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## A Glance at the Week

### Monday

7:00 am Men's Discussion (*Zoom*)

6:30 pm Small Group

## Church Contact Information

*Office Phone:* 651-698-3889

*Office Hours:* Thurs & Fri 1:00-6:00 p.m.

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## Looking Ahead

### Advent Series-

*A Son*        *Luke 1:26-38*

*A Song*      *Luke 1:39-55*

*War*         *Matthew 2:13-23*

*& Peace*     *Luke 2:10-14*

### Upcoming ~

*Epistle of James*



## Randolph Heights Presbyterian Church

435 Hamline Ave. South  
Saint Paul, MN 55105

## December 10, 2023

9:30am Discussion

10:30am Worship

[www.randolphheights.org](http://www.randolphheights.org)

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## We are glad you're here!

This is a community which strives to worship and serve God together. Within this community, people freely explore their personal questions about God and the Bible. It's together that we can better learn the breadth and depth of the Gospel and how it works out in our lives. Then, through the grace and hope of the gospel, we serve those in need and work together towards a thriving community.

This program is organized under five headings as described below:

**Gathering:** We remember God of Creation. The creator is amazing, perfect, powerful, good and is worthy of our worship and praise. This helps center and prepare our hearts for a time of worship.

**Confession and Renewal** reminds us that this world is not as God originally intended it. We express our grief and sorrow over the brokenness of this world and of our own lives. Our need for grace never goes away, and it is only by faith in Jesus that we can be made right with God. Within these words of renewal we recognize the truth that God's redemption of his people has been accomplished in Jesus.

**Thanksgiving** is our response to the redemptive plan of God. It is also an opportunity to express our thanks tangibly.

**Ministry of the Word** is expressed through reading our scripture passage for the day, listening to the Word preached, and responding with words of prayer from the congregation.

The **Benediction** is a good word to be sent out on.

*We encourage you to spend some time before the service begins and note how it flows. You are also encouraged to take this bulletin with you to use for personal devotional time throughout the week.*

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## Scripture Reading Luke 1:39-55

At that time Mary got ready and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judea, 40 where she entered Zechariah's home and greeted Elizabeth. 41 When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. 42 In a loud voice she exclaimed: "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear! 43 But why am I so favored, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? 44 As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. 45 Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill his promises to her!"

46 And Mary said:

"My soul glorifies the Lord  
and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,  
for he has been mindful  
of the humble state of his servant.  
From now on all generations will call me blessed,  
for the Mighty One has done great things for me –  
holy is his name.  
His mercy extends to those who fear him,  
from generation to generation.  
He has performed mighty deeds with his arm;  
he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts.  
He has brought down rulers from their thrones  
but has lifted up the humble.  
He has filled the hungry with good things  
but has sent the rich away empty.  
He has helped his servant Israel,  
remembering to be merciful  
<sup>55</sup>to Abraham and his descendants forever,  
just as he promised our ancestors."

L This is the Word of the Lord.

A Thanks be to God!

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## BENEDICTION

- L God has shown you what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.  
~ from *Micah 6:8, NIV*

### *\*Life in the Body*

### Send Out

- L Isaiah says, “The root of Jesse shall come, the one who rises to rule the Gentiles; in him the Gentiles shall hope.” May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. – *Romans 15:12-13, NRSV*

### A Prayer of Commitment

Lord Jesus Christ, there is nothing I can do that would make you love me more, and nothing I have done that makes you love me less. Your presence and approval are all I need for everlasting joy. As you have been to me, so I will be to others. As I pray, I'll measure your compassion by the cross and your power by the resurrection. Amen.

