

Christmas Day Worship

December 25, 2022



*First Congregational Church of Fresno
United Church of Christ*

*Rev. Dr. Norman Broadbent
Preaching*

Christmas Day

December 25, 2022

Our Gathering

Prelude

Scott Horton, Piano

Welcome and Centering

Rev. Dr. Norman Broadbent

Call to Worship (*Standing and responsively*)

Wade Hobson

Eternal God, in the still of the night just passed God sent God's almighty Word to pierce the world's darkness with the light of salvation.

Give to us and this earth the peace for which we long, and fill our hearts with the joy of heaven.

May this light, embodied in our worship today, shine forth in our lives;

through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns in the unity of the Holy Spirit; one God, now and forever. Amen.

Hymn

"Once In Royal David's City"

#145, pew hymnal

Christmas Day Responsive Collect (Adapted from Maya Angelou)

Wade Hobson

O God, you have created this holy day to dawn with a brightness of the True Light.

Into today's climate of fear and apprehension, Christmas enters, streaming lights of joy, ringing bells of hope and singing carols of forgiveness high up in the bright air.

The world is encouraged to come away from rancor, come the way of friendship.

It is the Glad Season. Hope is born again in the faces of children. It rides on the shoulders of our aged as they walk into their sunsets.

We, Angels and Mortal's, Believers and Non-Believers, look heavenward and speak the word aloud. And we say without shyness or apology or hesitation: Peace. We look at our world and speak the word aloud.

Peace. We look at each other, then into ourselves and we say without shyness or apology or hesitation: Peace, My Brother. Peace, My Sister. Peace, My Soul.

Offertory

"The Holly and the Ivy" - arr. P. Rodriguez

Scott Horton
organ

***Doxology and Dedication**

***We give You but Your own, whate'er the gift may be;
All that we have is Yours alone, we give it gratefully. Amen.***

Invitation to Prayer and Pastoral Christmas Day Prayer

***Lord, listen to your children praying; Lord, send your Spirit in this place.
Lord, listen to your children praying: send us love, send us power, send us grace.***

Lord's Prayer (using debts/debtors)

Announcements and Closing Thoughts

***Hymn**

"Angels From the Realm of Glory"

126 pew hymnal

***Responsive Words of Parting**

Holy One, now let your servants go in peace;

Your word has been fulfilled.

Our own eyes have seen the salvation which You have prepared in the presence of all people,

a light to reveal You to the nations, and the glory of Your people everywhere.

Peace be upon you and upon your household.

***Blessing Hymn**

"Go Now in Peace"

Go now in peace, never be afraid;

God will go with you each hour of ev'ry day.

Go now in faith- steadfast, strong, and true; know

God will guide you in all you o.

Go now in love and show you believe;

reach out to others so all the world can see

God will be there, watching from above.

Go now in peace, in faith, and in love. Amen. Amen. Amen.

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1989.

Postlude

"Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas" - arr. Kocur

Scott Horton
piano

It is our practice to be seated through the Postlude -

This Week at Big Red

Monday December 26

- ◆ 5:00pm: Yoga - Room 1
- ◆ **Office will be closed**

Tuesday, December 27

◆

Wednesday December 28

- ◆ 8:00am: Bible Study - Zoom
- ◆ 5:00pm: Yoga - Room 1

Thursday December 29

◆

Friday December 30

- ◆ 5:00pm: Yoga - Room 1

Saturday December 31

Sunday January 1

- ◆ 10:00am: Worship - Sanctuary
- ◆ 11:00am: Coffee Hour - Fellowship Hall

There will be no Roots and Branches meeting on New Year's Day

First Congregational Church of Fresno

2131 N. Van Ness Blvd., Fresno, CA 93704 | (559) 227-8489

Guest Preacher

Rev. Dr. Norman Broadbent

Music Director/Organist

Scott Horton

Caretaker/ Event Coordinator

Pat Morales

Accountant

Penny Leas Peterson

Office Administrator

Kymberly Lindsey

Office@bigredchurch.org

Custodian

Gregory Chavarria

Technicians

Karisa Garza

Brad Jenkins

Assisting in Today's Service

Organist: Scott Horton

Liturgist: Wade Hobson

Ushers: Bruce Owdom, Bob McParland, Sue Karibian

Technician: Karisa Garza

Coffee Hour: Kymberly Lindsey

FCCF Open and Affirming Statement

We believe that all people are sacred creations of a loving God. We affirm the diversity that exists among us. We strive to answer the call of Christ by extending his love, compassion and acceptance to everyone. In this spirit, we open our family of faith to people of every religious background, sexual orientation, family composition, physical and mental ability, race, age and gender.

