



Fourth Sunday of Advent: Angels  
December 19, 2021

## GATHERING

Prelude

Colony IV Brass

Opening Scripture – Luke 2:8-14

Advent Wreath – A Candle for the Angels

Responsive Prayer

In the psalms of David,  
**in the words of the prophets,**  
in the anthem sung to shepherds,  
**in the dream of Joseph,**  
in the visit to Mary,  
**your promise is spoken, eternal God,**  
**and takes flesh at last**  
**in the womb of the virgin.**

May Emmanuel  
find welcome in our hearts,  
**take flesh in our lives,**  
**and be peace for all peoples:**  
**the welcome advent of redemption and grace.**

**We ask this through him**  
**whose coming is certain,**  
**whose Day draws near;**  
**your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ,**  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.  
Amen.

Hymn #123

*It Came Upon a Midnight Clear*

It came upon a midnight clear, that glorious song of old, from angels bending near the earth, to touch their harps of gold: "Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heaven's al-gracious King": the world in solemn stillness lay, to hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies thy come, with peaceful wings unfurled, and still their heavenly music floats o'er all the weary world: above its sad and lowly plains thy bend on hovering wing, and ever o'er its Babel sounds the blessed angels sing.

Yet with the woes of sin and strife the world has suffered long; beneath the heavenly hymn have rolled two thousand years of wrong; and we at war on earth hear not the tidings that they bring; O, hush the noise and cease the strife to hear the angels sing!

Any you, beneath life's crushing load, whose forms are bending low, who toil along the climbing way with painful steps and slow, look now, for glad and golden hours come swiftly on the wing: O, rest beside the weary road, and hear the angels sing.

For lo, the days are hastening on, by prophets seen of old, when with the ever-circling years shall come the time foretold, when peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling, and the whole world give back the song which now the angels sing.

Opening Prayer

Greeting

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. **And also with you.**

## CONFESSING

Scripture – Matthew 1:18-25

Call to Confession

Prayers of Confession

Lord Jesus,  
we confess our willingness to be loved  
**but also our frequent reluctance to love.**  
We confess our readiness to accept your forgiveness  
**but also our persistent refusal to forgive.**  
We confess our eagerness to grasp your offer of redeeming love  
**but also our resistance to follow you without question.**

**In this Advent time,  
forgive us our failure  
to respond as we should.  
Come to us anew, and by your grace,  
assist us to receive you  
with joy, as the shepherds;  
with bravery, as Joseph;  
with trust, as Mary;  
with love, as you have loved us.  
Even so: come, Lord Jesus.**

**Hear our prayers ...**

Assurance of Forgiveness

\*Hymn #119

*Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*

Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king.  
Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!"  
Joyful, all ye nations rise; join the triumph of the skies;  
with the angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"  
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king!"

Christ, by highest heaven adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord,  
late in time behold him come, offspring of the virgin's womb.  
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see; hail the incarnate deity,  
pleased in flesh with us to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel.  
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king!"

Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the sun of righteousness!  
Light and life to all he brings, risen with healing in his wings.  
Mild he lays his glory by, born that we no more may die,  
born to raise us from the earth, born to give us second birth.  
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king!"

Affirmation of Faith – from the Presbyterian Study Catechism

Question 21. What does it mean to say that Jesus Christ is the image of God?

**Despite our turning from God, God did not turn from us, but instead sent Jesus Christ in the fullness of time to restore our broken humanity. Jesus lived completely for God, by giving himself completely for us, even to the point of dying for us. By living so completely for others, he manifested what he was -- the perfect image of God. When by grace we are conformed to him through faith, our humanity is renewed according to the divine image that we lost.**

\*Passing of the Peace

## LISTENING

Joys and Concerns of the Congregation

Prayers of the People, Lord's Prayer

Sermon in Music

Colony IV Brass

Scripture – Luke 1:26-38

Sermon in Words

### **God: Subcontracting Peace and Promises**

\*Hymn #143

*Angels, from the Realms of Glory*

Angels, from the realms of glory, wing your flight o'er all the earth;  
you, who sang creation's story, now proclaim Messiah's birth:  
come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn king!

Shepherds, in the fields abiding, watching o'er your flocks by night,  
God with us is now residing; yonder shines the infant light:  
come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn king!

Sages, leave your contemplations; brighter visions beam afar;  
seek the great desire of nations; you have seen his natal star:  
come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn king!

