

New St. Peter's Presbyterian Church
Christmas Eve Liturgy
December 24, 2017

Call to Worship (*“Come Thou Long Expected Jesus”*)

Prayer of Praise (Haggai 2; Luke 2; Romans 5; Isaiah 60)

Our great Father, long ago You promised to Your downtrodden people saying, “My Spirit remains in your midst. Fear not. Yet once more, in a little while, I will shake the heavens and the earth. And I will shake all nations, so that the treasures of all nations shall come in. And the latter glory of this temple shall be greater than the former!”

Centuries later, Your servant Simeon stood in the temple and looked upon Your Son, saying “My eyes have seen Your salvation that You have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to Your people Israel.”

Lord Jesus, because of Your birth we now dwell secure in the grace of God. For in Your name and priesthood we have everlasting access to Him who loved us so much that He sent You to us.

So now we praise You, Lord Jesus. For You are truly the LORD, our Savior and Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.

Hymn: *“O Come All Ye Faithful”*

Hymn: *“Joy to the World”*

The Blessing of the Incarnate Savior

(Luke 1, 2; Ezekiel 34; Irenaeus' *Against Heresies*, books IV and V)

Church, let it be known to all of you and to all the world that a Savior has been born in Israel! His name is Jesus, just as the angel told Mary, for He was sent to save His people from their sins!

This Jesus is the promised shepherd who will lead us into safe pastures, rescue us from wolves, feed us and never leave us hungry for He feeds us with Himself.

How has our God mercifully met our need?

Our God has sent His Son to become one of us, that He might heal us and make us to become what He is: a faithful child of His Father.

Hymn: *“It Came Upon a Midnight Clear”*

Confession of Sin and Plea for Pardon

(Haggai 1 and 2; Matthew 6; Ephesians 2; John 4; Isaiah 60)

Our gracious LORD and God, You rightly say to us, “Consider your ways. You have sown much, and harvested little. You eat, but you never have enough; you drink, but you never have your fill.” **We confess that we have sought to build the houses of our own comfort, pleasures, and success instead of seeking first Your Son and the growth of His kingdom. We don’t believe that You truly have our best interests in Your heart, and so we labor to take care of ourselves above all else. Seeking satisfaction in our efforts, we are hungrier than ever. By Your grace in Jesus Christ, forgive our sins, we pray, and give us the fulfillment our souls can only find in Him.**

Assurance of Pardon through the One Who Fills Us with Himself

People of God, through the Christ child the LORD your God has determined to bless you forevermore. **Because of His mercy, we can dwell securely as the new temple of His Spirit. Because of His provision, we have life in the Holy Spirit, and we shall never thirst. Because He has made us the people of His kingdom through Jesus the Son, we are the city of the LORD, Zion of the Holy One of Israel. Thanks be to our great God! Amen.**

Doxology (*“Come Thou Long Expected Jesus”*)

Homily *“Unexpected Advent: Haggai’s Story”* (Haggai 2:1-9)

Offerings and Alms

He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you?
To do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with our God.

Hymn: *“On Christmas Night All Christians Sing”*

Hymn: *“The First Noel”*

Benediction (Luke 1, 2, John 1)

Church, join your voices with the heavenly armies who sang praise to God at Jesus’ birth:

“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth there is peace for those on whom His favor rests.”

Rejoice, because the Son of God has become man!

Rejoice, because Jesus has brought to you the tender mercies of God!

Rejoice, because Jesus, who is at the Father’s side, has come to make Him known!

You have come to Your people once; come for us again.

Come again quickly, Lord Jesus! Amen!