



CHRISTMAS ACCORDING TO

Mary



NOVEMBER 27, 2022

Welcome to Mercy Presbyterian Church

Thank you for joining us in worship today. If you are visiting with us, we are delighted that you have chosen to be with us and our desire is to be a blessing to you. Our prayer is that God will transform our lives and enable us to live for His glory and the good of the world. We would love to get to know you better and answer any questions you may have. Please share your information with us by emailing us at church@mercydallas.com.

Our Worship

You will notice that we follow a thoughtful and connected rhythm in our worship, called liturgy. The order of our worship reflects the work of the gospel in our hearts. In worship, we come together to tell the story of the gospel by the structure of our worship, the content of our worship, and the way that we worship.

Parents of Young Children

We believe the church is for all people, young and old, and want Mercy to be a church where children are seen, heard, and loved. We invite you to involve your children in our service, help them understand what is going on, sing the songs with you, and participate in worship. Children learn how to worship by imitating you. We say and sing parts of our worship service every week in order to help our young children to participate. Children's bulletins with coloring activities are available by the door to the sanctuary. Nursery is also available for babies and toddlers.

Series Overview | Advent 2022

Advent means the arrival of a notable person or event. In the season of Advent, we remember what the arrival of God in the flesh meant and why it is worth celebrating. This year, Mercy will consider the significance of the first Christmas from the perspective of those who lived through the first Christmas - those who were there for the most important advent in the history of the world: Mary, Zechariah, the angels, and Simeon and Anna. Join us for this celebration of the first coming of Jesus so that we may together look forward to his second coming.

Christmas According to Mary | Luke 1:46-55

Mary magnifies the Lord in song for the child God has bestowed upon her. Themes will include God working through those of humble estate, Mary's gratitude even when the event has made her an outcast, and the double-meaning of Mary's prophetic words concerning Israel, which she cannot anticipate will be fulfilled through the cross.



ORDER OF WORSHIP
The Lord's Day | November 27, 2022

REFLECTION

Then the Grinch thought of something he hadn't before! What if Christmas, he thought, doesn't come from a store. What if Christmas...perhaps...means a little bit more!

- Dr. Seuss, How the Grinch Stole Christmas

I will honour Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year. I will live in the Past, the Present, and the Future. The Spirits of all Three shall strive within me. I will not shut out the lessons that they teach.

- Charles Dickens, A Christmas Carol

INVOCATION | *We pray for God's presence, power and blessing in worship*

CALL TO WORSHIP | *God invites us into His presence to worship Him*

Luke 1:50-55

And his mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.

He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts;

He has brought down the mighty from their thrones and exalted those of humble estate;

He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty.

He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy,

As he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his offspring forever.

HYMN OF ADORATION | *We sing praises to God*

O Come All Ye Faithful

Words and Music by John Francis Wade | Public Domain

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant!
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem!
Come and behold him, born the King of angels.

O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

God from true God, and light from Light eternal,
Born of a virgin, to earth he comes!
Only-begotten Son of God the Father:

O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above!
Glory to God, all glory in the highest:

O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning;
Jesus, to thee be all glory giv'n!
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing:

O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

ADVENT DOXOLOGY | *(Glory Words) We praise the Triune God*

O come, let us adore Him, O come let us adore Him.
O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.
We'll praise Your name forever, we'll praise your name forever.
We'll praise Your name forever, Christ the Lord.

CORPORATE PRAYER OF CONFESSION | *We acknowledge our sin and ask for God's grace*

Lord Jesus, in your incarnation you are the bread of life, but we have preferred our own food. You are the light of the world, but we have preferred darkness. You are the door, but we have looked for another way. You are the good shepherd, but we think we don't need a shepherd. You are the resurrection and the life, but we don't see ourselves as dead and therefore do not need your life. You are the way, the truth, and the life, but we have opted for lies. You are the true vine, but we have pretended to be our own vine. Please forgive our foolishness, and help us to see you as the all in all. Amen.

SILENT CONFESSION

ASSURANCE OF PARDONING GRACE | *God forgives our sins and gives us grace*

Proverbs 28:13

Whoever conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy.

HYMN OF ADVENT | *We celebrate God's gift of grace*

Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus

Words by Charles Wesley | Music by Rowland Prichard | Public Domain

Come Thou long-expected Jesus born to set Thy people free;
From our fears and sins release us, let us find our rest in Thee.
Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the saints Thou art;
Dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart.

