



**POPLAR SPRINGS BAPTIST CHURCH**  
est. 1794

**The Lord's Day, December 25th, 2022**  
**The First Sunday of Christmas**

**Rev. Danny Settle, Interim Pastor**  
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## CALL TO WORSHIP

*THE STRIKING OF THE HOUR*

*MEDITATION AND PREPARATION*

Prelude

*CALL TO WORSHIP*

Isaiah 61:10-11

"I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; For He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks *himself* with ornaments, and as a bride adorns *herself* with her jewels. For as the earth brings forth its bud, as the garden causes the things that are sown in it to spring forth, so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations.

*Minister:* Lift up your hearts unto the Lord!

*Congregation:* **We lift them up!**

*HYMN*

Joy to the World  
Celebration Hymnal #270

## CONFESSION OF SIN

*THE LAW OF GOD*

Galatians 5:19-21

"Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told *you* in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

*Private Confession*

*Corporate Confession*

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

**All: Almighty God, who does freely pardon all who repent and turn to Him, now fulfill in every contrite heart the promise of redeeming grace; forgiving all our sins, and cleansing us from an evil conscience; through the perfect sacrifice of Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen (The Book of Common Worship, 1946)**

*ASSURANCE OF PARDON*

Matthew 1:20-21

"But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of

David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins.”

*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 9:2-7*

*John 1:1-18*

*Galatians 4:1-7*

*Minister:* May God bless the reading of His Word.

*Congregation:* **Amen.**

*LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST 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*

Good Christian Men, Rejoice  
Celebration Hymnal #273

*SERMON*

A Triple A Lord’s Supper  
I Corinthians 11:17-32

*HYMN*

Infant Holy, Infant Lowly  
Celebration Hymnal #279

**COMMUNION**

*HYMN*

Blest Be the Tie that Binds  
Celebration Hymnal #426

**COMMISSIONING**

*BENEDICTION*

*Minister:* "As we leave this place, remember this:  
Nothing that we encounter in this world can ever separate us from the love of Jesus Christ: neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. So go from here with joy to love and serve the Lord. Amen."

*Congregation:* **Amen.**

Postlude

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

**The Death of My Son and the Birth of My Savior**

By Tim Challies

I expect it's going to prove a difficult holiday in the Challies home. Christmas is usually our favorite day of the year—one of the few holidays for which we've developed distinct family traditions. We get up early so the kids can sort through the trinkets in their stockings; then we pause for a breakfast of bacon, eggs, and croissants; then we open gifts; then we relax for a while before beginning to prepare a feast. We've developed this tradition over 22 years of marriage and nearly 21 years of parenting. We look forward to it every time it rolls around. But this year, of course, one of us will be missing. There will be 2 stockings by the fire, not 3; there will be 4 places at the table, not 5.

Since my son died, I've been told to expect that some of the hardest times will be the "firsts"—the first time back at church, the first March 5 (his birthday), the first May 8 (the day he was to be married), and yes, the first Christmas. That day is bound to be marked by both joy and sorrow, both celebration and grief. It will be a day on which I'll be confronted with one very sad and one very happy reality—the death of my son and the birth of my Savior.

Christmas is the day Christians remember the birth of Jesus. On this day we remember that day. “[Mary] gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.” We believe this is no mere myth, no mere morality tale, but an actual, historical event in which God was born a man. This God-man was born into a broken world—a world of suffering, a world of sorrow, a world in which even our greatest pleasures are marred by the knowledge that we are never far from grief, never far from loss.

As we ponder the birth of Jesus, we cannot help but consider the many references to both darkness and light. Many years before Jesus was born, Isaiah had prophesied “The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone.” Old Zechariah exclaimed poetically that “the sunrise shall visit us from on high to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death...” The shepherds who were tending their flocks through the night were interrupted by the glory of the Lord blazing in the darkness. The wise men saw a bright star glimmering in the night sky. Simeon exclaimed that this Jesus was “a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to your people Israel.”

The darkness of night represents the brokenness of this world—a world of pain, of suffering, of death. But the light that breaks into that darkness symbolizes the coming of the Savior who will deliver this world from its pain, its suffering, its death. Just as the first light of dawn brings the promise of day, the coming of Jesus brings the promise of joy, of healing, of making right all that has gone wrong. He, we come to learn, is “the Light of the World.” His birth marks the beginning of a new day, a new era, a new hope.

The coming of Christ is the coming of light, the coming of life, the coming of hope.

This is why the songwriter calls us to “Come behold the wondrous mystery, in the dawning of the King / He the theme of heaven’s praises, robed in frail humanity.” We must ponder the incredible reality that the One who had existed for all time, the One who was present and active at the creation of the world, the One who was immortal and invisible, chose to become fully human. And this changes everything, for, as the song continues, “In our longing, in our darkness, now the light of life has come.” The coming of Christ is the coming of light, the coming of life, the coming of hope. For by entering this world he could live in this world and die for this world. He could live a perfect life and die an atoning death, he could do for us what we could never do for ourselves. He could deliver us from death, he could deliver us to life eternal. No wonder, then, that the song implores us to “Look to Christ, who condescended, took on flesh to ransom us.” The beginning of the good news begins with his birth. It begins on Christmas.

The birth of my Savior has everything to do with the death of my son, for it is only because of Christ’s birth that I can have hope in Nick’s death. Because Jesus lived and lives, I can have confidence that Nick lives and will live. Christmas does not take away all my pain, but it does give me hope, it does give me confident assurance, that there is joy beyond the sorrow, gain beyond the loss, light beyond the darkness. The light that cut through the darkness on that Christmas night is the light that cuts through my darkness on this Christmas night. “The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.” It has not overcome it, it will not overcome it, it cannot overcome it, for this light is the light of life. This light is Christ himself.

# SERVICES

## CHRISTMAS DAY

Morning Worship 10:00 AM

NO EVENING SERVICE

## WEDNESDAY

BIBLE STUDY 7:00 PM

# LEADERSHIP

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