

Christmas Creed:

**I believe in Jesus Christ
and in the beauty of the gospel begun in Bethlehem.**

**I believe in the one whose spirit glorified a little town;
and whose spirit still brings music to persons all over the world,
in towns both large and small.**

**I believe in the one for whom the crowded inn could find no room,
and I confess that my heart still sometimes
wants to exclude Christ from my life today.**

**I believe in the one who the rulers of the earth ignored
and the proud could never understand;
whose life was among common people,
whose welcome came from persons of hungry hearts.**

**I believe in the one who proclaimed the love of God to be invincible:
I believe in the one whose cradle was a mother's arms,
whose modest home in Nazareth had love for its only wealth,
who looked at persons and made them see
what God's love saw in them, who by love brought sinners back to
purity, and lifted human weakness up to meet the strength of God.**

**I confess my ever-lasting need of God:
The need of forgiveness for our selfishness and greed,
the need of new life for empty souls,
the need of love for hearts grown cold.**

**I believe in God who gives us the best of himself.
I believe in Jesus, the son of the living God,
born in Bethlehem this night, for me and for the world. Amen.**

Closing Hymn #189 *Fairest Lord Jesus*

Benediction

Postlude

O Holy Night, Millie Hudson-vocalist



Riverside Park United Methodist Church

1st Sunday after Christmas

December 26, 2021

10:30 a.m.

Prelude

From Heaven Above to Earth I Come (Pachelbel)
Rich Lewis-organist

Welcome & Greeting

Announcements

Opening Song: #246 *Joy to the World*

Kids Message: Lighting the Christ Candle

Prayer

Offering Music

On This Day Earth Shall Ring (Hobby)
Rich Lewis-organist

Lessons and Carols for Christmas

Matthew 1:18-21 [Jesus is Announced]

On the one hand [Mary] was just a girl, an immature and frightened girl who had the good sense to believe what an angel told her in what seemed like a dream. On the other hand, she was the mother of the Son of God, with faith enough to move mountains, to sing about the victories of her son as if he were already at the right hand of his father instead of a dollop of cells in her womb. ... When we allow God to be born in us, there is no telling, no telling at all, what will come out.

— Barbara Brown Taylor, Mixed Blessings

Hymn #196 “Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus”

Matthew 1:22-25 [Jesus is born]

The virgin birth has never been a major stumbling block in my struggle with Christianity; it's far less mind-boggling than the Power of all Creation stooping so low as to become one of us.

— Madeleine L'Engle, A Stone for a Pillow

Hymn #218 It Came Upon a Midnight Clear

Matthew 2:1-6 [Jesus is Sought]

Man's maker was made man that He, Ruler of the stars, might nurse at His mother's breast; that the Bread might hunger, the Fountain thirst, the Light sleep, the Way be tired on its journey; that Truth might be accused of false witnesses, the Teacher be beaten with whips, the Foundation be suspended on wood; that Strength might grow weak; that the Healer might be wounded; that Life might die.

—Augustine of Hippo

Hymn # 249 There's a Song in the Air

Matthew 2:7-12 [Jesus is found with Rejoicing]

The Lord did not come to make a display. He came to heal and to teach suffering men. For one who wanted to make a display the thing would have been just to appear and dazzle the beholders. But for Him Who came to heal and to teach the way was not merely to dwell here, but to put Himself at the disposal of those who needed Him, and to be manifested according as they could bear it, not vitiating the value of the Divine appearing by exceeding their capacity to receive it.

— Athanasius of Alexandria, On the Incarnation

Hymn #240 Hark the Herald Angels Sing

Luke 2:21-33 [Jesus with Simeon]

The Son of God became man to enable men to become the sons of God.

— C. S. Lewis, Mere Christianity

Hymn #238 Angels We Have Heard on High

Luke 2:36-40 [Jesus with Anna who is Praising God]

And in the Incarnation the whole human race recovers the dignity of the image of God. Henceforth, any attack even on the least of men is an attack on Christ, who took the form of man, and in his own Person restored the image of God in all that bears a human form. Through fellowship and communion with the incarnate Lord, we recover our true humanity, and at the same time we are delivered from that individualism which is the consequence of sin, and retrieve our solidarity with the whole human race. By being partakers of Christ incarnate, we are partakers in the whole humanity which he bore. We now know that we have been taken up and borne in the humanity of Jesus, and therefore that new nature we now enjoy means that we too must bear the sins and sorrows of others.

The incarnate Lord makes his followers the brothers of all mankind.

— Dietrich Bonhoeffer, The Cost of Discipleship

Hymn #251 Go Tell it On the Mountain