Joy to those who long to see Thee, day-spring from on high appear
Come, thou promised Rod of Jesse of Thy birth we long to hear
O'er the hills the angels singing news glad tidings of a birth
Go to Him your praises bringing Christ the Lord has come to earth.

Come to earth to taste our sadness, He whose glories knew no end
By His life He brings us gladness our Redeemer Shepherd Friend
Leaving riches without number born within a cattle stall
This the ever lasting wonder Christ was born Lord of all.

Born Thy people to deliver, born a child and yet a King,
Born to reign in us forever, now Thy gracious kingdom bring.
By Thine own eternal Spirit rule in all our hearts alone;
By Thine all sufficient merit, raise us to Thy glorious throne.

BAPTISM

Jonathan Porter LeCroy

Parental Vows

1. Do you acknowledge your child's need of the cleansing blood of Jesus Christ, and the renewing grace of the Holy Spirit?
2. Do you claim God's covenant promises in his behalf, and do you look in faith to the Lord Jesus Christ for his salvation, as you do for your own?
3. Do you now unreservedly dedicate your child to God, and promise, in humble reliance upon divine grace, that you will endeavor to set before him a godly example, that you will pray with and for him, that you will teach him the doctrines of our holy religion, and that you will strive, by all the means of God's appointment, to bring him up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord?

Congregational Vow

Do you as a congregation undertake the responsibility of assisting these parents in the Christian nurture of this child?

CONFESSION OF FAITH | *We confess what we believe*

The Heidelberg Catechism | Q66

What are sacraments?

Sacraments are visible, holy signs and seals. They were instituted by God so that by our use of them he might make us understand more clearly the promise of the gospel, and seal that promise. And this is God's gospel promise: to grant us forgiveness of sins and eternal life by grace because of Christ's one sacrifice accomplished on the cross.

PASTORAL PRAYER AND LORD'S PRAYER | *We lift up our requests to God*

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.

HYMN OF PREPARATION | *We prepare our hearts to hear God's Word*

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

Translated by Theodore Baker | 15th c. German Carol | Public Domain

Lo, how a rose e'er blooming, from tender stem hath sprung,
Of Jesse's lineage coming, as men of old have sung.
It came, a floweret bright, amid the cold of winter,
When half-spent was the night.

Isaiah 'twas foretold it, the rose I have in mind;
With Mary we behold it, the virgin mother kind.
To show God's love aright, she bore to men a Savior,
When half-spent was the night.

The shepherds heard the story, proclaimed by angels bright,
How Christ, the Lord of glory, was born on earth this night.
To Bethlehem they sped, and in the manger found Him,
As angel heralds said.

This flow'r, whose fragrance tender, with sweetness fills the air,
Dispels with glorious splendor, the darkness ev'rywhere.
True man, yet very God, from sin and death He saves us,
And lightens ev'ry load.

O Savior, child of Mary, Who felt our human woe;
O Savior, King of Glory, Who dost our weakness know,
Bring us at length, we pray, to the bright courts of heaven
And to the endless day.

CHILDREN'S SERMON

CHILDREN'S CHURCH DISMISSAL | *Children 4 years old through 2nd grade*

Mary's Song of Praise: The Magnificat

⁴⁶ And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord,
⁴⁷ and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
⁴⁸ for he has looked on the humble estate of his servant.
For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed;
⁴⁹ for he who is mighty has done great things for me,
and holy is his name.
⁵⁰ And his mercy is for those who fear him
from generation to generation.
⁵¹ He has shown strength with his arm;
he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts;
⁵² he has brought down the mighty from their thrones
and exalted those of humble estate;
⁵³ he has filled the hungry with good things,
and the rich he has sent away empty.
⁵⁴ He has helped his servant Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,
⁵⁵ as he spoke to our fathers,
to Abraham and to his offspring forever."

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

SERMON NOTES

INTERLUDE

CELEBRATION OF THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER | *The family meal of Christians*

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, making us in your image. We praise you for your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ, who by His death on the cross and rising to new life offered the one true sacrifice for sin and obtained an eternal deliverance for His people. Therefore, we lift our voices to praise you, saying:

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest!

PRAYER

Gracious God, we thank you for these gifts of bread and wine, and pray that we who receive them, in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, according to our Savior's word, may share in victory and eternal life.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.

