FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT
DECEMBER 20, 2020 — 11 AM LIVESTREAM WORSHIP

PRELUDE
“Prelude on Once in Royal David’s City”
Dr. Edward Alan Moore, organ
David Willcocks

OPENING WORDS
The Rev. Dr. Randall K. Bush

SHARING GOD’S PEACE
The Rev. Dr. Bush
Leader: La paz de Cristo esté con ustedes.
People: Y también contigo.

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING LITANY (responsive reading)
Andrea DeVries, Sonia and Annabel Degenholtz
Leader: We light Advent candles as an act of prayer, trusting that our preparation for Christmas includes looking outward in love, looking forward in hope, and looking around expectantly for Christ, the Word made flesh, coming to us once more.
People: We light the fourth candle of love, echoing the dramatic prophecy of old that “a young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel, meaning God-with-us.”
Leader: Living Christ, Light of the World, shine in our lives and shine among us now.

HYMN #100 (vs. 1, 3, 4)
“Canticle of the Turning”
STAR OF THE COUNTY DOWN
My soul cries out with a joyful shout that the God of my heart is great
And my spirit sings of the wondrous things that you bring to the ones who wait.
You fixed your sight on your servant’s plight, and my weakness you did not spurn,
So from east to west shall my name be blest. Could the world be about to turn?

Refrain: My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Let the fires of your justice burn.
Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near, and the world is about to turn.

From the halls of power to the fortress tower, not a stone will be left on stone.
Let the king beware for your justice tears every tyrant from his throne.
The hungry poor shall weep no more, for the food they can never earn;
There are tables spread; every mouth be fed, for the world is about to turn. (Refrain)

Though the nations rage from age to age, we remember who holds us fast;
God’s mercy must deliver us from the conqueror’s crushing grasp.
This saving word that our forebears heard is the promise which holds us bound,
Till the spear and rod can be crushed by God, who is turning the world around. (Refrain)

PRAYER OF CONFESSION
Molly Peck
ASSURANCE OF GOD’S FORGIVENESS

Leader: Friends, believe the good news of the gospel: People: En Jesucristo tenemos perdón! In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven! ¡Alaben a Dios! Praise God!

SPECIAL MUSIC

“O Little Town of Bethlehem”

SPECIAL MUSIC

Todd Farwell, soloist

“O Little Town of Bethlehem”

John Prindle Scott

GOSPEL LESSON

Luke 1:26-38 Lynne and Keith Irvin

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin’s name was Mary. And he came to her and said, “Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you.” But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be.

The angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.” Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I am a virgin?” The angel said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God.”

Then Mary said, “Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.” Then the angel departed from her.

Leader: This is the word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God!

TIME FOR CHILDREN & FAMILIES

The Rev. Heather Schoenewolf

HYMN #140 (vs. 1, 2, 4) “Once in Royal David’s City” IRBY

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.

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.

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

The Rev. Dr. Bush

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON Colossians 2:6-12 The Rev. Dr. Bush

As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.

See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the universe, and not according to Christ. For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, and you have come to fullness in him, who is the head of every ruler and authority. In him also you were circumcised with a spiritual circumcision, by putting off the body of the flesh in the circumcision of Christ; when you were buried with him in baptism, you were also raised with him through faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead.
SERMON

The Word Becomes Flesh Again:
“Living Your Lives in Christ”
The Rev. Dr. Bush

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (from A Brief Statement of Faith)
In life and death we belong to God. We trust in Jesus Christ, fully human, fully God. Jesus proclaimed the reign of God: preaching good news to the poor and release to the captives, teaching by word and deed and blessing the children, healing the sick and binding up the brokenhearted, eating with outcasts, forgiving sinners, and calling all to repent and believe the gospel.

We 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!” With believers in every time and place, we rejoice that nothing in life or in death can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Hymn #92

“While We Are Waiting, Come”
Waiting

While we are waiting, come; while we are waiting, come.
Jesus, our Lord, Emmanuel, while we are waiting, come.

With power and glory, come; with power and glory, come.
Jesus, our Lord, Emmanuel, while we are waiting, come.

Come, Savior, quickly come; come, Savior, quickly come.
Jesus, our Lord, Emmanuel, while we are waiting, come.

PRAYER OF INTERCESSION & THE LORD’S PRAYER

The Rev. Patrice Fowler-Searcy

SPECIAL MUSIC

“Lo, How a Rose E’er Blooming”
arr. Sean Salamon

OFFERING INVITATION & PRAYER

The Rev. Dr. Bush

We offer our gifts in response to God’s love, and the grace of Jesus Christ, which we seek to make known through the ministries of this congregation. Please visit www.ELPC.church/donate if you would like to make a contribution.

Hymn #141 (ps. 1, 2, 4)

“On This Day Earth Shall Ring”
Personent Hodie

On this day earth shall ring
With the song children sing
To the Lord, Christ our King,
Born on earth to save us;
Him the Father gave us.

Refrain: Ideooo, ideooo, ideo gloria in excelsis Deo!

