11 am Worship Service
Sunday, December 27, 2020
FIRST SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS
DECEMBER 27, 2020 — 11 AM LIVESTREAM WORSHIP

PRELUDE

“Nativity Suite”

Oh, Come, Emmanuel
Silent Night
Shepherds
The Three Kings
Joy to the World

Jon Tyillian, organ
Wilbur Held

OPENING WORDS

The Rev. Dr. Randall K. Bush

SHARING GOD’S PEACE

La paz de Cristo esté con ustedes.
The peace of Christ be with you.

Y también contigo.
And also with you.

CALL TO WORSHIP (responsive reading)

Christ is born! Alleluia!

Jesus is among us! Alleluia!
The Word has become flesh! Alleluia!

Let us break forth into singing, for God has redeemed us in a Savior who is Christ the Lord! Alleluia! Amen!

The Rev. Dr. Bush

HYMN #136

“Go, Tell It on the Mountain”

Go, tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere;
Go, tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born!

While shepherds kept their watching o’er silent flocks by night,
Behold, throughout the heavens there shone a holy light. (Refrain)
The shepherds feared and trembled when lo! above the earth
Rang out the angel chorus that hailed our Savior’s birth. (Refrain)
Down in a lowly manger the humble Christ was born,
And God sent us salvation that blessed Christmas morn. (Refrain)

Kathryn Ophardt

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Kathryn Ophardt

ASSURANCE OF GOD’S FORGIVENESS

Friends, believe the good news of the gospel:

In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!
Praise God!
GOSPEL LESSON  
Luke 2:15-21  
Jean Kennedy

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

After eight days had passed, it was time to circumcise the child; and he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

Leader:  This is the word of the Lord.
People:  Thanks be to God!

TIME FOR CHILDREN & FAMILIES  
The Rev. Heather Schoenewolf

HYMN #146  “Gentle Mary Laid Her Child”  TEMPUS ADEST FLORIDUM

Gentle Mary laid her child lowly in a manger;  
There he lay, the undefiled, to the world a stranger.
Such a babe in such a place, can he be the Savior?  
Ask the saved of all the race who have found his favor.

Angels sang about his birth; wise men sought and found him;  
Heaven’s star shone brightly forth, glory all around him.
Shepherds saw the wondrous sight, heard the angels singing;  
All the plains were lit that night; all the hills were ringing.

Gentle Mary laid her child lowly in a manger;  
He is still the undefiled, but no more a stranger.
Son of God, of humble birth, beautiful the story;  
Praise his name in all the earth; hail the King of glory!

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION  
The Rev. Dr. Bush

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON  Galatians 4:1-7  
The Rev. Dr. Bush

My point is this: heirs, as long as they are minors, are no better than slaves, though they are the owners of all the property; but they remain under guardians and trustees until the date set by the father. So with us; while we were minors, we were enslaved to the elemental spirits of the world. But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!” So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

SERMON  “The Incarnation Committee: A Christmas Story”  
The Rev. Dr. Bush

SPECIAL MUSIC  “Mary, Did You Know”  Beth and Charlotte Bush, soloists

PRAYER OF INTERCESSION & THE LORD’S PRAYER  
The Rev. BJ Woodworth

OFFERING INVITATION & PRAYER  
The Rev. Patrice Fowler-Searcy

*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 #143 (vs. 1, 2, 4)  “Angels, from the Realms of Glory”  Regent Square

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!

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!

Blessing & Benediction  The Rev. Dr. Bush

Postlude  Jon Tyillian, organ  Keith Chapman

“Bring a Torch, Jeanette Isabella”

Participants in Today’s Service

Preaching: The Rev. Dr. Randall K. Bush

Liturgists: The Rev. Patrice Fowler-Searcy
The Rev. Heather Schoenewolf
The Rev. BJ Woodworth
Jean Kennedy
Kathryn Ophardt

Musicians: Jon Tyillian, Organist
Beth Bush, Cantor/Soloist
Charlotte Bush, Cantor/Soloist

A/V: Tim Benedict
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
GO, TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN

Refrain

Go, tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere;

Fine

go, tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born!

1 While shepherds kept their watching o'er silent flocks by night,
2 The shepherds feared and trembled when lo! above the earth
3 Down in a lowly manger the humble Christ was born,

behold, throughout the heavens there shone a holy light.
rang out the angel chorus that hailed our Savior's birth.
and God sent us salvation that blessed Christmas morn.

Like other material from oral traditions, 19th-century African American spirituals flourished without being written down. Their refrains were their most stable parts, and narrative stanzas were often improvised to fit. These Nativity stanzas attempt to recall that tradition.

TEXT: African American spiritual; stanzas, John W. Work II, 1940
Music Harm. © 1989 Melva Wilson Costen CCLI #689547

GO TELL IT
GENTLE MARY LAID HER CHILD

1 Gentle Mary laid her child lowly in a manger;
there he lay, the undefiled, to the world a stranger.

2 Angels sang about his birth; wise men sought and found him;
heaven's star shone brightly forth, glory all around him.

3 Gentle Mary laid her child lowly in a manger;
he is still the undefiled, but no more a stranger.

Such a babe in such a place, can he be the Savior?
Shepherds saw the wondrous sight, heard the angels singing;

Son of God, of humble birth, beautiful the story;
Ask the saved of all the race who have found his favor.

