



CHRIST
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH
MILFORD

November 28, 2021
1st Sunday of Advent

REFLECTION

Celebrating Messiah Jesus: Prince of Peace; Key of David

Child, when Herod wakes,
and hate or exploitation
swing their dripping swords,
from your cross and cradle
sing a new song.

Child, when Caesar's laws
choke love or strangle freedom,
calling darkness light,
from your cross and cradle
sing a new song.

Child, when Caiaphas
sends truth to crucifixion
to protect his prayers,
from your cross and cradle
sing a new song.

Child, your helpless love
brings death and resurrection;
joyfully we come
to your cross and cradle
with a new song—
Alleluia! Alleluia!

— Brian Wren (1936-)

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Advent + Christmas + Epiphany + Lent + Easter + Pentecost

Gathering Hymn

Come, Ye Thankful People, Come

1. Come, ye thank-ful peo-ple, come, raise the song of har-vest home;
 2. All the world is God's own field, fruit un-to his praise to yield;
 3. For the Lord our God shall come, and shall take his har-vest home;
 4. E-ven so, Lord, quick-ly come to thy fi-nal har-vest home;

all is safe-ly gath-ered in, ere the win-ter storms be-gin;
 wheat and tares to- geth-er sown, un-to joy or sor-row grown;
 from his field shall in that day all of-fens-es purge a-way;
 gath-er thou thy peo-ple in, free from sor-row, free from sin;

God, our Mak-er, doth pro-vide for our wants to be sup-plied:
 first the blade, and then the ear, then the full corn shall ap-pear:
 give his an-gels charge at last in the fire the tares to cast,
 there for-ev-er pu-ri-fied, in thy pres-ence to a-bide:

come to God's own tem-ple, come, raise the song of har-vest home.
 Lord of har-vest, grant that we whole-some grain and pure may be.
 but the fruit-ful ears to store in his gar-ner ev-er-more.
 come, with all thine an-gels, come, raise the glo-rious har-vest home.

1. Come, thou long - ex - spect - ed Je - sus, born to set thy peo - ple free;
 2. Joy to those who long to see thee, Day-spring from on high, ap - pear;
 3. Come to earth to taste our sad - ness, he whose glo - ries knew no end;
 4. Born thy peo - ple to de - liv - er, born a child and yet a king,

from our fears and sins re - lease us; let us find our rest in thee.
 come, thou prom - ised Rod of Jes - se, of thy birth we long to hear!
 by his life he brings us glad - ness, our Re - deem - er, Shep - herd, Friend.
 born to reign in us for - ev - er, now thy gra - cious king - dom bring.

Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion, hope of all the earth thou art,
 O'er the hills the an - gels sing - ing news, glad tid - ings of a birth:
 Leav - ing rich - es with - out num - ber, born with - in a cat - tle stall;
 By thine own e - ter - nal Spir - it rule in all our hearts a - lone;

dear De - sire of ev - 'ry na - tion, joy of ev - 'ry long - ing heart.
 "Go to him, your prais - es bring - ing; Christ the Lord has come to earth."
 this the ev - er - last - ing won - der, Christ was born the Lord of all.
 by thine all - suf - fi - cient mer - it, raise us to thy glo - rious throne.

— God + calls + cleanses + speaks + strengthens + sends —

Call to Worship Isaiah 9:2–7:

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;
those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness,
on them has light shined.

**You have multiplied the nation;
you have increased its joy;**

they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest,
as they are glad when they divide the spoil.

For the yoke of his burden, and the staff for his shoulder,
the rod of his oppressor,

you have broken as on the day of Midian.

For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult
and every garment rolled in blood
will be burned as fuel for the fire.

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given;

and the government shall be upon his shoulder,
and his name shall be called:

Wonderful Counselor; Mighty God; Everlasting Father; Prince of Peace.

Of the increase of his government and of peace
there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom,
to establish it and to uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time forth and forevermore.

The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

Invocation

Old Testament Lesson Jeremiah 23:1-8

Praise Hymn Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

— God + calls + cleanses + speaks + strengthens + sends —

Confession of Sin Reflection: Luke 1:11–23

Individual Confession

1. Com - fort, com - fort ye my peo - ple, speak ye peace, thus saith our God;
 2. Yea, her sins our God will par - don, blot - ting out each dark mis - deed;
 3. For the her - ald's voice is cry - ing in the des - ert far and near,
 4. Make ye straight what long was crook - ed, make the rough - er plac - es plain;

com - fort those who sit in dark - ness, mourn - ing 'neath their sor - row's load.
 all that well de - served his an - ger he no more will see or heed.
 bid - ding all men to re - pen - tance, since the king - dom now is here.
 let your hearts be true and hum - ble, as be - fits his ho - ly reign.

