



Prelude

Generation Fusion Quartet

Welcome & Announcements

Responsive Reading

Sing to the Lord a new song; **Sing to the Lord, all the earth!**
Sing to the Lord and bless God's name; **Tell the good news of salvation from day to day.**
Declare God's glory among the nations, God's marvelous words among all the peoples.
For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised.
Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice.
Let the sea roar, and all that fills it; The world, and those who live in it.
Let the whole creation sing for joy At the presence of God, who is coming.
**God is coming indeed, To judge the earth with righteousness,
And the peoples with equity and truth. Praise the Lord!**

Opening Hymn #140

"Once in Royal David's City"

Once in royal David's city stood a lowly cattle shed,
where a mother laid her baby in a manger for his bed:
Mary was that mother mild; Jesus Christ, her little child.

He came down to earth from heaven who is God and Lord of all,
and his shelter was a stable, and his cradle was a stall;
with the poor and meek and lowly, lived on earth our Savior holy.

Jesus is our childhood's pattern; day by day like us he grew;
he was little, weak and helpless; tears and smiles like us he knew;
and he feels for all our sadness, and he shares in all our gladness.

And our eyes at last shall see him, through his own redeeming love;
for that child so dear and gentle is our Lord in heaven above;
and he leads his children on to the place where he is gone.

First Lesson

Genesis 3:8-15, 17-19
*Adam and Eve disobey God's command
And disrupt the order and goodness of creation*

Carol #108

“Of the Father’s Love Begotten” [v. 1, 2, 5]

Of the Father's love begotten, ere the worlds began to be,
he is Alpha and Omega; he the source, the ending he,
of the things that are, that have been, and that future years shall see, evermore and evermore!

By his Word was all created; he commanded; it was done:
heaven and earth and depths of ocean, universe of three in one,
all that sees the moon’s soft shining, all that breathes beneath the sun, evermore and evermore!

O ye heights of heaven, adore him. Angel hosts, his praises sing.
Powers, dominions, bow before him, and extol our God and King.
Let no tongue on earth be silent; every voice in concert ring, evermore and evermore!

Second Lesson

Genesis 22:15-18
*God promises that, through Abraham,
All the peoples of the world will be blessed*

Carol #87

“Comfort, Comfort Now My People”

“Comfort, comfort now my people; tell of peace!” So says our God.
“Comfort those who sit in darkness mourning under sorrow’s load.
To my people now proclaim that my pardon waits for them!
Tell them that their sins I cover, and their warfare now is over.”

For the herald’s voice is crying in the desert far and near,
calling us to true repentance, since the reign of God is here.
O, that warning cry obey! Now prepare for God a way.
Let the valleys rise in meeting and the hills bow down in greeting.

Straight shall be what long was crooked, and the rougher places plain.
Let your hearts be true and humble, as befits God’s holy reign.
For the glory of the Lord now on earth is shed abroad,
and all flesh shall see the token that God’s word is never broken.

Third Lesson

Isaiah 9:2, 6-7
*The people who walk in darkness
Receive the promise of the Messiah*

Carol #82

“Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus”

Come, thou long-expected Jesus, born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us; let us find our rest in thee.
Israel’s strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art;
dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart.

Born thy people to deliver, born a child and yet a king,
born to reign in us forever, now thy gracious kingdom bring.
By thine own eternal Spirit rule in all our hearts alone;
by thine all-sufficient merit raise us to thy glorious throne.

Fourth Lesson

Isaiah 11:11-4a, 6-9

*The Messiah will come from the root of Jesse
To restore the peace of creation*

Carol #129 (Choir Only)

“Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming”

Fifth Lesson

Luke 1:26-35, 38

*An angel appears to Mary and announces
That she will bear a holy child*

Carol #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!”

Sixth Lesson

Luke 2:1-7

*Joseph and Mary travel to Bethlehem,
Where Mary gives birth to her child*

Carol #115

“Away in a Manger”

Away in a manger, no crib for his bed,
the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.
The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,
the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing; the poor baby wakes,
but little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes.
I love thee, Lord Jesus; look down from the sky,
and stay by my side until morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask thee to stay
close by me forever and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in thy tender care,
and fit us for heaven to live with thee there.

Seventh Lesson

Luke 2:8-16

*Angels appear to shepherds in the fields
And announce the birth of the Messiah*

Carol #113

“Angels We Have Heard on High”

Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o’er the plains,
and the mountains in reply echoing their joyous strains.
Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be which inspire your heavenly song?
Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Come to Bethlehem and see him whose birth the angels sing;
come, adore on bended knee Christ, the Lord, the newborn King.
Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Eighth Lesson

Matthew 2:1-11

*Magi from the East come seeking the Messiah
And offer gifts to the baby Jesus*

Carol #147

“The First Noel” [v. 1, 5, 6]

The first Nowell the angel did say was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay,
in fields where they lay keeping their sheep, on a cold winter’s night that was so deep.
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, born is the King of Israel.