Hallelujah! Christ our Passover has been sacrificed for us.

Therefore, let us keep the feast. Hallelujah!

The gifts of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God!

PARTAKING OF THE ELEMENTS

The Lord's Supper, also called Communion or the Eucharist, is the family meal of Christians. We invite followers of Jesus Christ to partake of this sacrament: those who have believed the good news, have repented of their sins, and are baptized members in good standing in the Lord's Church. If you are not a Christian, or if you are not prepared to share in this meal, we encourage you to spend this time in prayer. We hope that this time is helpful to you as you consider your relationship with Jesus Christ and with His people, the Church.

Please consider offering your tithes as a physical act of worship by placing your offering in the tithe box located at the entrance to the sanctuary.

Prayer for Those Searching for Truth

Lord Jesus, you claim to be the way, the truth, and the life. Grant that I might be undaunted by the cost of following you as I consider the reasons for doing so. If what you claim is true, please guide me, teach me, and open to me the reality of who you are. Give me an understanding of you that is coherent, convincing, and that leads to the life that you promise. Amen.

Prayer for Awakening

Lord Jesus, I have heard from the Bible for years, and have been in church for years, but very little of this seems real to me. Please show me the reality of what you are saying. Unnerve me with the badness of the bad news. Enthrall me with the goodness of the good news. Make what is familiar seem new. Amen.

Prayer of Belief

Lord Jesus, I admit that I am weaker and more sinful than I ever before believed, but through you I am more loved and accepted than I ever dared to hope. I thank you for paying my debt, bearing my punishment on the cross, and offering forgiveness and new life. Knowing that you have been raised from the dead, I turn from my sins and receive you as Savior and Lord. Amen.

Prayer for Covenant Children

Lord Jesus, thank you for giving me the opportunity to grow up in a Christian family where I am surrounded by the good news of the gospel. Help me to grow in my understanding of who you are and what you have done for me on the cross. Help me learn what it means for me to turn from my sins and trust in you alone for my salvation. Teach me what it means to follow you as one of your disciples. Amen.

Prayer for Those Struggling Against Sin

Lord Jesus, give me the ability to see in you the fulfillment of all my needs and desires, and help me to turn from every false source of satisfaction to feed on you, the true and living bread. Enable me to lay aside the sin that clings so closely to me, and run with perseverance the race that you have set before me, looking only to you, the author and perfecter of my faith. Amen.

COMMUNION HYMN | *We celebrate the family meal of Christians*

The First Noel

Traditional English Carol, 17th century | Public Domain

The first Noel the angel did say
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep,
On a cold winter's night that was so deep.
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, born is the King of Israel.

They looked up and saw a star
Shining in the east, beyond them far;
And to the earth it gave great light,
And so it continued both day and night.
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, born is the King of Israel.

And by the light of that same star
Three Wise Men came from country far;
To seek for a king was their intent,
And to follow the star wherever it went.
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, born is the King of Israel.

Then let us with all one accord
Sing praises to our heavenly Lord
That hath made heaven and earth of naught
And with His blood mankind hath bought.
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, born is the King of Israel.

GLORIA PATRI | *(Glory to the Father) We praise the Triune God*

Gloria, in excelsis Deo.
Gloria, in excelsis Deo.

BENEDICTION | *God sends us out into the world with His blessing*

Romans 15:13

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.

DISMISSAL | *God sends us out into the world*

Let us go forth to serve the world as those who love our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. **Thanks be to God!**

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What did it mean for Mary to be pregnant out of wedlock? How does she respond? How does her response challenge you?
2. Consider verses 51 and 52. What does the coming of the Messiah mean for the proud and mighty? How have you been proud? How have you seen yourself as mighty?
3. In verse 53, God is disposed toward the poor. How do you share in God's disposition?
4. Mary sings that her child is the fulfillment of things spoken to Abraham. God is master of the slow reveal. How might that shape expectations for his work in your life and in history?
5. How are you impacted by Mary's song