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## Reflections

You and I have been trained by our culture to not believe in the supernatural... a Jewish woman, Mary, had been trained by her culture to not believe that God could ever become a human being. So, though they are different, the barriers she faced against belief in the Christmas message were every bit as big as the barriers you may be facing. And yet a combination of evidence and experience shattered those barriers and she came to faith. That is exactly the way it works now. She doubted, she questioned, she used her reason, and she asked questions – just as we must today if we are going to have faith. ~ *Tim Keller, Pastor, Author*

People are always clinging to what they want to hear, discarding the evidence that doesn't fit with their beliefs, giving greater weight to evidence that does.  
~ *Paula Stokes, Author, The Key to Everything*

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Many know how to flatter, few know how to praise.  
~ *Wendell Phillips, 1811-1884, Orator, Attorney, Abolitionist*

I'll just put two words out there one is community and the other is mentors ... one of the biggest Concepts here is community versus networks. A community is a group of real people who are kind of stuck together you can't just come and go as you please. It takes a while to get in and it's hard to get out, so you have to get along with each other. [We] need to be embedded in communities and I would say a religious community is the quintessential perfect Community.  
~ *Jonathan Haidt, 1963- , Social Psychologist, Author*

Confirmation bias is the most effective way to go on living a lie.  
~ *Christopher James Gilbert, 1987- , Philosophy, Musician*

Our misbeliefs often make it impossible for us to realize, and/or to accept, some facts.  
~ *Mokokoma Frans Makhonoana, 1985-2023, Social Critic, Satirist*

Common sense is what tells us the earth is flat.  
~ *Stuart Chase, 1888-1985, Social Theorist, Writer*

## PRELUDE

Micah 6:6 – With what shall I come before the LORD and bow down before the exalted God?

L O God, you pour out the Spirit of grace and love. Deliver us from cold hearts and wandering thoughts,

A *May we, with steady minds and burning zeal, worship you in spirit and truth.*  
Amen.

### The Angel Gabriel

Bordes

S. Baring-Gould



The an - gel Ga - bri - el from hea - ven came, his  
"I come from heav'n to tell the Lord's de - cree: a  
Then gen - tle Ma - ry meek - ly bowed her head; "To  
Of her, Im - man - u - el, the Christ, was born In



wings as drift - ed snow, his eyes as flame; "All  
bles - sed vir - gin mo - ther you shall be. Your  
me be as it pleas - es God," she said. "My  
Beth - le - hem, all on a Christ - mas morn, and



hail," said he to meek and low - ly Ma - -ry, "most  
Son shall be Im - man - u - el, by seers fore - told, most  
soul shall laud and mag - ni - fy his ho - ly name." Most  
Chris - tian folk through - out the world will e - ver say, "Most



high - ly fa - vored la - dy." Glo - - ri - a!  
high - ly fa - vored la - dy." Glo - - ri - a!  
high - ly fa - vored la - dy, Glo - - ri - a!  
high - ly fa - vored la - dy." Glo - - ri - a!

## Pastoral Prayer

L Root of Jesse, as you rise as a sign for all the peoples, and call forth the worship of all the nations, come quickly to deliver us from sin and death. Key of David, scepter over the house of Israel, your covenant people, open our hearts, our lives, our futures. Set free all who are imprisoned, all those who live in the valley of the shadow of death. Ruler of all nations, Lord of all time and space, you hold humanity together. As you lovingly formed us from the dust of the earth, lovingly reform, save, and renew us. Immanuel, our Lord, our hope and desire, come mightily to save us; our trust is in you. We rejoice in your faithfulness. Our hearts overflow with hope as we express our longing for the advent of our Lord. Prepare us to receive, honor, and follow him, our Messiah, the King of kings and Lord of lords. Amen.

### Open Petition

After each petition the Leader will say:

L Lord in your mercy

A *Hear our prayer. (Response from Congregation)*

~or~

L *Let us Give God Thanks*

A *We give You thanks O Lord.*

L Strengthen us, O God, in the power of your Spirit, to loose the chains that bind and claim your blessing for all people. Keep us faithful in your service until Christ comes in final victory and we shall feast with all your saints in the joy of your eternal realm. In Christ and in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor are yours, almighty God. Amen.