Then entered in those wise men three, full reverently upon their knee,
and offered there in his presence their gold, and myrrh, and frankincense.
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, born is the King of Israel.

Then let us all with one accord sing praises to our heavenly Lord,
that hath made heaven and earth of nought, and with his blood our life hath bought.
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, born is the King of Israel.

Ninth Lesson

John 1:1-14

The Word of God becomes flesh
And lives among us, full of grace and truth

Carol #122

“Silent Night, Holy Night” [v. 1, 3, 4]

Silent night, holy night! All is calm, all is bright ‘round yon virgin mother and child!
Holy Infant, so tender and mild, Sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night! Son of God, love’s pure light Radiant beams from thy holy face,
With the dawn of redeeming grace, Jesus, Lord, at thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

Silent night, holy night! Wondrous star, lend thy light; With the angels let us sing
Alleluia to our King: Christ the Savior is born; Christ the Savior is born.

Prayers for the People

The Lord’s Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come, thy 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 lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever.

Amen.

People, look east. The time is near of the crowning of the year.
Make your house fair as you are able; trim the hearth and set the table.
People, look east and sing today: Love, the Guest, is on the way.

Furrows, be glad. Though earth is bare, one more seed is planted there.
Give up your strength the seed to nourish, that in course the flower may flourish.
People, look east and sing today: Love, the Rose, is on the way.

Birds, though you long have ceased to build, guard the nest that must be filled.
Even the hour when wings are frozen God for fledging time has chosen.
People, look east and sing today: Love, the Bird, is on the way.

Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim one more light the bowl shall brim,
shining beyond the frosty weather, bright as sun and moon together.
People, look east and sing today: Love, the Star, is on the way.

Angels, announce with shouts of mirth Christ who brings new life to earth.
Set every peak and valley humming with the word, the Lord is coming.
People, look east and sing today: Love, the Lord, is on the way.

Benediction

Postlude



Information & Announcements

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.

PRAYER CONCERNS

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

Current Member Concerns: Ann R. Smith; Jane Prentice; Ann Hall; Jane Ebey; Frank & Evelyn Clark; Nancy Miles; Annette Hutto - Current Friends and Family Concerns: Margaret Yawn; Donna Carole Kitchens; Joel Jones; Nelda Crow; Sara Walcott; Laurie King (Diboll); John & Louise Sallstrom - Military Personnel Prayer List: Austin Riley; Joshua Sulkers; Isaac Falkenstine (Bonnie Diboll's grandson); James Watwood

Sanctuary Flowers

Flowers this Sunday have been given to the glory of God by Amy Vogt in loving memory of her husband, Bob Vogt and member Catherine Woodydy.

Sunday Study – A Clear View of the Birth of Jesus

Every Sunday through December 17th, Pastor Ralph will lead a Sunday Study discussion based on brief video lectures by Dr. Kenneth Bailey, a Presbyterian scholar and seminary professor in the Middle East for 40 years. Join us at 9^{AM} in the fellowship hall; a light breakfast will be provided. If you're unable to make it to the Sunday morning study, join us Wednesdays at noon in the Library for a duplicate study. This Wednesday's study has been cancelled.

Alternative Christmas Fair

Join us after worship today for our Alternative Christmas Fair. This is an opportunity to give to a charity or mission of your choice in honor of someone special to you. It's a perfect gift! It always fits, never expires, and makes everyone feel good.

Christmas Eve

Christmas Eve, we will have an abbreviated worship service in the morning at 10:30 and our annual Christmas Eve Candlelight service at 6:00^{PM}. If you or someone you know would like transportation to and from the evening service, please let Jennifer know in the office. (admin@northminstermacon.org)

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 of need. Donations can be made any time this month, and a special offering envelope will be provided with your December 17th bulletin.

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; Jeff Denny; Barbara Fatkin; Nita McCord; Jinny McDuffie; Ray Mosely; Michael Napier; Donna Shuford; Minor Vernon; Genny Whitaker

RALPH HAWKINS, Pastor and Teaching Elder PAUL EVANS, Parish Associate GUNNER CHANCEY, Director of Music
KAREN JONES, Clerk of Session JENNIFER WHITEHEAD, Ministry Assistant

Office hours this week: Tuesday through Thursday 8^{AM}-4^{PM}; Sunday 7^{AM}-1^{PM}

Jennifer Cell: 478-318-7911

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