



**REDEEMER
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH**

CHRISTMAS EVE | 12.24.2021

Cover Art

Johnny McKee

Window Covering

Barb Knuckles

The window is a map of rebuilding: the rings represent us, our families, tribes, workplaces, neighborhoods, and the city. The metallic pipecleaners represent our interconnections, creating a beautiful pattern of God's grace and mercy reaching far beyond our individual selves.

Platform Art

Tom Peck

Towers represent the corners of the rebuilt temple, constructed during Ezra's time. Golden bowls, part of the treasure provided to build the temple, define the structures. Yet, as the church calendar progresses, they also become monumental Advent candles, signalling our anticipation of Jesus, savior of the world.

Banners

Erin Hall

The places we are from carry a feeling, a texture. The familiarity of a handrail or a rocking chair, a tile floor, a crack in the sidewalk can take us back in time, give us a sense of place, or keep us grounded. This season members of our community, mostly our youth and teens, have shared the texture of their place with us in these harmonious banners made of graphite rubbings on paper. These banners themselves are a tiny crack into small places and things that matter to big meaningful lives—and remind us to reconnect, engage, and to be present and intentional in the spaces we inhabit.

Stage Wall Installation

Dirk Edwards, Hidi Gardner, and Redeemer parishioners

Golden Cloud

Kyle Ragsdale

Heraldry

*Hanging Disc Installation
Barb Knuckles*

As we rebuild, our unity is in Christ, the Holy Spirit, and the coming/already here kingdom of God. We are examples of the work of God redeeming people from every nation, tongue and tribe, unifying us without obliterating the beauties of our redeemed cultural differences. (Rev. 5:9) We are celebrating our unity and the beauty of our particularity using symbols of heraldry.

Communion Set

Craig Dodge Lile

Welcome

Prayer of Illumination

Leader Holy Spirit, open the eyes of our soul tonight
to see our Father for who he truly is.
Let your mystery be unhidden from us.

All **Give us belief despite all of our distrust and cynicism
that you are good
that you have been at work throughout all history
that you have come to us in this strange way,
and this explains your love and the way you will save us.**

Leader Father, you continue to guide the universe in your plan of healing and restoration
until Jesus fully reigns as King and his splendor and joy covers the whole earth.

All **Help us to see, we ask, in the name of Jesus
and may your glory be here tonight.
Amen.**

ACT I: WHO IS THIS CHILD?

Lesson 1

from Genesis 3:14-15

Reader

After the splendor of creation, when humanity had a free and joyful fellowship with God, Adam and Eve were tempted away with the promise of their own independent understanding. They believed what made sense to them, doubted the one who made them and loved them and through that one choice they brought into the world a spiritual disease that has affected all of us who have been born since. A deceiver and accuser in the form of a serpent was the one who had come and infected their minds with distrust. When they had eaten the lie, they felt shame and they judged themselves for the first time, realizing they were not ok, that they were no longer at rest or whole. So God came and found them and when they confessed what had happened and how the serpent had deceived them, God turned to the serpent and spoke:

“Because you have done this, you are cursed more than all animals, domestic and wild. You will crawl on your belly, groveling in the dust as long as you live. And I will cause hostility between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring. Her child will strike your head, and you will strike his heel.”

But who this child would be, how he would strike the serpent’s head, when he would come, how long they would have to live in the brokenness they had created, neither Adam nor Eve nor even the serpent had any idea. Only that God was promising to make things right through a child.

Carol

“O Savior, Rend the Heavens Wide”

All

**O Savior, rend the heavens wide;
Come down, come down with mighty stride;
Unlock the gates, the doors break down,
Unbar the way to heaven’s crown.**

**O Morning Star, O Radiant Sun,
When will our hearts behold your dawn?
O Sun, arise; without your light,
We grope in gloom and dark of night.**

Lesson 2

from Genesis 22:16-18

Reader

Thousands of years went by, and a man named Abraham was tested with an unthinkable act, to sacrifice his miracle-born son. However, Abraham knew that God was good and would not allow his son to die and that even if he did, he believed that God would raise him from the dead. God did spare Isaac and answered Abraham's faith revealing more of what this promised child would do:

“This is what the LORD says: Because you have obeyed me and have not withheld even your son, your only son, I swear by my own name that I will certainly bless you. I will multiply your descendants beyond number, like the stars in the sky and the sand on the seashore. Your descendants will conquer the cities of their enemies. And through your child all the nations of the earth will be blessed—all because you have obeyed me.”