As Christians, we experience God's reconciling love. In response we stand with those who suffer discrimination, isolation and alienation.

We welcome all people to participate fully in our church's life and ministry. We celebrate the variety of talents and perspectives which flow into our spiritual community, continuing to enrich us in ways we could not have predicted or envisioned.

Once in Royal David's City

145

Cecil F. Alexander, 1848; alt.

Luke 1:26-35; 2:1-7; 1 Thess. 4:13-18



1 Once in roy - al Da - vid's ci - ty stood a low - ly cat - tle shed,
2 Je - sus came to earth from heav - en, who is God and Head of all,
3 And through all this won - drous child - hood Je - sus hon - ored and o - beyed,
4 Je - sus is our child - hood's pat - tern, dai - ly like us lived and grew,
5 We at last shall meet our Sav - ior, fount of God's re - deem - ing grace,



Where a moth - er laid her ba - by in a man - ger for a bed:
Shel - tered in a rus - tic sta - ble, cra - dled in a com - mon stall;
Loved and watched the ten - der moth - er whose strong arms a cra - dle made.
Je - sus, lit - tle, weak, and help - less, tears and smiles and com - fort knew.
For that Child so dear and gen - tle reigns with - in a glo - rious place;



Mar - y was that moth - er mild, Je - sus Christ her lit - tle child.
With the poor and meek and low - ly lived on earth our Sav - ior ho - ly.
So, like Je - sus, we should be serv - ing God o - be - dient - ly.
Je - sus felt the pain of sad - ness, and the joy - ous lift of glad - ness.
Lead - ing all God's chil - dren on to the heaven where saints have gone.

Cecil Frances Alexander, wife of the bishop of Ireland, wrote a series of children's hymns commenting on the Apostles' Creed. This hymn, elaborating on the words "... born of the Virgin Mary," tells the whole life of Christ.

Tune: IRBY 8.7.8.7.7.7.
Henry J. Gauntlett, 1849
Harm. A. H. Mann, 1919

On Christmas Night All Christians Sing

143

Traditional English carol

Luke 2:8-14; John 1:1-5, 14; Acts 13:38-39

1 On Christ-mas night all Chris - tians sing, to hear the news the
2 Then why should we on earth be sad, since our Re - deem - er
3 From out of mys - tery came the Light, which made the an - gels

an - gels bring; On Christ - mas night all Chris - tians sing, to
made us glad; Then why should we on earth be sad, since
sing this night; From out of mys - tery came the Light, which

hear the news the an - gels bring— News of great
our Re - deem - er made us glad, When from our
made the an - gels sing this night: "Glo - ry to

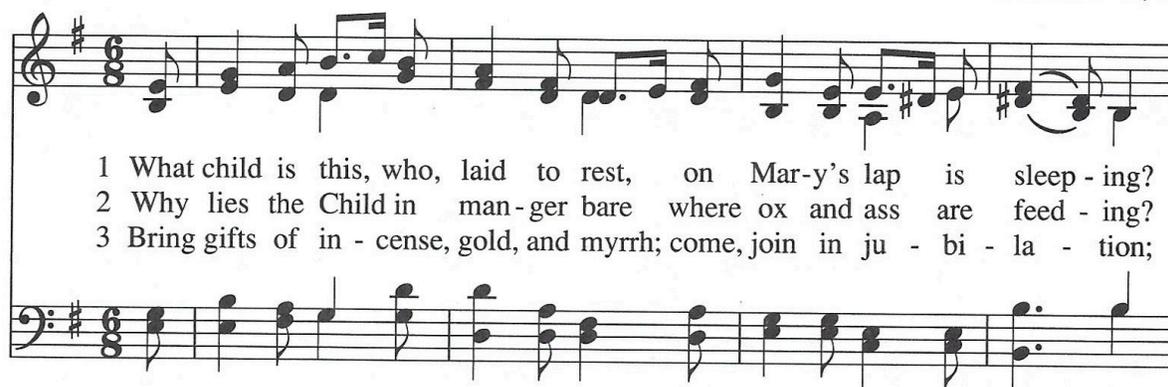
joy, news of great mirth, news of our gra-cious Rul-er's birth.
sin Christ set us free, all for to gain our lib - er - ty.
God and peace to all, for - ev - er - more, Al - le - lu - ia!"