All creation, join in praising God the Father, Spirit, Son,  
evermore your voices raising to the eternal Three in One:  
come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn king!

## DEPARTING

\*Sending Prayer

\*Benediction – from the Brief Statement of Faith

**In gratitude to God,  
empowered by the Spirit,  
let us strive to serve Christ in our daily tasks  
and to live holy and joyful lives  
even as we watch for God's  
new heaven and new earth,  
praying: Come, Lord Jesus!**

\*Sung Response

Hymn #88, verse 1

O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,  
that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

Postlude

All rights reserved, License #1244003





## Information & Announcements

### Special Thanks to the Colony IV Brass

We extend a special thank you to the following musicians of the Colony IV Brass quintet for providing today's music: Doug Hill and Ray Lawrence, trumpet; Susan Van Wick, french horn; Stephen Hoy, trombone; Randal Foil, Euphonium.

### Welcome to our guests!

Whether you are sharing in the worship of God with us for the first time, visiting with family or friends, or returning for a visit to your home church, we welcome you today in the name of Jesus. Please share some contact information with us so we can follow up with you and make a place for you in our weekly fellowship. You may email our church office at [admin@northminstermacon.org](mailto:admin@northminstermacon.org).

### PRAYER CONCERNS

If you have a need or a request for prayer, please contact the church office.

Current Member Concerns: Ann R. Smith; Jewel James; Ann Hall; Jane Ebey; Jon Geerlings; Kathy Wheeler; Betty Barlow; Donna Shuford; Frank Clark; Janet Kelly; Jewell James

Current Friends and Family Concerns: Margaret Yawn; Donna Carole Kitchens; Nelda Crow; Joel Jones

Military Personnel Prayer List: Austin Riley; Joshua Sulkers; Isaac Falkenstine (Bonnie Diboll's grandson)

### Stewardship

We extend our gratitude as a body of Christ for the time, talents and treasures shared during 2021. We ask that you prayerfully seek God's will for your continued support and sharing of these gifts within the upcoming year. You may fill out your time, talent, and treasure form(s) by mail, here at the church, or online. If you would like to submit your form online, you may go to [www.northminstermacon.org/give](http://www.northminstermacon.org/give).

### Christmas Joy Special Offering

Each year during the Advent and Christmas season, we turn our eyes to Bethlehem and celebrate the wondrous gift of Jesus Christ, our Savior. God has blessed the church with incredible leadership in every time and place, but those leaders often need to be supported by their communities as well. This Offering addresses the support needed by some of our leaders, including supporting leadership development for communities of color and providing support for Presbyterian church workers in their time on need. Special envelopes are provided in today's bulletin.

### Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion

With great joy we return to our Christmas Eve worship traditions of lighting the candles and sharing in the communion meal. Please join us this December 24th for this special service. The harp prelude will begin at 5:30pm and the service will begin at 6. The service will be shared via live stream as well.

### Thank you from Janet Kelly & Family

"Words are powerless to express our gratitude for all the cards, prayers, and love given to Janet, Gene, and the rest of the Kelly family. Your love, caring, concern, and words of encouragement are helping the family cope with Janet's illness." -from Marion

Please continue to send your thoughts and prayers through this long recovery process.

### Holiday Office Hours

The office will be open December 20<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> from 8:30am-1:00pm. Jennifer will be available by phone and email December 23<sup>rd</sup>. The office will be closed the week of December 27<sup>th</sup> through 31<sup>st</sup>. In case of any emergencies, please contact Ralph at 478-250-3355 or [pastorhawkins@northminstermacon.org](mailto:pastorhawkins@northminstermacon.org).

### NORTHMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Our calling at Northminster is to make disciples, to grow in faith together, and to serve others in Christ.

CONGREGATION: Ministers of the Good News

SESSION of Ruling Elders: Kari Alderman; Emily Brown; Lynn Denny; Roland Hill; Jan Hirsh;

Melissa McDougald; Charlotte Nolan; Sandra Ridgeway; Minor Vernon

RALPH HAWKINS, Pastor and Teaching Elder PAUL EVANS, Parish Associate SANDRA SMITH, Music Director

KAREN JONES, Clerk of Session JENNIFER WHITEHEAD, Ministry Assistant

**Office hours this week:** Monday - Wednesday 8:30-1:00