



# CORNERSTONE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



SERVICE OF CELEBRATION AND GOSPEL RENEWAL

*Third Sunday of Advent—Glory*

*20 December 2020*

# *Pastoral Notes*

Dear Cornerstone Family,

Every Advent about this time, I pull together a few quotes from my Yuletide reading to share. This year, sadly, my seasonal reading was cut short by research for upcoming articles, conferences, and classes. Even with that, I sneaked in a bookish exploration or two, running wild in grand mystery of the incarnation. Below are a few jewels from my treasure hunts, as we draw the waiting season of Advent to a close and prepare for the festivity of Christmas.

“Maybe Christmas” he thought, “doesn’t come from a store. Maybe Christmas, perhaps, means a little bit more.”—Dr. Seuss

“Christmas says there is a cosmic scheme of things. God made us as his image to reflect his glory. We have sinned and fallen short of that glory (Romans 3:23). But the Son of God, who is the very image of God (Colossians 1:15), was sent by God, and came in love to restore his image. Through faith in him, we discover that our lives fit into the ‘cosmic scheme of things.’ He recreates in us a love for himself and restores us to fellowship with himself, which transforms self-directed love into love of our neighbors. That is the destiny for which we were created.”—Sinclair Ferguson

“Jesus, Lord, we look to thee,  
On this day of thine own Nativity;  
Show thyself the Prince of Peace;  
Bid our jarring conflicts cease.”—Charles Wesley

“In the Christian story, God descends to reascend. He comes down; down the from the heights of absolute being into time and space, down into humanity... down to the very roots and seabed of the Nature He has created. But He goes down to come up again and bring the whole ruined world with Him. One has the picture of a strong man stooping lower and lower to get himself underneath some great complicated burden. He must stoop in order to lift; he must almost disappear under the load before he incredibly straightens his back and marches off with the whole mass swaying on his shoulders.”—C.S. Lewis

“There is nothing so secular that it cannot be sacred, and that is one of the deepest messages of the incarnation.”—Madeline Engle

“We have nearly arrived at the great merry-making season of the year. On Christmas day we shall find all England enjoying themselves with all the good cheer which they can afford. Servants of God, you who have the largest share in the person of him who was born at Bethlehem, I invite you to the best of all Christmas fare—to nobler food than makes the table groan—bread from heaven, for your spirit. Behold, how rich and how abundant are the provisions which God has made for the high festival which he would have his servants keep, not now and then, but all the days of their lives.”—C.H. Spurgeon

Grace & Peace,

*Stete*

Worship is a response to the love of God that brings us out of darkness into his light. The rhythm and flow of the service reflects this present reality as God calls his people and reveals himself, forgives their sins, teaches them from his Word, the Bible, feeds them, and then sends them out to live what they have learned.

This is the pattern of his love in redeeming and saving his people.

## Prelude, Announcements, and Preparation

### GOD CALLS HIS PEOPLE AND REVEALS HIMSELF

*God calls His people to worship and come before Him. The Creator of all things reveals Himself through His Word and calls us into His presence.*

#### Lighting of the Advent Wreath—From Heaven Came the Angels Bright, Vs I

From Heav-en came the an-gels bright to shep-herds watch-ing in the night.

A new-born roy-al child, they said, lies yon-der in a man-ger bed.

Text: Martin Luther; Music: PUER NOBIS NASCITUR, Michael Praetorius, 1571-1621.

#### Call to Worship—from Psalm 96:I-9

Pastor: Oh sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the earth!

Sing to the Lord, bless his name; tell of his salvation from day to day.

All: Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous works among all the peoples!

Pastor: For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; he is to be feared above all gods.

Men : For all the gods of the peoples are worthless idols, but the Lord made the heavens.

Women: Splendor and majesty are before him; strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.

Pastor: Ascribe to the Lord, O families of the peoples,  
ascribe to the Lord glory and strength!

All: Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name;  
bring an offering, and come into his courts!

Pastor: Worship the Lord in the splendor of holiness; tremble before him, all the earth!

