became flesh and lived among us.

All: **Glory to God in the highest!** (silence)

Leader: Christ is born. Give him glory! Christ has come down from heaven. Receive him! Christ is now on earth. Exalt him! O earth, sing to the Lord! O you nations, praise him in joy, for he has been glorified!

All: **Amen!**

THE WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

LESSON FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT

Micah 5:2–5a

Pew Bible, OT page 865

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

LESSON FROM THE NEW TESTAMENT

Titus 2: 11–14

Pew Bible, NT page 214

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

†**GOSPEL PROCESSIONAL HYMN:** 113 *Angels We Have Heard on High*

GLORIA

Stanzas 1 and 2 as the Gospel party processes. Stanza 3 as it returns to the Chancel.

†LESSON FROM THE GOSPEL

Luke 2: 1–20

Pew Bible, NT page 58

Leader: The Gospel of the Lord.

All: **Praise to you, O Christ.**

SERMON: *How God Changes the World*

The Reverend Dr. Fritz Ritsch, *Pastor*

SILENT REFLECTION

“No priest, no theologian stood at the cradle of Bethlehem. And yet all Christian theology finds its origin in the miracle of miracles, that God became human...Sacred theology originates in prayerful kneeling before the mystery of the divine child in the stable.”

– Dietrich Bonhoeffer, 1909–1945, German Theologian, Pastor, Martyr

†**HYMN:** 147 *The First Nowell*

THE FIRST NOWELL

†PROFESSION OF FAITH:

Christ Jesus, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross. Therefore, God has also highly exalted him and given him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess, to the glory of God: Jesus is Lord! Amen.

INVITATION TO DISCIPLESHIP

PRESENTATION OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS

OFFERTORY ANTHEM: *Hark! the herald angels sing* (2001)

Mack Wilberg (b. 1955)

*Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!
Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!"
Joyful, all ye nations, rise; Join the triumph of the skies;
With the angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"*

*Christ, by highest heaven adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord,
Late in time behold him come, offspring of a virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh, the Christ now see, Hail the incarnate Deity,
Pleased as man with men to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel.
Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"*

*Hail! the heaven born Prince of Peace! Hail! the Son of righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings, Risen with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by, Born that man no more may die,
Born to raise the sons of earth, Born to give them second birth.
Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"*

†DOXOLOGY 606

OLD HUNDREDTH

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

THE EUCHARIST

THE INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE

The Lord's Supper is open to all who seek to know God through Jesus Christ, regardless of religious background. Safe containers for the elements of bread and wine are located in the pew racks. There are two seals: one on the very top reveals a wafer and the one beneath it opens the grape juice. When you receive the elements, eat the wafer and drink the juice. Set the used containers in the pew racks when you are done.

GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Leader: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

Leader: Lift up your hearts.

All: We lift them to the Lord.

Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All: It is right to give God thanks and praise.

(prayer continues)

SANCTUS 565

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full, full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest, hosanna in the highest.

MEMORIAL ACCLAMATION 566

Leader: Great is the mystery of faith:

All: Christ has died, Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

PRAYER OF INTERCESSION FOR THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Traditional Version

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.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION AND THE LORD'S SUPPER

COMMUNION INSTRUCTIONS:

Following the Words of Institution, when the pastor says, "The Gifts of God for the people of God.", please partake of the communion by eating the wafer and drinking the juice.

COMMUNION MUSIC: *Lully, Lulla, Lullay* (2011)

Philip W. J. Stopford (b. 1977)

Lully, lulla, Lully, lulla, By, by, lully, lullay.

Lully, lulla, Thou little tiny Child, By, by lully, lullay.

O sisters too how may we do for to preserve this day?

This poor youngling for whom we sing, By, by, lully, lullay.

Herod, the king, in his raging, charged he hath this day.

His men of might in his own sight all young children to slay.

That woe is me, poor Child for Thee, and ever morn and day.

For Thy parting neither say nor sing, By, by lully, lullay.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING FOR COMMUNION

Leader: Bless the Lord, O my soul!

All: And all that is within me, bless God's holy name!

Leader: Bless the Lord, O my soul!

All: And forget not all God's benefits!

Empower us by your Holy Spirit, O God, to be Christ's presence in the world, even as Jesus was God with us. Give us courage to speak his truth, seek his justice, and love with his love. Keep us faithful in your service until Christ comes again in final victory and we shall feast with all your saints in the joy of your eternal realm. Through Christ, in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor are yours, almighty God, now and forever. Amen.

DEPARTING IN THE JOY OF CHRIST'S BIRTH

THE CANDLE-LIGHTING

Leader: His life is the light that shines in the darkness.

All: And the darkness can never extinguish it.

The pastor will light the candles of the ushers, who will then light the candles of the first person in each row. Please pass the light down your row and hold your candles as we sing "Silent Night."

†HYMN: 122 *Silent Night, Holy Night*

STILLE NACHT

†BENEDICTION

PEAL OF THE TOWER BELLS

POSTLUDE: *Improvisation on ANTIOCH*

Jordan Smith

The flowers are given to the Glory of God and in memory of Peter Mark Scott by Jim and Judy Cox.