The Puritan era in England sent the medieval carols underground. Many were not rediscovered until the early twentieth century when Ralph Vaughan Williams, Cecil Sharp, and others began collecting them. This tune is one found by Vaughan Williams in Sussex.

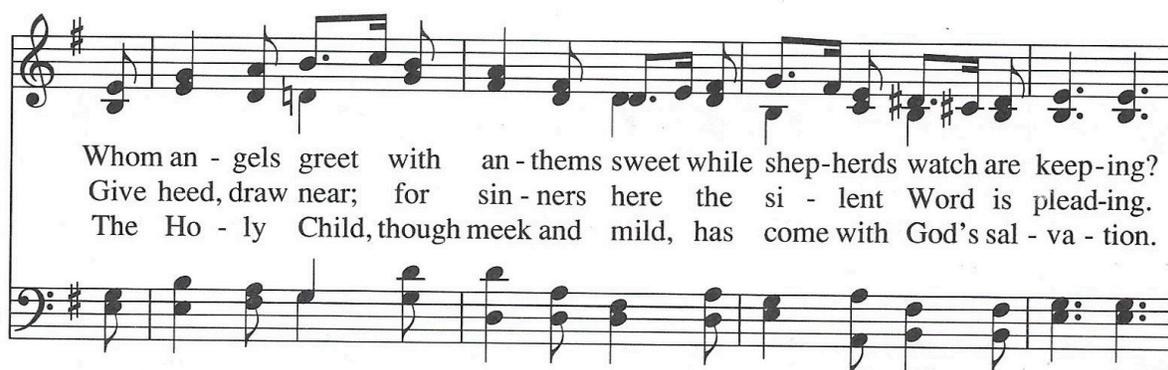
Tune: SUSSEX CAROL 8.8.8.8.8.8.
English traditional melody
Harm. Jonathan McNair, 1993

What Child Is This

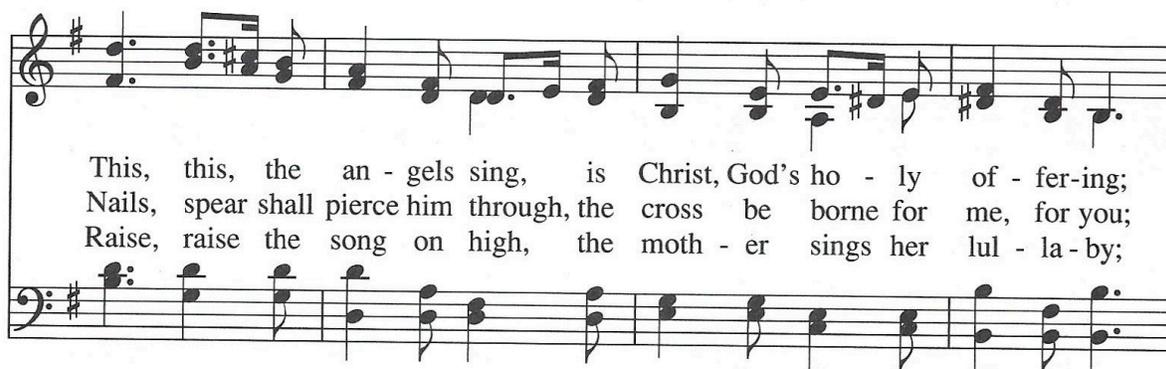
148

*William C. Dix, 1865; alt.**Luke 2:7-14, 25-32; Matt. 2:11; John 1:14;
John 19:16b-18, 34*