# Hymn of Praise—Angels We Have Heard on High

An - gels, we have heard on high, sweet - ly sing - ing o'er the plains,  
Shep - herds, why this ju - bi - lee? Why your joy - ous strains pro - long?  
Come to Beth - le - hem and see him whose birth the an - gels sing;

and the moun - tains in re - ply ech - o back their joy - ous strains.  
Say what may the tid - ings be, which in - spire your heav'n - ly song?  
come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ the Lord, the new - born King.

Glo - ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o,

glo - ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o.

Text: Traditional French Carol. Music: Traditional French Melody.

## Old Testament Reading—Isaiah 40:1-5

Comfort, comfort my people, says your God.

<sup>2</sup> Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,  
and cry to her

that her warfare is ended,

that her iniquity is pardoned,

that she has received from the LORD's hand

double for all her sins.

<sup>3</sup> A voice cries:

“In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD;

make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

<sup>4</sup> Every valley shall be lifted up,

and every mountain and hill be made low;

the uneven ground shall become level,

and the rough places a plain.

<sup>5</sup> And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,

and all flesh shall see it together,

for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.”

Elder: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

## GOD CALLS HIS PEOPLE TO CONFESSION, REPENTANCE & RECONCILIATION

*The People of God respond to His Word by confessing their sins, repenting of their sinful ways, and seeking God's favor through the reconciling work of Jesus, the Son of God.*

### Sung Response—Lamb of God



Text: John 1:29; Music: FRANKLIN AGNUS DEI, Gregory D Wilbur, 2009. ©2009 Greyfriars Press.

## Congregational Prayer of Confession

Pastor: Knowing ourselves to be sinners,  
we approach the glorious incarnation of Christ,  
his coming into the world, with awe.

All: 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 were made through him,  
and without him was not any thing made that was made.  
In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.  
The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.  
He was in the world, and the world was made through Him,  
Yet we did not know Him.  
He came to His own,  
And we did not receive Him.  
But to all who did receive him, he gave the right to become children of God,  
To those who believed in His name.  
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.  
And from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.  
For the law was given through Moses;  
grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

*(from John 1)*

## Silent Prayers of Confession

### Assurance of Pardon—based on Isaiah 7:14, 53:4-6

Pastor: Therefore the LORD himself will give you a sign.

All: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

Pastor: Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows.

He was wounded for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities;

All: upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his stripes we are healed.

Pastor: All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way;

All: and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

## Hymn of Praise—Angels from the Realms of Glory

An - gels from the realms of glo - ry, Wing your flight o'er all the earth;  
Shep - herds, in the field a - bid - ing, watch - ing o'er your flocks by night,  
Sa - ges, leave your con - tem - pla - tions, Bright - er vi - sions beam a - far;  
Saints, be - fore the al - tar bend - ing, Watch - ing long in hope and fear;

Ye who sang cre - a - tion's sto - ry Now pro - claim Mes - si - ah's birth.  
God with us is now re - sid - ing; Yon - der shines the in - fant light:  
Seek the great De - sire of na - tions; Ye have seen His na - tal star.  
Sud - den - ly the Lord, de - scend - ing, In His tem - ple shall ap - pear.

*Come and wor - ship, come and wor - ship, Wor - ship Christ, the new-born King.*

The image shows a musical score for a hymn. It consists of three systems of music. Each system has a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment line (bass clef). The key signature is one flat (Bb) and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are written below the vocal line. The first system contains the first four lines of the hymn. The second system contains the next four lines. The third system contains the final line, which is italicized.

Text: James Montgomery, 1816, 1825; Music REGENT SQUARE, Henry Smart, 1867.

## GOD TEACHES US THROUGH HIS WORD

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### The Reading of the Word—James 5:7-10

<sup>7</sup> Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about it, until it receives the early and the late rains. <sup>8</sup> You also, be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. <sup>9</sup> Do not grumble against one another, brothers, so that you may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing at the door. <sup>10</sup> As an example of suffering and patience, brothers, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. <sup>11</sup> Behold, we consider those blessed who remained steadfast. You have heard of the steadfastness of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful.

Leader: The grass withers, the flower fades;

All: But the Word of our God will stand forever.

