Christmas Tableaux

December 15, 2024

3:30 | 5:15 | 7:00 | 8:15 pm

Welcome to this celebration of the Lord's birth. Please silence your cell phone, refrain from photography, and try to minimize talking. We do understand that children will want to wiggle, whisper, and point and that's just fine. We're glad you came.

✠ Order of Service ✠

Hymn: "It Came Upon a Midnight Clear" (971)

Opening of the Word & the Lord's Prayer

> Our Father, who art in the heavens, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, as in heaven so upon the earth. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts as we also 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.

1. The Prophecy of Isaiah
2. An Angel Appears to Zacharias
3. The Annunciation to Mary
4. Joseph's Dream
5. Mary Visits Elizabeth
6. The Naming of John
7. Going to Be Registered
8. Shepherds & Nativity
   You will be invited to "go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass." Go up the center aisle to see the nativity scene and return by the side aisles.
9. Simeon Meets Jesus
10. The Journey of the Wise Men
11. The Child Grew
12. The Word Became Flesh and Dwelt Among Us

Hymn: "Break Forth, O Beauteous Heavenly Light" (965)

Benediction & Closing of the Word

Hymn: "Joy to the World" (962)

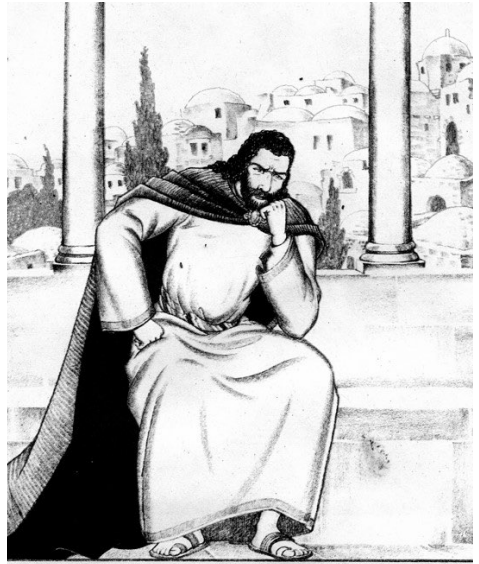> *Begin singing with the choir, after a long introduction.*

Jehovah God came down and took on a human form, so as to restore to order everything in heaven, everything in hell, and everything in the church. For at the time of His coming the power of hell had become stronger than the power of heaven, and on earth the power of evil had become stronger than the power of good, so that total damnation stood threatening at the door. (*True Christianity* 3)

It is a universal point of faith that no mortal could have been saved, if the Lord had not come into the world. It is a universal point of faith that He came into the world to take hell away from the human race. (*True Christianity* 2)

Jesus was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written:

"The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me,
Because He has anointed Me
To preach the gospel to the poor;
He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted,
To proclaim liberty to the captives
And recovery of sight to the blind,
To set at liberty those who are oppressed;
To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD."

Then He closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him. And He began to say to them, "Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing." (Luke 4:17-21)

Jesus was born into this world "in the days of Herod the king"– at a time when evil seemed to have complete control. The good people that remained, like Simeon, longed for "the Consolation of Israel," but, like the old priest Zacharias and his wife Elizabeth, they were barren and unable to bring new life into the dark world. That is, until the messengers of the Lord started appearing to people, bringing unbelievably good news– "good tidings of great joy which will be to all people."

Such news is hard to believe. It is hard to believe that our prayers have been heard and that things will change for the better. The power of evil remains awfully strong in this world and still causes much harm, but that little baby born in Bethlehem still has the power to "save His people from their sins." Let us again come to marvel at and ponder the significance of the Lord's birth into this world and be renewed in our innocent trust in His care for us and His ability "to guide our feet into the way of peace."

Join us for our other Christmas services:

Lessons & Carols Vespers - Dec. 22 - 7:30 pm
Christmas Eve Family Services - Dec. 24 - 4:00 | 5:30 | 7:00 pm
Christmas Day Adult Service - Dec. 25 - 11:30 am

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