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## The Lord's Table *(Offered 1st Sunday of Month)*

### *Invitation to the Table*

- L Professing & baptized members of a church in which Jesus Christ is professed as Lord and Savior: the Lord has prepared his table for all who love him and trust in him alone for their salvation. All who are truly sorry for their sins, who sincerely believe in the Lord Jesus as their Savior, and who desire to live in obedience to him, are now invited to come with gladness to the table of the Lord.
- A *We receive this food gladly, believing, as we eat, that Jesus is our lifegiving food and drink and that he will come again to call us to the wedding feast of the Lamb.*
- L Let us give thanks together:
- Prayer of Thanks** *(from a fourth-century liturgy from the city of Alexandria.)*
- A *It is truly right to glorify you, Father, and to give you thanks, for you alone are God, living and true, dwelling in light inaccessible from before time and forever. Fountain of all life and source of all goodness, you made all things and fill them with your blessing; you created them to rejoice in the splendor of your radiance. Countless throngs of angels stand before you to serve you night and day, and, beholding the glory of your presence, they offer you unceasing praise. Joining with them, and giving voice to every creature under heaven, we glorify your name and lift our voices in joyful praise:*
- All Sing: *Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of Power and Might,  
Heaven and Earth are filled with Your Glory. (2x)  
Hosanna! Hosanna! In the highest! (2x)*

### **Words of institution**

- L The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me." In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this in remembrance of me." For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. 1 Cor 11:23-26, NIV

### **Distribution of the Elements**

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## Advent Candle Lighting

- L We relight the candle of HOPE and we light the candle for PEACE. As we prepare for the coming of Jesus, we remember that Jesus is our hope and our peace. From the prophet Isaiah:
- A *For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. (light candle)*
- L Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid. (– John 14:27) Let us pray:
- A *Gracious God, Grant that we may find peace as we prepare for our Lord's birth. May divisions in ourselves and with other be peacefully resolved. Help us to see the paths of peace in our lives, and then give us the courage to follow them. Lord, let us remember that you only, are the giver of lasting peace. Amen.*

### **Prayer of Adoration (followed by Lord's Prayer)**

- L Lord God Almighty, King of glory and love eternal, you are worthy at all times to receive adoration, praise, and blessing; we praise you now for sending your Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ, for whom our hearts wait, and to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, be honor and dominion, now and for ever. Amen.
- Hear us now as we prayer together, the words you taught your disciples:
- A *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*

# Joy to the World

George Fredrick Handel

Isaac Watts



Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re - ceive her King;  
Joy to the earth, the Sa - vior reigns! Let all our songs em - ploy;  
No more let sins and sor - rows grow, Nor thorns in - fest the ground;  
He rules the world with truth and grace, And makes the na - tions prove



Let e - 'vry heart pre - pare Him room, And  
While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains Re -  
He comes to make His bless - ings flow Far  
The glo - ries of His right - eous - ness, And



heav'n and na - ture sing, And heav'n and na - ture sing, And  
- peat the sound - ing joy, Re - peat the sound - ing joy, Re -  
as the curse is found, Far as the curse is found, Far  
won - ders of His love, And won - ders of His love, And



heav'n, and heav'n, and na - ture sing.  
- peat, re - peat, the sound - ing joy.  
as, far as, the curse is found.  
won - ders, won - ders, of His love.

*All Sing: Canticle of the Turning*

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 one who waits.  
You fixed your sight on the 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?

Though I am small, my God, my all, you work great things in me.  
And your mercy will last from the depths of the past  
to the end of the age to be.  
Your very name puts the proud to shame,  
and to those who would for you yearn,  
You will show your might, put the strong to flight, for the world is about to turn.