**Sermon—Christ, Our Certain Hope, pt 4**  
*Establish Your Hearts*

—Ben Griffith, *Pastor*



## Sung Response—From Heaven Came the Angels Bright

The image shows a musical score for a sung response. It consists of two systems of music, each with a treble and bass staff. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. The lyrics are: "All praise to you, e - ter - nal Son, Whose ad - vent has— our free - dom won, Whom with the Fa - ther we a - dore, And Ho - ly Spir - it, ev - er - more." The music is written in a simple, homophonic style with block chords and moving lines.

Text: Martin Luther; Music: PUER NOBIS NASCITUR, Michael Praetorius, 1571-1621.

## Profession of Faith—from Philippians 2:5-11

We believe, that though Christ Jesus was in the form of God,  
He did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped,  
but emptied Himself, by taking the form of a servant,  
being born in the likeness of men.  
And being found in human form,  
He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death,  
even death on a cross.  
Therefore God has highly exalted Him  
and bestowed on Him the name that is above every name,  
so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,  
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,  
and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,  
to the glory of God the Father. Amen.

## Sung Response—Gloria

WOMEN

Glo-ry to God in the high - est! Peace to His peo-ple on earth.

MEN

Glo-ry to God in the high - est! Peace to His peo-ple on earth. We praise earth. Glo-ry to God in the high - est! Peace on earth. We praise You! We bless You! We a - dore You! We glo - ri - fy! We give You thanks for Your glo - ry. We give You thanks for Your glo - ry.

We give You thanks for Your glo - ry. We give You thanks.

CCLI #11121087 Text: Luke 2:14; Music: FRANKLIN GLORIA, Gregory D Wilbur, 2012 ©2012 Greyfriars Press.

## THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

*God offers to His people the gift of communion with Him through the grace of the sacrament and we respond in thanksgiving.*

## Words of Institution and the Lord's Table

### Guidelines for the Lord's Supper

*The Lord's Supper is the family meal for Christians. We invite all baptized Christians who are members of a congregation that proclaims the gospel, and who are at peace with God and with their neighbor, and who seek strength to live more faithfully for Christ to join us.*

*If you are not a Christian, or if you are not prepared to share in this meal, we encourage you to spend this time in prayer. You can find some sample prayers on the next page. We hope that this time is helpful to you as you consider your relationship with Jesus Christ and with His people, the church.*

*At Cornerstone, we come forward to receive communion. We have options for wine and grape juice. The bread and wine or juice are stacked together.*

## Hymn of Communion—All My Heart This Night Rejoices

All my heart this night re - joic - es As I hear, far and  
 Hark! a voice from yon - der man - ger, Soft and sweet, doth en -  
 Come then, let us has - ten yon - der; Here let all, great and  
 Dear - est Lord, thee will I cher - ish. Though my breath fail in

near, Sweet - est an - gel voic - es; "Christ is born," their choirs are  
 treat, "Flee from woe and dan - ger; Breth - ren, come; from all that  
 small, Kneel in awe and won - der, Love him who with love is  
 death, yet I shall not per - ish, but with thee a - bid for -

sing - ing, Till the air ev - ery - where Now with joy is ring - ing.  
 grieves you You are freed; all you need I will sure - ly give you."  
 yearn - ing; Hail the star that from far Bright with hope is burn - ing.  
 ev - er there on high, in that joy which can van - ish ne - ver.

Text: Paul Gerhardt, 1607-76, Tr by Catherine Winkworth, 1829+78; Music: BONN (FROLICH SOLL), Johann Georg Ebeling, 1637

### Prayers for Those Not Taking the Lord's Supper

If you are not able to partake in the Lord's Supper today, please use this time to meditate on one of the following prayers.