CALENDAR

Sunday, November 27

First Sunday of Advent

No Elementary Sunday School

No Youth Group

Tuesday, November 29

6:30 - 7:30am

Men's Bible Study | Cindi's Dallas

Friday, December 2

6:30pm

Men's Social | Swindell's Home

Saturday, December 3

10am - 12pm

Women's Brunch | Thomason's Home

Sunday, December 4

Second Sunday of Advent

Tuesday, December 6

6:30 - 7:30am

Men's Bible Study | Cindi's Dallas

Sunday, December 11

Third Sunday of Advent

9 - 9:45am

Elementary Sunday School | Room 120

11:20 - 11:40am

Children's Chorus Rehearsal | PK4 - 5th grade

6pm

Lessons + Carols

No Youth Group

Tuesday, December 13

6:30 - 7:30am

Men's Bible Study | Cindi's Dallas

Sunday, December 18

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Saturday, December 24

Christmas Eve Service | The Chapel

Sunday, December 25

Christmas Day

No Elementary Sunday School

No Youth Group

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Winter Crates for Ukraine

As winter rapidly approaches in Ukraine, the team in Poland has identified a new shipping opportunity, without the need for couriers. Mercy has committed to filling four crates for the pilot shipment leaving Dallas on December 8th. You can find a link to the most current list of needed items in the weekly email. Bring any items from the list to Mercy next Sunday, December 4th. Continue to be in prayer for those facing extreme hardship this winter and for those ministering the Gospel there.

Lessons + Carols

Mercy's annual Lessons + Carols will be Sunday, December 11 at 6pm. This family service celebrates the birth of the Prince of Peace with readings from scripture and carols. Children ages 4- 5th grade will sing the opening carol for this service and will rehearse for 20 minutes following the Sunday morning service on 12/11. Nursery for ages 0-3 will be available. Questions? Contact Jessica at jessica@mercydallas.com

Mercy Children

Nursery is available weekly for infants (Nursery Room). Sunday School is available for toddlers during the service. Children (4 years-2nd Grade) are dismissed from the service during the sermon for Children's Church. Elementary Sunday School (3rd-5th Grade) meets at 9am on 2nd & 4th Sundays. A Mother's Room is available during the service if you need a space to feed or calm a little one. The office to the north of the sanctuary is a private space set with comfortable chairs and a changing station. If you have any questions or would like to get involved with our children's ministry, please email Emily Freeman (emily@mercydallas.com).

Youth Group

Youth Group meets 2nd & 4th Sunday evenings at rotating homes. The schedule will be listed on the calendar in the bulletin and online. The 4th Sunday of each month, youth have the opportunity to serve as part of the Set Up or Welcome Team as a group, though they are welcome to serve any week alongside their families. For more information about the youth ministry and schedule, contact Josh and Hannah Patch at youth@mercydallas.com.

Women's Ministry

Our study of Genesis will continue on January 10th/11th. The ladies Christmas Brunch is December 3rd from 10-12 at Andrea Thomason's home. Contact Joanna Dawson (women@mercydallas.com) with any questions regarding the women's ministry at Mercy.

Men's Ministry

Mercy Men meet Tuesdays from 6:30-7:30am at Cindi's Deli in Dallas (on Central between Forest and Royal). We are studying Dietrich Bonhoeffer's *The Cost of Discipleship*. December 13th will be the last meeting of the semester. The men's cookout is this coming Friday, December 2nd at the Swindell's home at 6:30pm.

Serve at Mercy

Sunday morning volunteers are critical to the work and worship of Mercy. Contact Jessica at jessica@mercydallas.com for more information or to sign up.

Weekly Update

Our weekly email newsletter is the primary way we communicate announcements, information about church life, and details about upcoming events. Email church@mercydallas.com if you would like to receive weekly emails.

CONNECTING

Community Groups

Community Groups are a vital part of Mercy’s ministry and worship. If you are interested in joining a community group, please contact Jessica at jessica@mercydallas.com.

Weekly Update

Our weekly email newsletter is the primary way we communicate announcements, information about church life, and details about upcoming events. Email church@mercydallas.com if you would like to receive weekly emails.

Prayer Requests

If you have a private matter that the session could be praying for, please email their private email at session@mercydallas.com. They would love the opportunity to lift your needs before the Lord.

Giving

If you would like to give to the work and worship of Mercy Presbyterian Church, you can do so in three ways:

- Place checks or cash in the offering box located by the door as you exit the sanctuary on Sundays.
- Give online at www.mercydallas.churchcenter.com/giving/to/general
- Mail a check to Mercy Presbyterian, P.O. Box 670035, Dallas, TX 75230

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MINISTRY STAFF

Interim Pastor

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