Speak ye to Je - ru - sa - lem of the peace that waits for them;
 She hath suf - fered man - y a day, now her griefs have passed a - way;
 O that warn - ing cry o - bey! Now pre - pare for God a way;
 For the glo - ry of the Lord now o'er earth is shed a - broad;

tell her that her sins I cov - er, and her war - fare now is o - ver.
 God will change her pin - ing sad - ness in - to ev - er - spring - ing glad - ness.
 let the val - leys rise to meet him, and the hills bow down to greet him.
 and all flesh shall see the to - ken that his word is nev - er bro - ken.

1. Once in roy - al Da - vid's cit - y stood a low - ly cat - tle shed,
 2. He came down to earth from heav - en who is God and Lord of all,
 3. And through all his won - drous child - hood he would hon - or and o - bey,
 4. And our eyes at last shall see him, through his own re - deem - ing love;
 5. Not in that poor low - ly sta - ble, with the ox - en stand - ing by,

where a moth - er laid her ba - by in a man - ger for his bed:
 and his shel - ter was a sta - ble, and his cra - dle was a stall:
 • love and watch the low - ly maid - en in whose gen - tle arms he lay:
 for that child so dear and gen - tle is our Lord in heav'n a - bove,
 we shall see him, but in heav - en, set at God's right hand on high;

Mar - y was that moth - er mild, Je - sus Christ her lit - tle child.
 with the poor, and mean, and low - ly, lived on earth our Sav - ior ho - ly.
 • Chris - tian chil - dren all must be mild, o - be - dient, good as he.
 and he leads his chil - dren on to the place where he is gone.
 when like stars his chil - dren crowned all in white shall wait a - round.

Confession of Faith The Apostle's Creed (1st Century)
 I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and earth;
 And in Jesus Christ, His only Son Our Lord,
 Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
 born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate,

was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended into Hell;

the third day He rose again from the dead;

He ascended into Heaven, and sits at the right hand of God, the Father almighty;
from there He shall come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic* Church,
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body and life everlasting. Amen.

*that is, the universal church

Communion in Christ Jesus

All Christians are invited to receive Christ's presence of bread and wine. When directed please take your bulletin, stand and form a circle around the worship space. Whether you intend to take communion or not, please join us in the circle. If you are not able to stand, please move your chair into the circle. We serve wine in the outer rings of the tray in the Lord's Supper, believing it to be the Biblical element used. We provide grape juice in the inner rings for those who, out of conscience or for health, do not drink wine.

Communion Hymn

Lo, how a rose e'er blooming (verses 1-3)

Prayer for those searching

Oh God, I am discovering that the more I have, the more I need to have, the more I am loved, the more I need to be loved, the more I achieve, the more I need to achieve. Nothing seems to satisfy me. Could it be, as someone once said, that "Our hearts are restless until they find their rest in thee." Dear God, if this is true, and if as the Bible teaches there is life and life eternal in Christ alone, please guide me to Him. Open me to the reality of the One who alone can satisfy my restless heart. Give me the courage to believe that which I cannot see but can understand, feel and touch through the Word, sacraments and church family. Lord I want to believe, help my unbelief! Amen.

— God + calls + cleanses + speaks + strengthens + sends —

Coronation Hymn

Lo, how a rose e'er blooming (verses 4-5)

Benediction

Numbers 6.24-26

The LORD bless you and keep you;

the LORD make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you;

the LORD lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.

1. Lo, how a rose e'er bloom - ing from ten - der
 2. I - sa - iah 'twas fore - told it, the rose I
 3. The shep - herds heard the sto - ry, pro - claimed by
 4. This flow'r, whose fra - grance ten - der with sweet - ness
 5. O Sav - ior, child of Mar - y, who felt our

stem hath sprung, of Jes - se's lin - eage com - ing,
 have in mind; with Mar - y we be - hold it,
 • an - gels bright, how Christ, the Lord of glo - ry.
 fills the air, dis - pels with glo - rious splen - dor
 hu - man woe; O Sav - ior, King of glo - ry,

as men of old have sung. It came, a flow'r - et bright,
 the vir - gin moth - er kind. To show God's love a - right
 • was born on earth this night. To Beth - le - hem they sped
 the dark - ness ev - 'ry - where. True man, yet ver - y God;
 who dost our weak - ness know, bring us at length, we pray,

a - mid the cold of win - ter, when half - spent was the night.
 she bore to men a Sav - ior, when half - spent was the night.
 • and in the man - ger found him, as an - gel her - alds said.
 from sin and death he saves us and light - ens ev - 'ry load.
 to the bright courts of heav - en and to the end - less day.

