



The mission of GPPC is to embody God's love by cultivating community, practicing hope, repairing harm, and doing justice as Jesus did.

January 5, 2025

Second Sunday of Christmas

11:00am

+ indicates you are invited to stand

Bold print indicates congregation in unison

We are grateful to be gathered here in the Almond Creek-James River watershed, which we share with a diversity of plants and creatures, including the flowering dogwood, butterfly milkweed, striped bass, northern cardinal, and red fox.

We acknowledge that this land is the traditional territory of the Powhatan Confederacy. May we nurture our relationship with all our neighbors, and our shared responsibilities to this watershed where we gather today.

GATHERING

The act of assembling in Jesus' name bears witness to the Church's identity and mission as Christ's body in the world.

Gather your thoughts and feelings. Entrust yourself to God's saving grace.

Prelude What Star Is This, with Beams So Bright Paul Manz

Greeting and Announcements

Introit Doug Brown

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. - John 1:5

Call to Worship [adapted from a prayer by Pat Bennett]

One: Inspiring Word, move the chaos within us; call forth form and order

All: that we may know you in our shaping and, in the shaping, surrender our lives to yours.

One: Illuminating Word, pierce the darkness within us; call forth insight and understanding

All: that we may know you in our seeing and, in seeing, follow the way of your kingdom.

One: Incarnate Word, dwell within us; call forth passion and purpose

All: that we may know you in our living, and in living, embody you for the world.

+ Hymn 127 Hark! The Herald Angels Sing (Jesus, the Light of the World)

Prayer of Confession [by Sarah Are Speed, sanctifiedart.org]

Kenyan traditional

One: Loving God, we are forgetful people. We confess that we want reconciliation to be quick and easy.

All: Remind us of the long walk to Bethlehem.

One: We are tempted to overlook the outcasts in our society.

All: Remind us of the shepherds and their faithful witness.

One: We expect that you will move in us, and we don't feel compelled to seek you out.

All: Remind us of the magi—the way they searched for you, and the gifts they brought.

One: We get caught up in the business of our days.

All: Remind us of Mary and how she treasured sacred moments in her heart.

One: We wake up thinking only of ourselves.

All: Remind us of the daily choice we have to open our doors to people in need.

One: We lose our way and forget you.

All: Remind us to look for your guiding light.

One: We are a forgetful people.

All: Forgive us, we pray.

Silent prayer

Assurance of Forgiveness

+ Gloria

VOM HIMMEL HOCH

Glo - ry to God in high - est heaven, who un - to us his Son has given. —

— With an - gels sing in pi - ous mirth: peace and good will to all — the earth.

WORD

Where the scriptures are read and proclaimed, Jesus Christ, the living Word, is present by the power of the Holy Spirit. God's Spirit also evokes our response. Through singing, affirmation, and prayer, with the help of God's Spirit, we discern Jesus Christ, receive Christ's grace, and resolve to follow Christ's way.

Prayer for Illumination

Scripture

Jeremiah 31:7-14 [NRSVUE]

For thus says the Lord: Sing aloud with gladness for Jacob, and raise shouts for the chief of the nations; proclaim, give praise, and say, "Save, O Lord, your people, the remnant of Israel." See, I am going to bring them from the land of the north and gather them from the farthest parts of the earth, among them the blind and the lame, those with child and those in labor together; a great company, they shall return here. With weeping they shall come, and with consolations I will lead them back; I will let them walk by brooks of water, in a straight path where they shall not stumble, for I have become a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn.

Hear the word of the Lord, O nations, and declare it in the coastlands far away; say, "He who scattered Israel will gather him and will keep him as a shepherd does a flock." For the Lord has ransomed Jacob and has redeemed him from hands too strong for him. They shall come and sing aloud on the height of Zion, and they shall be radiant over the goodness of the Lord, over the grain, the wine, and the oil, and over the young of the flock and the herd; their life shall become like a watered garden, and they shall never languish again. Then shall the young women rejoice in the dance, and the young men and the old shall be merry. I will turn their mourning into joy; I will comfort them and give them gladness for sorrow. I will give the priests their fill of fatness, and my people shall be satisfied with my bounty, says the Lord.

Psalms 147:12-20

One: Praise the Holy One, O Jerusalem!
Praise your God, O Zion!

**All: For God strengthens the bars of your gates and blesses your children within you.
God grants peace within your borders and fills you with the finest of wheat.**

One: God's command is sent out to the earth; the word of God runs swiftly.
God gives snow like wool and scatters frost like ashes.

**All: God hurls down hail like crumbs – who can stand before the cold of the LORD?
God's word is sent forth and melts them; God makes the wind blow, and the waters flow.**

One: God's word is declared to Jacob,
God's statutes and ordinances to Israel.

**All: The LORD has not dealt thus with any other nation;
to them God's ordinances have not been revealed. Praise the Holy One!**

John 1:1-18 [NRSVUE]

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it.

There was a man sent from God whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

He was in the world, and the world came into being through him, yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of any human will, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. (John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.'") From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. It is the only Son, himself God, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

One: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

All: Thanks be to God.

Sermon Carla Pratt Keyes

+ Hymn 753 *Make Me a Channel of Your Peace*

+ Affirmation of Faith [from the Iona Community]

We believe in God whose love is the source of all life and the desire of our lives, whose love was given a human face in Jesus of Nazareth, whose love was crucified by the evil that waits to enslave us all, and whose love, defeating even death, is our glorious promise of freedom. Therefore, though we are sometimes fearful and full of doubt, in God we trust and, in the name of Jesus Christ, we commit ourselves, in the service of others, to seek justice and to live in peace, to care for the earth and to share the commonwealth of God's goodness, to live in the freedom of forgiveness and the power of the Spirit of love, and in the company of the faithful so to be the Church for the glory of God.