All the plains were lit that night; all the hills were ringing.
Praise his name in all the earth; hail the King of glory!

This 20th-century Christmas text by an English-born Canadian clergyman was originally a poem called "The Manger Prince." It gains a certain antique flavor by being set to a late medieval song associated with springtime. (The tune name means "The flowering time is near.")
ANGELS, FROM THE REALMS OF GLORY (vs. 1, 2, 4)

1 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, worship Christ, the new-born king!

2 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,

3 Sages, leave your contemplations; brighten visions
   beam afar; seek the great desire of nations;
you have seen his natal star: come and worship,

4 All creation, join in praising God the Father,
   Spirit, Son, evermore your voices raising
   to the eternal Three in One:

This familiar carol was first published as a poem in the Christmas Eve 1816 issue of a newspaper the author edited in Sheffield, England. The tune name celebrates the location of a prominent Presbyterian Church in London, sometimes called the "Presbyterian cathedral."

TEXT: Stanzas 1–3, James Montgomery, 1816, 1823; stanza 4, Salisbury Hymn Book, 1857
MUSIC: Henry Thomas Smart, 1867
REGENT SQUARE 8.7.8.7.8.7
Church Events and Announcements
December 27, 2020 • First Sunday of Christmas

PW VIRTUAL BIBLE STUDY: LAMENTING LIFE
Monday, Jan 4 from 7–8:30 pm
Tuesday, Jan 5 from 10 am–12 pm
The practice of lament has the power to change us and our lives. Such change may be most evident when we lament lives filled with suffering and pain beyond our control. Job cursed the day he was born (Job 3). Yet, he persisted in his lament until God answered. Job has much to teach both lamenters and their companions. All women are invited to practice lament. Join PW on Tuesday, Jan 19 from Noon–1 pm to Share Lament. For details and Zoom info, email PW.ELPC@gmail.com.

LGBTQ MINISTRY
• Friday, Jan 8 from 5-6 pm: Happy Hour
At the end of a long week, come together with friends. Pour your favorite beverage, log on/call in to Zoom, and share in fellowship and fun for an hour. “See” you there!
• Saturday, Jan 16 from 9am-7pm: Day Retreat
Members and friends of ELPC’s LGBTQ Ministry are invited to spend the day with our church family while we celebrate the new year through worship, discussion, creative activities, reflections, and fellowship on Zoom. This will be a fun and safe place to explore and to laugh. Please RSVP to Wil by Sunday, Jan 10, or contact him with any questions (Wil@coh.net; 412.441.3800 x118).

CHILDREN & YOUTH MINISTRY
• Sunday, Jan 10 from 12:30-1:30 pm: Letter Writing
A letter can make someone feel loved, whether it’s a note to a friend, a message to someone in your church family, or a letter advocating for justice half way around the world. Youth in grades 6–12 will write letters to folks both in our church and through Amnesty International’s Write for Rights campaign. RSVP to Sara so she can mail you supplies ahead of time (SaraH@coh.net).
• Sunday, Jan 17 from 5:30-6:30 pm: Tween Night Cooking Class
 Tweens in grades 4–6 will gather on Zoom to make dinner for their families. We will be making an easy ricotta gnocchi and “dirt” for dessert.

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).

YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY
• Friday, Jan 8 from 7-9 pm: Virtual Game Night
This Game Night will begin with trivia followed by other games on the Jack Box platform. Everyone can play along on their own mobile devices by using a browser. Two devices do make it easier but you also can go between Zoom and browser. Grab your snacks and settle in for a night of fun!
• Wednesday, Jan 13 from 8-9 pm: Do the “Write” Thing
One Wednesday every month, we take a different approach to “writing,” whether it is reflecting, drawing, meditation, visual art, social justice, or communicating to others. Whether you write, type, voice text, use communication symbols, or draw, please join us!
• Monday, Jan 18 from 1-3 pm: Virtual 29th Annual MLK Celebration
Peoria, Illinois, Public Employees for Community Concerns’ 29th annual MLK Celebration is virtual this year. Hear Dr. Bernice King speak from 1–2 pm, and then YAMs may join our Zoom discussion from 2–3 pm. Ticket cost will be covered by Young Adult Ministry. Please RSVP to Kelli Booher (KelliB@coh.net) to attend.

There’s Still Time to Support Our STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN
Stewardship pledges for 2021 will still be received during the month of January. While the response to date has been generous, a slight overall decrease in giving has occurred.

If you have not yet submitted a pledge or would like to make an extra gift for the coming year, you can do so online at ELPC.church or by contacting Rachelle Calfee, ELPC’s bookkeeper (RachelleC@coh.net; 412.441.3800 x134).

Together we can make sure that ELPC’s light brightly shines in the new year!