



POPLAR SPRINGS BAPTIST CHURCH
est. 1794

The Lord's Day, December 18th, 2022
The Fourth Sunday of Advent

Rev. Danny Settle, Interim Pastor
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CALL TO WORSHIP

THE STRIKING OF THE HOUR

MEDITATION AND PREPARATION

Prelude

CALL TO WORSHIP

Psalm 100

"Make a joyful shout to the Lord, all you lands! Serve the Lord with gladness; Come before His presence with singing.

Know that the Lord, He is God; It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves; We are His people and the sheep of His pasture. Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, And into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him, and bless His name.

For the Lord is good; His mercy is everlasting, And His truth endures to all generations"

Minister: Lift up your hearts unto the Lord!

Congregation: **We lift them up!**

HYMN

Angels We Have Heard on High
Celebration Hymnal #278

CONFESSION OF SIN

THE LAW OF GOD

2 Timothy 3:1-5

"But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!"

Private Confession

Corporate Confession

Minister: We make this, our corporate confession, unto God:

***All:* Remember not, Lord, our offences, nor the offences of our forefathers; neither take thou vengeance of our sins: Spare us, good Lord, spare thy people, whom thou hast redeemed with thy most precious blood, and be not angry with us forever. Spare us, good Lord.**

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Isaiah 53:4-6

"Surely, He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. But

He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all."

Minister: Your sins are forgiven through Christ.

Congregation: **Thanks be to God!**

DOXOLOGY

Doxology
Celebration Hymnal #815

CONSECRATION

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE READING

Minister: The Word of the Lord.

Isaiah 40:1-11

Luke 2:8-14

John 10:22-30

Minister: May God bless the reading of His Word.

Congregation: **Amen.**

LIGHTING OF THE SHEPHERD'S CANDLE

PASTORAL PRAYER

Minister: We make these petitions, ending with the prayer our Lord taught us to pray:

All: **"Our Father in heaven,
Hallowed be Your name.
Your kingdom come,
Your 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 do not lead us into temptation,
But deliver us from the evil one.
For Yours is the kingdom and the
power and the glory forever.
Amen."** (Matthew 6:9-13)

HYMN

The First Noel
Celebration Hymnal #265

SERMON

Where Have You Laid Christ?
Luke 2:1-7

HYMN

Savior, like a Shepherd Lead Us
Celebration Hymnal #688

COMMISSIONING

BENEDICTION

Minister: "Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen." (Hebrews 13:20-21)

Congregation: **Amen.**

Postlude

In the foyer, a plate is designated for tithes and offerings.

Darkness and Hell at Christmastime

By Peter Jones

For some reason Christmas has become too angelic, all lights, Santa, glitter, and shining cherubs on gaudy Christmas cards. There is a sliver of truth to this, of course. When Christ came as a child the true light shineth. When Christ came, he did bring gifts. But Christmas is also (maybe even mostly) about demons and Hell and darkness. It is about the darkness of eternal fire. It is about the worm that does not die. It is about the terrors of death. It is about the dragons that live in our own hearts. There is nothing wrong with rejoicing in the light, but if we forget the darkness the light loses its potency. It is easy at Christmas time to take the light for granted, to forget what Christ actually came to do. Christmas songs can be a great remedy for this memory lapse.

It may come as a surprise that many of the Advent and Christmas songs we sing mention this darkness and hell. I thought I would quote a few lines from these songs to give some perspective on what exactly Christ came to do.

O Come, O Come Emmanuel is one of the best carols to show who we were before Christ came. It views God's people as in exile and bondage to Satan and in need of rescue. Verses 3 and 4 clearly bring this out.

O come, Thou Rod of Jesse, free
Thine own from Satan's tyranny
From depths of Hell Thy people save
And give them victory o'er the grave

O come, Thou Day-Spring, come and cheer
Our spirits by Thine advent here
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night
And death's dark shadows put to flight.

Anytime you are tempted to believe that Christmas has nothing to do with evil, Hell, death, and Satan sing this song.

The fourth verse of the song Savior of the Nations, Come has these lines in it:

From the Father forth he came and returneth to the same
Captive leading death and hell, High the song of triumph swell.

The final verse of Good Christian Men Rejoice, says, "now ye need not fear the grave."

Of course, Joy to the World, talks about Christ coming to make his blessings flow "far as the curse is found."

Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence, says that Christ descends 'from the realms of endless day, that the powers of hell may vanish."

Lo, How a Rose E're Blooming, states that Christ "dispels with glorious splendor/the darkness everywhere."

Of the Father's Love Begotten says in verse 3:

He is found in human fashion death and sorrow here to know
That the race of Adam's children doomed by law to endless woe
May not henceforth die and perish In the
dreadful gulf below evermore and evermore.

I am sure there are some I have missed. In addition to these references to Hell and darkness, numerous Christmas songs speak specifically of Christ's victory over sin, which means his victory over death and Hell.

And of course, the Scriptures speak to this as well. In Matthew Jesus' birth is not follow by peace on earth, but by Herod killing the children and Joseph fleeing with his family to Egypt. The battle begins at the Incarnation. Herod knew this. Unfortunately, we often do not.

In Luke the power of Christ's birth is sung about. Mary states that when God sent Christ he:

Showed strength with his arm
Scattered the proud
Put down the mighty
Filled the hungry
But sent the rich away empty

Christ's entrance into the world was not warm and fuzzy. He came to crush the serpent and all those who align themselves with him.

Zacharias says that Christ came so:

We should be saved from our enemies
and from the hand of all who hate us.
That we will be delivered from the hand of our enemies.

Christmas is about a King who came to banish all the powers of darkness and Hell, not just a baby born in a manger. When the angel came to Mary and the angels sung to the shepherds the end of our enemies was already at hand. Christ came to destroy all our enemies. Don't let Old Saint Nick and fat baby faced angels and "Santa Baby" cause you to forget about darkness, Hell, Satan, Herod, death, and sin during this Christmas. To forget these things is to forget why Christ came.

SERVICES

THE LORD'S DAY

Morning Worship 10:00 AM

NO EVENING SERVICE

WEDNESDAY

BIBLE STUDY 7:00 PM

LEADERSHIP

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