+ Somos Uno (Hymn 322)

We are one in Christ Jesus, all one body, all one spirit, all together.

Somos uno en Cristo, somos uno, somos uno, uno solo.

**We share one God, one mighty Lord, one abiding faith, one binding love,
One single baptism, one Holy Comforter, the Holy Spirit, uniting all.**

Prayers of the People

EUCCHARIST

The Lord's Supper is the sign and seal of our communion with the crucified and risen Lord.

We celebrate with thanksgiving (eukharistia) the grace (kharis) with which Jesus welcomes us to sit at his table, eat what will satisfy our deepest hungers, and feed others as we've been fed.

We offer ourselves in response to Christ's wonderful offering of love.

Offering



Everyone is invited to place tithes, offerings, visitor cards, or any other communications to the Pastor or staff in the designated wall boxes beside each door at the back of the Sanctuary or signal an usher to bring you the offering plate.

Monetary gifts and pledges to GPPC may also be given online at <https://www.ginterparkpc.org/giving>, or by using the QR Code to the left.

Today we receive Epiphany stars – paper stars printed with words that signify gifts of God's Spirit. Please choose a star without peeking at the gift written on it! Then wear it; there's a pin attached.

We hope that in the coming year you may discover in your gift something of God's presence in (and purpose for) your life.

Offertory

Torches

John Joubert

Torches, torches, run with torches all the way to Bethlehem! Christ is born and now lies sleeping; come and sing your song to him! Ah, Roro, Roro, my baby, ah, Roro, my love, Roro; Sleep you well, my heart's own darling, while we sing you our Roro. Sing, my friends, and make you merry, joy and mirth and joy again; Lo, he lives, the King of heaven, now and evermore. Amen. trad. Galician, tr. J.B. Trend

+ Doxology (Hymn 607)

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise Christ, all people here below;
praise Holy Spirit evermore; praise Triune God, whom we adore.**

Invitation to Communion

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving and the Lord's Prayer

One: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

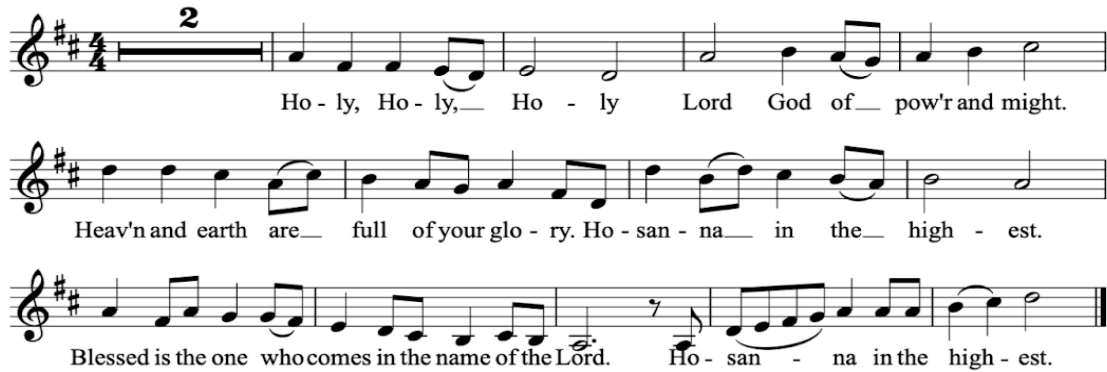
One: Lift up your hearts.

All: We lift them to the Lord.

One: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

One: It is good to give you thanks, O God, source of abundant life. In Jesus is your eternal Word, the reflection of your glory. In him you have become one with us that we might become one with you.



2

Ho - ly, Ho - ly, Ho - ly Lord God of pow'r and might.
Heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.
Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

One: Thank you for Jesus, who proclaimed your dream of peace. He gave himself for our weary world, accepting death so that we might live and setting us free to love. Remembering his death and resurrection and longing for his coming in glory, we offer you these gifts of bread and cup and our lives in thanks and praise.

Pour out your Spirit upon these gifts, that they may be the body and blood of our Savior Jesus Christ. Pour out your Spirit upon us, that we might be a people of grace and truth, bearing good news of joy in every season. Then bring us at the last with Mary and Joseph and all your saints to that vision of eternal splendor for which you have created us. Through Jesus Christ our Lord, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, we worship you, O God, in songs of everlasting praise.

All: 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.

Breaking of the Bread

(Bread is gluten-free and vegan with honey.)

Please come forward to receive communion.

Servers have used hand sanitizer. Please hold your hand flat to receive the bread and take a cup from the tray.

You can consume those elements once you've returned to your pew, or while seated briefly on a front pew.

Please return to your seat by a side aisle.

If you cannot easily come forward, we will happily bring the elements to your pew.

After others have been served, please raise your hand to signal us.

Music during Communion

Prayer after Communion

SENDING

Our worship and service do not end with the postlude; we go forth to love and serve God in our daily lives.

+ Hymn 152 *What Star Is This, with Beams So Bright*

+ Charge and Blessing

+ The Peace

One: The peace of Christ be with you.

All: And also with you.

+ Postlude

Noel Suisse

Louis Claude D'Aquin

ABOUT WORSHIP

WORSHIP LEADERS: GPPC's Director of Music is Doug Brown. Our lector is Heather Kay. Our livestream operator is Anna Creech. Tom Hobbs is lead usher.

HEARING ASSISTANCE DEVICES are available in the Narthex. Please see today's greeter or an usher.

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