His the doom, ours the mirth;
When he came down to earth
Bethlehem saw his birth;
Ox and ass beside him
From the cold would hide him. (Refrain)

On this day angels sing;
With their song earth shall ring,
Praising Christ, heaven’s King,
Born on earth to save us;
Peace and love he gave us. (Refrain)

Blessing & Benediction

The Rev. Dr. Bush

Postlude

“Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland, BWV 661”
(Savior of the Nations, Come)
Dr. Moore, organ
Johann Sebastian Bach
CANTICLE OF THE TURNING (Ps. 1, 3, 4)

1. My soul cries out with a joyful shout that the
   God of my heart is great, and my spirit sings of the
   You fixed your sight on your servant's plight, and my
   weakness you did not spurn, so from east to west shall my

2. Though I am small, my God, my all, you
   work great things in me, and your mercy will last from the
   Your very name puts the proud to shame, and to
   those who would for you yearn, you will show your might, put the

3. From the halls of power to the fortress tower, not a
   stone will be left on stone. Let the king beware for your
   justice tears every tyrant from his throne.
   The hungry poor shall weep no more, for the
   food they can never earn; there are tables spread;

4. Though the nations rage from age to age, we re-
   member who holds us fast: God's mercy must de-
   liver us from the conqueror's crushing grasp.
   This saving word that our forebears heard is the
   promise which holds us bound, till the spear and rod can be

By employing an energetic Irish folk song for its melody, this ballad-like paraphrase of the Magnificat, Mary's song at her meeting with her relative Elizabeth (Luke 1:46-55), recaptures both the wonder and the faith of the young woman who first recognized what God was doing.
name be blest. Could the world be about to turn?
strong to flight, for the world is about to turn.
mouth be fed, for the world is about to turn.
crushed by God, who is turning the world around.

Refrain
My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Let the
fires of your justice burn. Wipe away all tears, for the
dawn draws near, and the world is about to turn.
ONCE IN ROYAL DAVID’S CITY (vs. 1, 2, 4)

1 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.

2 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.

3 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.

4 And our eyes at last shall see him, through his own re-
   deeming love; for that child so dear and gentle is our
   on to the place where he is gone.
While We Are Waiting, Come

1 While we are waiting, come;
2 With power and glory, come;
3 Come, Savior, quickly come;

While we are waiting, come.
With power and glory, come.
Come, Savior, quickly come.

Jesus, our Lord, Emmanuel,

While we are waiting, come.

This simple and meditative Advent hymn is so uncomplicated in both text and tune that it can be learned quickly and sung without reference to a book, which might make it effective as a prayer response. It would also lend itself to improvised stanzas on appropriate occasions.

TEXT: Claire Cloninger, 1986
MUSIC: Don Cason, 1986
Text and Music © 1986 Word Music, LLC
CCLI #689547
ON THIS DAY EARTH SHALL RING (vs. 1, 2, 4)

1 On this day earth shall ring, with the song
2 His the doom, ours the mirth; when he came
3 God's bright star, o'er his head, wise men three
4 On this day angels sing; with their song

Children sing to the Lord, Christ our King, born on earth to

down to earth Bethlehem saw his birth; ox and ass be-
to him led; kneel they low by his bed, lay their gifts be-
earth shall ring, praising Christ, heaven's King, born on earth to

Refrain

save us; him the Father gave us.
side him from the cold would hide him. *Id-o-o-o-o,
fore him, praise him and adore him. *Id-o-o-o-o,
save us; peace and love he gave us.

id-o-o-o-o, id-o-o-gloria in excelsis De-o!

*Therefore, glory to God in the highest.

Guitar chords do not correspond with keyboard harmony.

Although this Latin carol for Christmas may have roots several centuries older than its 16th-century emergence, the text was all in one language until its 20th-century translator chose to adopt the original last two lines of the fourth stanza as a unifying refrain in all stanzas.

MUSIC: Piae Cantiones, 1582; arr. Gustav Holst, c. 1917
Text and Music Arr. © 1924, ren. J. Curnen & Sons Ltd.
FREE FLU SHOT CLINIC — TODAY!
ELPC’s Mission Board, in partnership with the Birmingham Free Clinic, will be hosting a Free Flu Shot Clinic today from 12-4 pm in ELPC’s South Highland Ave semi-circle driveway. All are welcome to receive a free flu shot! No appointments are necessary. Visit our website for more details at www.ELPC.church.

CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING — TODAY!
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. The Christmas Joy Offering addresses the support needed by our leaders—including leadership development programs in communities of color and Presbyterian church workers in their time of need. The offering will be received today.

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN SPIRITUAL DIRECTION?
Spiritual direction is the practice of accompanying another in their own attentiveness to the movement of God and their everyday, ordinary lives. The practice involves silence, listening, reflection and discernment. If you think you might be interested in this or are just curious, contact Rev. BJ Woodworth (BJW@coh.net).

Christmas Eve Worship Services

The early Friends & Family Service at 5 pm will feature an intergenerational celebration of Christ’s birth and a sermon by Pastor Heather.

The later traditional Candlelight Service at 8 pm will have the familiar components of special music, Christmas quotes, and a sermon by Pastor Randy.

Both services will include communion and a candle-lit version of Silent Night.
Birmingham Free Clinic and East Liberty Presbyterian Church are offering FREE FLU SHOTS to the Pittsburgh community.

**NO RSVP or appointment is necessary!**

Walk or drive to the church’s circular entrance to receive your free flu shot! All are invited to participate!
 PARTICIPANTS
IN TODAY’S SERVICE

Preaching: The Rev. Dr. Randall K. Bush
Liturgists: The Rev. Patrice Fowler-Searcy
The Rev. Heather Schoenewolf
Andrea DeVries and
Sonia and Annabel Degenholtz
Lynn and Keith Irvin
Molly Peck
Musicians: Dr. Edward Alan Moore, Organist /
Music Director
Todd Farwell, Cantor/Soloist
Guest
Musicians: Monique Mead, Violin
Andrés Cárdenes, Violin
Isabel Cárdenes, Harp
Tino Cárdenes, Piano
A/V: Tim Benedict and Wayne Gaines

As part of ELPC’s mission to extend radical hospitality to all, our full worship service is now being livestreamed on:

Facebook
www.facebook.com/EastLibertyPresbyterian

YouTube
http://tiny.cc/elpc-youtube

and archived at www.ELPC.church

If you would like to make a contribution, please visit:
www.ELPC.church/donate