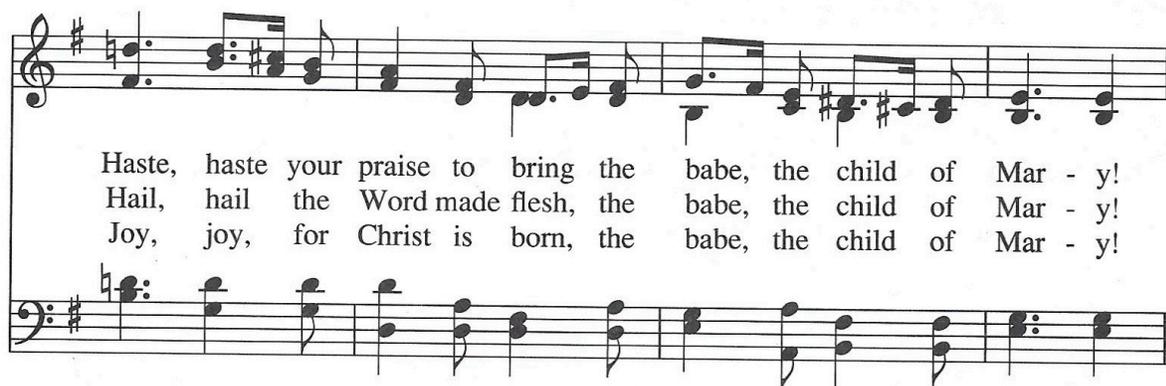
1 What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mar-y's lap is sleep - ing?
2 Why lies the Child in man - ger bare where ox and ass are feed - ing?
3 Bring gifts of in - cense, gold, and myrrh; come, join in ju - bi - la - tion;



Whom an - gels greet with an - thems sweet while shep - herds watch are keep - ing?
Give heed, draw near; for sin - ners here the si - lent Word is plead - ing.
The Ho - ly Child, though meek and mild, has come with God's sal - va - tion.



This, this, the an - gels sing, is Christ, God's ho - ly of - fer - ing;
Nails, spear shall pierce him through, the cross be borne for me, for you;
Raise, raise the song on high, the moth - er sings her lul - la - by;



Haste, haste your praise to bring the babe, the child of Mar - y!
Hail, hail the Word made flesh, the babe, the child of Mar - y!
Joy, joy, for Christ is born, the babe, the child of Mar - y!

William Chatterton Dix, manager of an English marine insurance company, wrote a number of fine hymns. This one is always sung to the tune Greensleeves, which first appeared in England in 1580 and is mentioned in one of Shakespeare's plays.

Tune: GREENSLEEVES 8.7.8.7.6.8.6.7. with refrain
English traditional melody, 16th century

Good Christian Friends, Rejoice

German and Latin, 14th century
 Transl. John Mason Neale, 1855; alt.

Descant

3 Good Chris - tian friends, re-joyce with heart and soul and voice;

1 Good Chris-tian friends, re - joyce with heart and soul and voice;
 2 Good Chris-tian friends, re - joyce with heart and soul and voice;
 3 Good Chris-tian friends, re - joyce with heart and soul and voice;

now you need not fear the grave: Je - sus Christ was born to save!

now give heed to what we say: Je - sus Christ is born to-day;
 now you know of end - less bliss: Je - sus Christ was born for this!
 now you need not fear the grave: Je - sus Christ was born to save!

Calls you one and calls you all to gain the ev - er -

Ox and ass be - fore him bow, a - sleep with - in the
 God has o - pened heav - en's door, and you are blessed for -
 Calls you one and calls you all to gain the ev - er -

man-ger now. Christ is born to - day, Christ is born to - day!
 ev - er-more. Christ was born for this, Christ was born for this!
 last-ing hall. Christ was born to save, Christ was born to save!