Poinsettia Dedications 2021

IN HONOR

Brian Anderson
Sue and Kurt Anderson

Marilyn Jonas Bindseil
Jim and Tammy Hille

Scott G. Campbell
Karla and Bruce Campbell

Our children and grandchildren
Harriett and Sam Moore

The Communications Committee
Anonymous

Lindsay and Reid Daniel
Paige and Burl Daniel

Our grandchildren
Aspen, Hunter, Landry, Philippa, Braden and Stewart
Jane and John Hawkins

Our grandchildren
Katie, Eric, Hanna, Emma, Clair, Nick,
Allie, Maddie and Geo
Jerry and Marilyn Andress

Samantha Ruth LeMond Languell
Sharon LeMond, Del, Leslie and David

Matt Loynachan
Gretchen Denny and George Bristol

Lisa, Jack and Sam Madsen
Sue and Kurt Anderson

KayLynne and Steven Midgley
Mom and Dad

The Deacons of St. Stephen Presbyterian Church
Mary Howington

The dedicated choirs of St. Stephen
Sharon LeMond, Del, Leslie, David and Samantha

The Staff of St. Stephen Presbyterian Church
Sue and Kurt Anderson
Roger Davis
Sharon LeMond, Del, Leslie, David and Samantha

The St. Stephen Church Family and Staff
Darlene Myatt

Betty Arvin, Mark, Jack and Sam Thielman
Alison Trinkle

Jack and Sam Thielman
Betty Arvin and Mark Thielman

Mike Tyson
Gretchen Denny and George Bristol

Matthew and Kristin Villegas
Karla and Bruce Campbell

Peggy Wadley - In appreciation for her work
as Clerk of the Session
Anonymous

IN MEMORY

Richard, Natalie and Lucy Anderson
Sue and Kurt Anderson

Willard, Fem and Joan Marie Anderson
Sue and Kurt Anderson

Jack and Bernice Arvin
Betty Arvin and Mark Thielman

Craig Bender
Sharon LeMond, Del and Leslie

Harry Campbell
Lee Ann and Tony Dauphinot

Lorena Miller Campbell
Lee Ann and Tony Dauphinot

Stewart Mason Campbell
Lee Ann and Tony Dauphinot

Jack and Bernice Arvin
Ann Frizzell Carter
Janice Arvin Carter and Tad Carter

Harry and Ruth Corby
Marshall and Charlotte Ray

Sam Denny
Gretchen Denny and George Bristol

Ada Dickerson
The Andrade Family

Timothy W. East
Roger Davis

Holly Fawcett
Sharon LeMond, Del and Leslie

James Douglas Foster
James Edward Foster
Sharon Foster

Mr. and Mrs. Mathew Gaskin
Linda and Dean Johnson

Gladys and Clint Herrins
Jane and John Hawkins

Rebecca Wyche Hille
Jim and Tammy Hille

Janet Jonas Hobrecht
Jim and Tammy Hille

Edwin James Hoffa
Sharon LeMond, Del, Leslie and David

Ruth and Jimmy Hoffa
Sharon LeMond, Del, Leslie and David



IN MEMORY

Sam Hulsey
Gretchen Denny and George Bristol

Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Johnson
Linda and Dean Johnson

Donald Wade Jones
Marilyn Jones

Bob and Pat Key
Annette and Lee Mallard

Juanita and Leonard Knaffle
Faith and Jim Mallory

Mary Alice and Ralph LeMond
Sharon LeMond, Del, Leslie and David

Robert H. LeMond
Sharon LeMond, Del, Leslie and David

Gene Lowry
Kay Lowry

Jim, Eugenia, Ken and Rix Trinkle
RB and Florence Luker
Alison Trinkle

Gene and Doris Mallard
Annette and Lee Mallard

Beulah and J.T. Mallory
Faith and Jim Mallory

Kitsy Moody
Gretchen Denny and George Bristol

IN MEMORY

David Newton and Tom Newton
Harriett and Sam Moore

Our parents
Harriett and Sam Moore

Richard, Margie and Scott Pay
Sue and Kurt Anderson

Helen Sheffield Piscopo
Lee Ann and Tony Dauphinot

Mitchell Wade Poe
Lee Ann and Tony Dauphinot

Marshall and Bobby Ray
Marshall and Charlotte Ray

Barbara Rinker
The Andrade Family

Ethel Sanderson
Sharon LeMond, Del and Leslie

Judy Staser
Sharon LeMond, Del and Leslie

Clarence and Arlice Thielman
Betty Arvin and Mark Thielman

Sonny Thompson
Anne Arvin Thompson and Rick Thompson

Terry Wilson
William and Jody Wilson
Lynn Wilson

Please take your poinsettias home after the 8:00 pm Christmas Eve service,
or pick up from the office on Monday, December 27.



The Reverend Dr. Fritz Ritsch, *Pastor*
The Reverend Dr. Warner Bailey, *Parish Associate*
Jordan Smith, *Organist & Director of Music Ministries*
Beth Fultz, *Director of Christian Education*