*Prayer for Those Searching for Truth.* Lord Jesus, you claim to be the way, the truth, and the life. Grant that I might be undaunted by the cost of following you as I consider the reasons for doing so. If what you claim is true, please guide me, teach me, and open me to the reality of who you are. Give me an understanding of you that is coherent, convincing, and that leads to the life you promise. *Amen*

*Prayer of Belief.* Lord Jesus Christ, I admit that I am weaker and more sinful than I ever dared admit, but through you I am more loved and accepted than I ever dared hope. I thank you for paying my debt on the cross, taking what I deserved in order to offer me complete forgiveness. Knowing that you have been raised from the dead, I turn from my sins and receive you as my Savior and Lord. *Amen*

*Prayer of Commitment.* Lord Jesus, you have called us to follow you in baptism and in a life of committed discipleship through membership in your church. Grant that I may take the necessary steps to be one with your people, and live in the fullness of your Spirit. *Amen*

# Communion Hymn—God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen



God rest you mer - ry, gen - tle - men, let noth - ing you dis - may, re -  
 From God our heav'n - ly Fa - ther, a bless - ed an - gel came; and  
 "Fear not, then," said the an - gel, "let noth - ing you af - fright; this  
 The shep - herds at those tid - ings re - joic - éd much in mind, and



mem - ber Christ our Sav - ior was born on Christ - mas day, to  
 un - to cer - tain shep - herds brought tid - ings of the same; how  
 day is born a Sav - ior of a pure vir - gin bright, to  
 left their flocks a - feed - ing, in tem - pest, storm, and wind: and



save us all from Sa - tan's pow'r when we were gone a - stray; O tid - ings of  
 that in Beth - le - hem was born the Son of God by name,  
 free all those who trust in him from Sa - tan's pow'r and might."  
 went to Beth - le - hem straight - way, the Son of God to find,



com - fort and joy, com - fort and joy, O tid - ings of com - fort and joy.



Text and Music: 18<sup>th</sup> century Traditional Carol

# GOD'S PEOPLE RESPOND IN GRATEFUL PRAISE

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## Prayer of Thanksgiving and Intercession

### *The Lord's Prayer*

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*

## Hymn of Praise—Hark! a Thrilling Voice is Sounding

The musical score is written in 4/4 time with a key signature of two sharps (D major). It consists of two systems of music, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The lyrics are printed below the vocal lines.

Hark! a thrill - ing voice is sound - ing; "Christ is nigh," it seems to say,  
Wak - ened by the so - lemn warn - ing Let the earth - bound soul a - rise;  
Lo, the Lamb, so long ex - spect - ed, Comes with par - don down from Heav'n;  
That when next He comes in glor - y, And the world is wrapp'd in fear,  
Hon - or, glor - y, might, and bless - ing Be to God: the Fa - ther, Son

"Cast a - way the works of dark - ness, O ye chil - dren of the day."  
Christ, her Sun, all ill dis - pell - ing, Shines up - on the morn - ing skies.  
Let us haste, with tears of sor - row, One and all to be for - given.  
With His mer - cy He may shield us, And with words of love draw near.  
And the ev - er - last - ing Spir - it, While e - ter - nal ag - es run.

Text: 5<sup>th</sup> century, trans. Edward Caswall, 1849; Music: MERTON (MONK), William H. Merton, 1850

# GOD SENDS HIS PEOPLE OUT TO BE LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS

*After calling His people into His presence, forgiving their sins, instructing them in His Word, and providing a foretaste of the marriage supper of the Lamb, God sends His people into the world to show His light in the darkness.*

## Benediction—from Luke I:76-79

Go before the Lord to prepare His ways. Give knowledge of salvation to His people in the forgiveness of their sins, because of the tender mercy of our God, whereby the sunrise shall visit us from on high—to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace. *Amen.*

## Sung Response—To Us a Child of Hope is Born, Vs I

The musical score is written in 4/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It consists of four systems, each with a vocal line (treble clef) and a bass line (bass clef). The lyrics are: "To us a Child of hope is born, To us a Son is giv'n, Him shall the tribes of earth o - bey, Him all the hosts of Heav'n. His Name shall be the Prince of Peace, For - ev - er - more a - dored, The Won - der - ful, the Coun - se - lor, The great and might - y Lord."

Text: John Morrison, 1781; Music: KINGSFOLD, English Folk Tune.