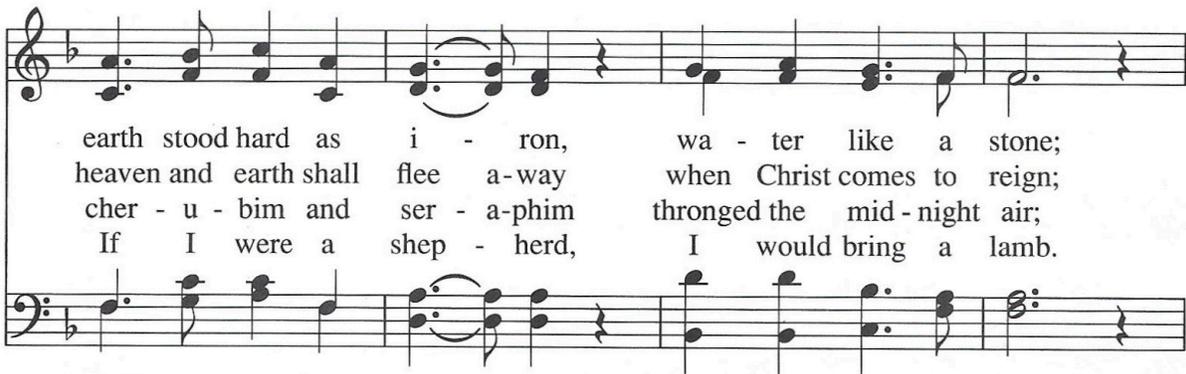
In the Bleak Midwinter

128

Christina G. Rosseti, 1872; alt.



1 In the bleak mid - win - ter, frost - y wind made moan,
2 Our God tran-scends all heav - en, earth, and its do - main;
3 An - gels and arch - an - gels may have gath-ered there,
4 What can I of - fer, poor as I am?



earth stood hard as i - ron, wa - ter like a stone;
heaven and earth shall flee a-way when Christ comes to reign;
cher - u - bim and ser - a-phim thronged the mid - night 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 - win - ter a sta - ble place suf - ficed the
But his moth - er on - ly, in her maid - en bliss,
If I were a wise one, I would do my part; but



in the bleak mid - win - ter, long a - go.
sov - ereign God al - might - y, Je - sus Christ.
wor - shiped the be - lov - ed with a kiss.
what can I of - fer: all my heart.

Christina Rossetti has portrayed the Christmas story, not in warm Bethlehem, but in the winter of her native England. Rossetti was an accomplished writer of poetry and prose, noted for her deep spirituality.

Tune: CRANHAM Irr.
Gustav Holst, 1906

Joy to the World!

132

Isaac Watts, 1719; alt.

Ps. 98:4-9; Luke 2:11-15

1 Joy to the world! the Lord is come: let earth its
2 Joy to the earth! the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their
3 Christ rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the

prais - es bring; Let ev - ery heart pre - pare Christ room,
songs em - ploy; While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
na - tions prove The glo - ries of God's righ - teous - ness

and heaven and na - ture sing, and heaven and na - ture
re - peat the sound - ing joy, re - peat the sound - ing
and won - ders of God's love, and won - ders of God's

and heaven and na - ture sing, and
re - peat the sound - ing joy, re -
and won - ders of God's love, and

sing, and heaven, and heaven and na - ture sing.
joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
love, and won - ders, won - ders of God's love.

heaven and na - ture sing,
peat the sound - ing joy,
won - ders of God's love,

Stanza 1 may be sung, "Joy to the world! the Sovereign comes: . . ."

Isaac Watts, an English Congregationalist, freely paraphrased Old Testament psalms to glorify Christ and here develops a hymn of advent and nativity from a psalm.

Tune: ANTIOCH C.M.
Lowell Mason, 1836

Angels, from the Realms of Glory

126

James Montgomery, 1816; alt.

Luke 2:8-20; Matt. 2:1-2, 9-11

1 An - gels, from the realms of glo - ry, wing your flight o'er all the earth;
2 Shep-herds, in the fields a - bid - ing, watch-ing o'er your flocks by night,
3 Sag - es, leave your con - tem-pla-tions, bright-er vi - sions beam a - far;
4 Saints, be - fore the al - tar bend-ing, watch-ing long in hope and fear,

As you 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, guid - ed by Christ's na - tal star:
Sud - den - ly, your prayers at - tend-ing, Christ be - side you shall ap - pear.

Refrain

Come and wor-ship, come and wor-ship, wor-ship Christ, give thanks and sing.

James Montgomery, English journalist, raised a strong voice against injustice in his newspaper *Sheffield Iris*, in which this hymn was first printed on December 24, 1816. The tune is named for Regent Square Church in London, today a congregation of the United Reformed Church in England and Wales.

Tune: REGENT SQUARE 8.7.8.7.8.7.
Henry T. Smart, 1867