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, ev'ry 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 forbears heard  
is the promise that holds us bound,  
'Til the spear and rod can be crushed by God, who is turning the world around  
(refrain)

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## MINISTRY OF THE WORD

### Preparation

- L Make us to know your ways, O LORD; teach us your paths. Lead us in your truth, and teach us, for you are the God of our salvation; for you we wait all day long. Amen. – *from Psalm 25:4-5, NRSV*

**Scripture** Luke 1:39-55 (found on Page 15)

**Series** Advent 2023

**Sermon** A Song

### Profession of Faith

- A *As followers of Jesus Christ,  
living in this world –  
which some seek to control,  
and others view with despair –  
we declare with joy and trust:  
Our world belongs to God!  
Remembering the promise  
to reconcile the world to himself,  
God joined our humanity in Jesus Christ –  
the eternal Word made flesh.  
He is the long-awaited Messiah,  
one with us and one with God,  
fully human and fully divine,  
conceived by the Holy Spirit  
and born of the virgin Mary.  
We long for that day when our bodies are raised,  
the Lord wipes away our tears,  
and we dwell forever in the presence of God.  
We will take our place in the new creation,  
where there will be no more death,  
or mourning or crying or pain,  
and the Lord will be our light.  
Come, Lord Jesus, come.*

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## CONFESSION & RENEWAL

- L The psalmist testifies: Come and hear, all you who fear God, and I will tell what he has done for me. If I had cherished iniquity in my heart, the Lord would not have listened. But truly God has listened; he has given heed to the words of my prayer. Blessed be God, because he has not rejected my prayer or removed his steadfast love from me. In the strength of this assurance, let us confess our sins to God.

– *based on Psalm 66:16, 18-20, NRSV*

## CONFESSION & RENEWAL

- A *Lord, we have not kept watch for you. We have occupied ourselves with our own concerns. We have not waited to find your will for us. We have not noticed the needs of the people around us. We have not acknowledged the love that has been shown to us. Forgive us for our lack of watchfulness. Help us to wait to know your will. Help us to look out for the needs of others. Help us to work and watch for your coming. Amen.*

## Silent and Personal Confession

## Creator of the Stars of Night

Alex Mejias

JM Neale (trans.)



Cre - a - tor of the stars of night, your peo - ple's ev - er -  
In sor - row that the an - cient curse should doom to death a  
When this old world drew on toward night You came, but not in  
At your great name, ma - jes - tic now, all knees must bend, all



- last - ing light, O Christ, Re - deem - er of us all, we pray you,  
u - ni - verse, you came to save a ru - ined race with heal - ing  
splen - dor bright Not as a mon - arch, but the child Of Ma - ry  
hearts must bow; all things on earth with one ac - cord join those in



hear us when we call.  
gifts of heav'n - ly grace. (2) Come, oh come,  
vir - gin mo - ther mild  
heav'n to call you Lord. (4) Come, oh come,



Come, oh come, Come, oh come, to us.  
Come, oh come, Come, oh come, to us.

## RENEWAL

L The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. And this is the name by which it will be called: "The Lord is our righteousness." People of God: Jesus Christ, our Lord, whose coming we announce in this season, is our righteousness. In Christ, we are made right with God.

— based on Jeremiah 33:14-16, NRSV

A *Thanks be to God!*

### Doxology

L What can I give him, poor as I am? If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb. If I were a wise man, I would do my part. Yet what I can, I give him, give him my heart.

*Praise God, from Whom all blessings flow.*

*Praise Him, all creatures here below.*

*Praise Him above, ye heavenly host.*

*Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.*

*Amen.*

### Prayer of Dedication

A *God of hope,  
you gave your Son to free a lost world.  
You give your Spirit to comfort and encourage.  
You give us hope for a future free of pain, sorrow, and tears.  
You promise us a future with you.  
In gratitude, we bring you our time, talents, and tithes.  
May our gifts be used so that many others will taste and see  
the goodness of knowing you.  
In Jesus' name we pray.  
Amen.*