*Welcome to Cornerstone! We're glad you're visiting with us today and would love the opportunity to welcome you personally. We invite you to fill out our visitor card by following this link.*  
<https://cornerstonepresbyterianchurch.ccbchurch.com/goto/forms/40/responses/new>



# Focus on Church Ministry

## Children's Ministry

The Children's Ministry is in need of a PreK teacher beginning in January, 2021. We also need folks who are willing to step into classrooms and sub when regular teachers and assistants have to miss. If you would like to be a part of the important work the Children's Ministry is doing in laying a foundation for our covenant children, go to the app or website to fill out an interest form, or contact Meredith Suits. [elementary@cstonepres.org](mailto:elementary@cstonepres.org)

## Women's Ministry

Come study the Psalms with other Cornerstone ladies beginning in January. There are three day and time options on both ends of the county. Sign up on the website or app. Contact Martha or Julie for more info or if you have questions. [women@cstonepres.org](mailto:women@cstonepres.org)

## On the Bookshelf

Consider picking up one (or both!) of these new books to prepare your heart as we celebrate the Advent season. The Bookshelf is at the top of the stairs outside the church office. Payment is on your honor, on the top shelf.

*The Christmas We Didn't Expect*, David Mathis (\$8)

*Repeat the Sounding Joy*, Christopher Ash (\$9)

## Advent Devotionals

Advent devotionals are available at both chapel entrances. These provide readings for each day until January 6. Pick one up at either chapel entrance.

## Year End Giving

Any gift for tax credit in the year 2020 should be postmarked by December 31. Questions? Contact Susan Bumpus in the church office.

615-618-4707 or [susan@cstonepres.org](mailto:susan@cstonepres.org)

## Giving

There are boxes for tithes and alms at both entrances to the chapel, or you can give safely and securely online through the website or app.

## Exploring Cornerstone Class

If you're interested in learning more about Cornerstone or uniting in membership, please join Pastor Nate for the next Exploring Cornerstone Class in early 2021. In this class, you will learn about the history, beliefs, vision, and ministries of Cornerstone as well as meet key ministry leaders. The class dates and details will be determined in relationship with registrants. If you have any interest in being a part of this class, please email Susan Bumpus today. [susan@cstonepres.org](mailto:susan@cstonepres.org)

## Cornerstone Youth – One-Day-Getaway!

We will be kicking off the Spring semester Saturday, January 16, at Deer Run Camp with a day of worship, teaching, eating and games. Cost is \$20, and scholarships are available. Register and find more info on the website or app. Questions? Contact Taylor Thompson: [youth@cstonepres.org](mailto:youth@cstonepres.org)



1. Take a few moments to reflect on what you are waiting on during this particular season of life. How has the Lord been working on your patience lately?
2. What do you find most difficult about life "in the gap"?
3. Identify a particular difficult circumstance in your life. How does it bring fresh courage and patience to remember that "there is more here than meets the eye"?
4. Why is the thought of Jesus returning as a "judge" comforting, and not terrifying, for the Christian?
5. How does reflecting on God's heart (his compassion and mercy) establish your heart?
6. What are some other key take-aways from today's message?

## CORNERSTONE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

### Presbyterian Church in America

**Pastor:** Nate Shurden (615-618-4707 Office) or [nate@cstonepres.org](mailto:nate@cstonepres.org)

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**Men's Ministry:** Ron Moffat or [men@cstonepres.org](mailto:men@cstonepres.org)

**Acting Youth Director:** Taylor Thompson (717-371-0848) or [youth@cstonepres.org](mailto:youth@cstonepres.org)

**Children's Director:** Meredith Suits (865-250-3579) or [elementary@cstonepres.org](mailto:elementary@cstonepres.org)

**Nursery Coordinator:** Christy Shurden or [nursery@cstonepres.org](mailto:nursery@cstonepres.org)

**Prayer Requests:** [prayer@cstonepres.org](mailto:prayer@cstonepres.org)

#### Ruling Elders

Randy Allen (615-260-1884)

Terry Cheney (615-579-7089)

Chuck Emerson: *Emeritus* (615-943-8443)

Joe Haworth (615-289-7543)

Will Kesler (423-313-7493)

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#### Deacons

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Matt Faulk (714-801-7596)

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Kevin McClung (615-243-9228)

Mike Payne (615-579-6453)

Wes Pittman (615-393-0365)

Brent Roberts (615-394-0662)

\*Jim Robinson (615-587-0442)

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\*On Sabbatical

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*All Scripture quotations from the English Standard Version*

