



January 3, 2021

2nd Sunday After Christmas

CCLI # 2929798 and #20547245

Spiritual Quote of the week “I will honor
Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year.
“Charles Dickens

Welcome

Prelude ‘*Noël ancien, op. 28*’ H. Doyen

Lighting of the Candles

Lighting of the Community and Christ Candle

*For gathering today in this sacred space, we light
the Christ Candle*

Call to Worship: Pastor John

L: On this day, we remember the gift of God's Word,

**P: who gathers us together from the farthest
parts of the world
to worship in joy and hope.**

L: On this day, we remember the simple graces of the
bread and the cup,

**P: those plain gifts shaped by God's love into
nourishing hope.**

L: Now, here you are God, running swiftly toward us:

P: to melt our frozen faith,

L: to comfort us in our loneliness, thank you God
and whisper your Spirit among us today virtually
and within this sanctuary upon the New Year.

Choir Introit

**Hymn #130 ‘Joy to the World! The Lord is
Come’ (Pilgrim Hymnal)**

- 1. Joy to the world! the Lord is come;
Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare him room,*

*And heaven and nature sing,
 And heaven and nature sing,
 And heaven, and heaven, and nature sing.*

*2. Joy to the world! the Savior reigns;
 Let men their songs employ;
 While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
 Repeat the sounding joy,
 Repeat the sounding joy,
 Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.*

*3. He rules the world with truth and grace,
 And makes the nations prove
 The glories of His righteousness,
 And wonders of His love,
 And wonders of His love,
 And wonders, wonders, of His love.*

Prayer of Confession Pastor Gerry

Gracious God, we are still playing with our new toys, the manger figures have not been put away; we have the stacks of Christmas cards, but we memorize the words sin has taught us; we set limits on who we will love,

we make promises we cannot keep, we fail to see the pain and hurt we cause. God of the angels and shepherds, forgive us. Your Word has come to reshape our lives; your Light has come to show us the way home; your Son has come to make us your family. Have mercy and make us new people. This we pray in the name of Jesus. Amen.

**DAZZLING BOUQUET -Time for Children-
Message— Blessing Box**

*1. Come here, all you six-foot gladiolas.
Come all you purple lilacs shining bright.
Come let us all bloom together in one garden:
A carnival of fragrance and delight. (Refrain)*

*Mine is the church where everybody's welcome.
I know it's true 'cause I got through the door.
We are a dazzling bouquet of every kind of flower.
Jump in the vase, 'cause we've got space for more.*

UCC DOC Missionary Partner this week
Thomas Smith- Korea

Pastor Gerry

Pastoral Prayer and 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

Choir Response

Choir ANTHEM *'Do you Hear What I Hear?'*

N. Regney -G. Shayne
 (Arr. By H. Simone)

Scripture Reading: John1: 1-18 English

Standard Version

The Word Became Flesh

***1** In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. **2** He was in the beginning with God. **3** All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. **4** In him was life,^[a] and the life was the light of men. **5** The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.*

***6** There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. **7** He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. **8** He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.*

***9** The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. **10** He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. **11** He came to his own,^[b] and his own people^[c] did not receive him. **12** But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, **13** who were*

born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son^[d] from the Father, full of grace and truth. ¹⁵ (John bore witness about him, and cried out, “This was he of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me ranks before me, because he was before me.’”) ¹⁶ For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.^[e] ¹⁷ For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ No one has ever seen God; the only God,^[f] who is at the Father's side,^[g] he has made him known.

Hymn #124 “Bring a Torch, Jeannette, Isabella (Pilgrim Hymnal)

*1. Bring a torch, Jeanette, Isabella
Bring a torch, to the cradle run!
It is Jesus, good folk of the village;
Christ is born and Mary's calling;
Ah! ah! beautiful is the Mother
Ah! ah! beautiful is her Son!*

*2. It is wrong when the Child is sleeping
It is wrong to talk so loud;*

*Silence, all, as you gather around.
 Lest your noise should waken Jesus.
 Hush! hush! see how fast He slumbers!
 Hush! hush! see how fast He sleeps!*

*3. Softly to the little stable.
 Softly for a moment come;
 Look and see how charming is Jesus
 How He is white, His cheeks are rosy!
 Hush! hush! see how the Child is sleeping;
 Hush! hush! see how He smiles in his dreams.*

Prayer of Illumination

**Let us look for Christ wherever we go-Let us
 never stop seeking Believing that there is a
 light that shines in the darkness -Which the
 darkness shall not overcome and may the
 love of the Creator- The joy of the Spirit And
 the peace of the Christ-child Be with you this
 New Year, and evermore.**

Sermon 'God's Creativity' Rev. John Hogue

Invitation to the Offering

What a marvelous gift - forgiveness! Filled with hope and new life, we can sing God's praises forever. Amen

Musical Interlude

Doxology

Prayer of Dedication of Offering Pastor John

The gift of Bethlehem has come to bless us, and so may our gifts bring hope, bring healing, bring peace, and bring grace to Birmingham, to Belfast, to Bangladesh, in every place where folks hunger for your gifts, O God. This we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

Welcome

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

L: May the God of newness be with you.

P: And also, with you.

L: People of Christmas, offer your hearts to God.

P: We lift them to the One who comes, new hope and life cradled in loving hands.

L: People of the Holy One of Bethlehem, sing glad praises to our God. We come, for we have received the good news,

P: we have believed the Word, we are given joyful songs to sing.

Pastor John: (respond in the Bold Type) As we begin this year with hope, we remember his promise to be with us always, even as we tell of that mystery, we call faith:

**At the beginning of time, Christ was the Word of creation;
at the right time, Christ was the Word of redemption;
at the end of time, Christ will be the Word who brings us home.**

Words of Institution

Sharing of the Bread (Verse 1. Lo' How a Rose E'er Blooming')

Sharing of the Juice (Verse 2. Lo 'How a Rose E'er Blooming')

Thanksgiving Prayer

Commissioning

Hymn: # #150 ‘Sing a Different Song’ (New Century Hymnal)

1. *Sing a different song now Christmas is here,
Sing a song of people knowing God's near:
The Messiah is born in the face of our scorn
Sing a different song to welcome and warn.*
2. *Shout a different shout now Christmas is
here,
Shout a shout of joy and genuine cheer:
Fill the earth and the sky with the news from
on high,
Shout a different shout that all may come by.*
3. *Love a different love now Christmas is here,
Love without condition, love without fear:
With the humble and poor , with the shy and
unsure,
Love a different love. Let Christ be the cure!*
4. *Dance a different dance now Christmas is
here,
Dance a dance of war on suffering and fear:*

Peace and justice are one, on the light of the sun.

Dance a different dance. God's reign has begun!!

Benediction

POSTLUDE

'Shepherd's Leave Your Pastures'

Ancient Carol

(Arr. By W.I. Nevins)

Diaconate wanted to insure everyone's safety as a top priority. We have two options. We will continue to live stream by clicking on our website www.firstchurchnc.com. You will see a link for Facebook and just click on that button. You do not need to have a Facebook account. It is recorded each week for later viewing. You can also watch by going to our First Church Facebook page for the live video.