REFLECTION

*O Key of David and scepter of the House of Israel;
you open and no one can shut;
you shut and no one can open:
Come and lead the prisoners from the prison house,
those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death.*

The End of War—on Isaiah 2:1-4

1. Isaiah lived to see his prediction that Zion would not fall to Assyria fulfilled in the overthrow of Sennacherib, King of Assyria, by the act of the Lord. Maybe this poem arose from his conviction, excited and confirmed by this deliverance, that the great Zion-based promises would yet be fulfilled. At all events, the fact that the poem is found in two prophets [see also Micah 4:1-4] indicates its popular currency. In the present setting Isaiah uses it to challenge the people to face up to what, possibly, they were singing with glib detachment. If others are ever to say Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, (v. 3) Judah must heed the call Come, ...let us walk in the light of the LORD (v. 5)... The presence and truth of the Lord (v. 2-3a) exercises a supernatural magnetism, producing a reordered world (v. 4a) and a new humanity (v. 4b)...

2. In the last days or 'at the end of the days' is the undated future, neither necessarily far nor certainly near. It is also known as 'the day of the Lord' bringing both judgment and victory leading to peace: the consummation and enjoyment of God's rule. The prophets insist on the certainty of what God will do and the present necessity of readiness. What had always been known to be true of Zion [that it is the joy of the whole earth] will be universally recognized.

Mountains were widely held to be the homes of the gods. The exaltation of the mountain of the LORD's temple, the mountain where he lives, typifies therefore a supernatural triumph of the Lord over all gods. The construction of will be established stresses fact and continuance....The incongruity of a stream flowing upwards to earth's highest point is intentional; a supernatural magnetism is at work.

3. The peoples come voluntarily, notwithstanding the supernatural magnetism stressed by verse 2. Their coming transcends nationalism: they acknowledge the God of a single nation, the God of Jacob, as the God of all nations. They are moved by the desire 'that he may teach' and they affirm 'so that we may walk'. (This is true knowledge: a grasp of truth issuing in redirection of life.) They also come responsively 'for law will go forth': Zion is the source of a law, a 'teaching' which is nothing less than the word of the LORD, veritable divine revelation.

4. In human political thinking the reduction of armaments is a hoped-for cause of peace and this is not without truth, but for Isaiah the abolition of armaments follows a divine reordering of the world consequent upon the transcending of nationalism by the recognition of the one true God. To judge means to 'make authoritative pronouncements', and to settle disputes means to 'arbitrate'. The means of war (beat their swords), the practice of war (take up sword) and the mentality of war (train for war) all alike disappear. The choice of agricultural implements (ploughshares and pruning hooks) is symbolic of the return to the Garden of Eden: people right with God again; the curse removed; the end of the serpent's dominion; an ideal environment.

—Alec Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah* (1993)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Community Group | Meeting tonight, Nov. 28, at the Bishops for Friendsgiving! Check the weekly email for a link to sign up to bring a dish, drink or side.

Men's Breakfast | Wednesdays at 7am, Pop's Restaurant (134 Old Gate Ln.). We meet with no agenda but to create space for guys to form a strong community where important questions can be discussed and answered. Feel free to invite friends and neighbors.

Thursday Night Prayer Meeting | 7-7:50pm. Regular prayer for each other, our community, our world and the redemptive work of God is essential to our mission. Please join us as we follow a short prayer and scripture liturgy and pray for each other.
[Zoom link](#) | Meeting ID: 899 5618 6470 | Passcode: 355978

Sunday Worship | We'll be meeting at the Fowler Building (parking at I Shipyard Ln.) for December 5th, 12th & 19th; back at the MAC (40 Railroad Ave. S.) for the 26th.

Men's & Women's Bible Studies | Women's meets Dec. 4th, 9-10:30am. Men's meets Dec. 18th, 9-10:30am. RSVP for either study to info@cpcmilford.org.

Men's & Women's Monthly Fellowship | Generally 3rd Fridays, rotating months. Women are meeting Friday, Dec. 10th. RSVP to info@cpcmilford.org.

Contact us

203.812.9928 | cpcmilford@gmail.com | facebook.com/CPCMilford | cpcmilford.org

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