

HIGHLAND BAPTIST CHURCH  
THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT  
DECEMBER 13, 2020 ■ 10:00 A.M.

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Invitation to Worship

Lauren Jones Mayfield

Chiming of the Hour

Lighting of the Advent Candle: Joy

Rosalind Heinz

Song of Prophecy

text, Diane Brewer  
music, Mary Louise Bringle

*Joy Lives in a Weary World*



Joy lives in a wear - y world when we have ears to hear the cho - rus of the years.



Joy lives in a wear - y world: the prom - ised song of won - der comes.

The Prophecy

Isaiah 35:1-10

Lauren Jones Mayfield

Prayer of Expectancy and The Exchange of Peace

Diane Brewer

*May the JOY of Christ be with you.*

***ANGEL and STAR***

Texts by Thomas Troeger

Music by Austin Echols

Presented by Highland's Sanctuary Choir Ensemble and Treble Ensemble

Linda Campbell, Soprano

Stephanie Hall, Mitchell Rollins, and Jonathan Shippey, Instrumentalists

Mary Alice Birdwhistell, Reader

Carol

*Angel and Star*

Angel and star, music and light: gifts for the child born on the night.  
Sing with the choir, greeting the birth. Deepen their song, live it on earth.  
Shine with the star, send out its ray. In the deep dark brighten the way.  
Sing with the choir, gladden the night. Shine with the star, point to the light.

Holy Scripture – Luke 1:26-38

Prayers of the People

God of Gabriel, of birth and life, hear our prayer:

**Like Mary, make us bold to question angels.**

**Like Mary, help us pray: Your word be done.**

**Like Mary, stir our hearts to ponder what you do.**

**Like Mary, prepare us for the birth of Christ. Amen.**

Holy Scripture – Matthew 1:18-25

Carol

KINGSFOLD

*The Hands That First Held Mary's Child*

The hands that first held Mary's Child were hard from working wood,  
from boards they sawed and planed and filed and splinters they withstood.  
This day they gripped no tool of steel, they drove no iron nail,  
but cradled from the head to heel our Lord, newborn and frail.

When Joseph marveled at the size of that small breathing frame,  
and gazed upon those bright new eyes and spoke the infant's name,  
the angel's words he once had dreamed poured down from heaven's height,  
and like the host of stars that beamed blessed earth with welcome light.

"This child shall be Emmanuel, not God upon the throne,  
but God with us, Emmanuel, as close as blood and bone."  
The tiny form in Joseph's palms confirmed what he had heard,  
and from his heart rose hymns and psalms for heaven's human word.

The tools that Joseph laid aside a mob would later lift and use  
with anger, fear, and pride to crucify God's gift.  
Let us, O Lord, not only hold the child who's born today,  
but charged with faith may we be bold to follow in his way.

Holy Scripture – Luke 2:1-7

Carol

*When Mary's Baby Cried*

When Mary's baby cried the donkeys, cows and sheep  
moved from the manger to provide a bed where he could sleep.  
They brayed and mooed and bleat. It was their lullaby:  
a creatures' chorus sung to greet a newborn creature's cry.

Inside the inn the guests had fallen sound asleep.  
They never woke to hear Christ blest by donkeys, cows and sheep.  
They dreamed sweet dreams but missed the mother bowing down  
above the infant face she kissed that stalks of straw had crowned.

O Christ, we will not sleep when you are born anew,  
but like the donkeys, cows and sheep, awake to welcome you.  
We'll bring you food and light, and sing a lullaby,  
and keeping watch throughout the night we'll answer when you cry.

Holy Scripture – Luke 2:8-15

Carol

*Disturbed by Light*

Disturbed by light, while fighting sleep, their eyes half closed, half watching sheep,  
the shepherds might have turned away and rested till the break of day:

Why risk the night, the winds that blow? Why risk the way we do not know?

Disturbed by light that marked the sky where dark alone once met the eye,  
the magi might have paused to test the wisdom of their star-born quest.

Why risk the night the winds that blow? Why risk the way we do not know?

Disturbed by light that draws us past the world we grip so hard and fast,  
we might delay our starting out until we answer every doubt –  
except our hearts refuse to slow and every beat insists we go.

Holy Scripture – Luke 2:16-20

Carol

If you would hear the angels sing count every star at night  
until your heart starts wondering who seeds the dark with light.

For wonder is the note that sounds when angels visit earth,  
and wonder is the note that crowns their music at Christ's birth.

Such wonder redirects our sight from all the stars above  
to find that heaven's brightest light shines here on earth as love.

Reflection

Mary Alice Birdwhistell

Holy Scripture – Matthew 2:1-12

Carol

One Gift the magi bore worth more than all the rest:  
the grace to kneel and bow before the child whom starlight blest.  
Their myrrh and frankincense lay sweet upon the air,  
but sweeter yet and more intense the magi's humble prayer.  
And though their gift of gold shone brightly with the skies  
still heaven's light was twice as bold in their adoring eyes.  
*Star of wonder, star of night, Star with royal beauty bright,  
Westward leading, still proceeding, Guide us to thy perfect light.*  
One Gift the magi bore worth more than all the rest:  
we give that gift when we adore the child whom starlight blest.

*One Gift the Magi Bore*

Holy Scripture – Ephesians 3:16-17

Carol

Clear out the cluttered heart, lest like the crowded inn,  
there is no room, no way to part a path to let Christ in.  
Then use the opened space for faith, for hope, for prayer,  
for nurturing a life of grace toward strangers needing care.  
An unexpected guest, arriving late at night,  
whom you provide with food and rest, will fill your heart with light.  
And with that light comes more, a gift that can't be priced:  
the joy of learning through your door you welcomed in the Christ.

*Clear Out the Cluttered Heart*

Benediction

Mary Alice Birdwhistell

*O Come, All Ye Faithful*

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,  
 O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem!  
 Come and behold him born the King of angels:

O come, let us adore him,  
 O come, let us adore him,  
 O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

True God of true God, Light from Light eternal,  
 lo, he shuns not the virgin's womb;  
 Son of the Father, begotten, not created;

O come, let us adore him,  
 O come, let us adore him,  
 O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.  
 Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation!  
 O sing, all ye citizens of heaven above:  
 "Glory to God, all glory in the highest";

O come, let us adore him,  
 O come, let us adore him,  
 O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning,  
 Jesus, to thee be all glory given;  
 Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing;

O come, let us adore him,  
 O come, let us adore him,  
 O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

**Today in Worship**

We appreciate the musical gifts and leadership from a Sanctuary Choir Ensemble: Linda Campbell, Cameron Carnes, Nick Claussen, Mary Dwyer, Lisa Holm, Ben Horman, Hannelore Mehler, and Kyle King, guest singer. Today's Treble Voices are Livia Mayfield and Taft Mayfield.

We are grateful for the collaboration of Diane Brewer from Highland's Worship Ministry Group with Rev. Lauren Jones Mayfield in planning the prayers for today's service. Rosalind Heinz lit the Advent candles in today's service. She joined Highland in 2012 and serves on the Anti-Racism Ministry Team, is a volunteer in the office and a greeter on Sunday mornings. Please express your gratitude for the original artwork created for our Advent bulletins by Allison Keenan, Highland member and Art Specialist with Shelby County Schools.

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