But what kind of blessing would he bring and how would one person bless all the nations in the world?

Carol

“O Savior, Rend the Heavens Wide”

All

**Sin's dreadful doom upon us lies;
Grim death looms fierce before our eyes.
O, come, lead us with mighty hand,
Through exile to the promised land.**

**There shall we all our praises bring
Ever to you, our Savior King;
There shall we laud you and adore
Forever and forever more.
Forever and forever more.
Forever and forever more.**

words from a German spiritual song; tr. Martin L. Seltz; music Nathan Partain, 2003

Lesson 3

from 2 Samuel 7:11-13

Reader

A thousand years later, Abraham's descendants are a nation and their King, David, was looking to establish God's full honor and glory on the earth. He wanted to build a permanent temple for God because at that time God's worship was still happening in a tent. When God responds to his desire for this, he tells him that David's son will build the temple and he tells him that the promised child will come in the form of a King, one of David's sons and yet this king would be eternal. He says:

“The LORD declares to you that the LORD himself will establish a house for you: When your days are over and you rest with your ancestors, I will raise up your child to succeed you, your own flesh and blood, and I will establish his kingdom. He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.

So David's son Solomon did become king after him and did build a temple, but that kingdom fell and so did the temple he built. But God, who cannot lie, was pointing to a different kind of king, who would build the true eternal temple.

Song

“Savior of the Nations, Come”

All

**Savior of the nations, come, show yourself, the virgin’s Son.
Marvel, heaven, wonder, earth, that our God chose such a birth.**

**Not by human power or seed did the woman’s womb conceive;
Only by the Spirit’s breath was the Word of God made flesh.**

**Christ laid down his majesty, passed through dark Gethsemane.
Though he left his Father’s home, Christ now sits on God’s own throne.**

**Christ in glory intercede for your creature’s suffering need.
Let your resurrecting power soon complete the victory hour.**

**Praise to you, O Lord, we sing. Praise to Christ, our newborn King!
With the Father, Spirit, one, let your lasting kingdom come.**

*words Ambrose, 4th., and Martin Luther, 1523; tr. Calvin Seerveld, 1984
music Enchiridia, Erfurt, 1524; arr. Bruce Benedict, 2009 Cardiphonia Music*

Lesson 4

from Isaiah 9:2-7, Isaiah 61:1-2

Reader

A few hundred years later, Isaiah (a prophet through whom God spoke to his people), was given visions of the King who was to come and his Kingdom but saw that this king would not only rule one place, but the whole world; and that he would bring healing and make the world right everywhere and for all time. Isaiah declares from God:

The people walking in darkness
have seen a great light;
on those living in the land of deep darkness
a light has dawned.

And then he says:

To us a child is born,
to us a son is given,
and the government will be on his shoulders.
And he will be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
Of the greatness of his government and peace
there will be no end.
He will reign on David's throne
and over his kingdom,
establishing and upholding it
with justice and righteousness
from that time on and forever.
The zeal of the LORD Almighty
will accomplish this.

And then, Isaiah speaks in the voice of this King:

The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me,
because the LORD has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the poor.
He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim freedom for the captives
and release from darkness for the prisoners,
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor

This King would be God. He would be an Everlasting Father who comes to set the whole world free from oppression and his government would be of righteousness and peace for the poor and broken hearted.

Song

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

All

**O come, O come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here,
Until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.**

**O come, Thou Rod of Jesse, free,
Thine own from Satan’s tyranny;
From depths of hell thy people save,
And give them victory over the grave.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.**

**O come, thou Day-spring, come and cheer
Our spirits by thine advent here;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
And death’s dark shadows put to flight.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.**

**O come, Desire of Nations, bind
In one the hearts of all mankind;
Bid thou our sad divisions cease,
And be thyself our King of Peace.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.**

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

words Anonymous, 9th cent.; tr. John M. Neale, 1851; music French melody, 15th cent.; Public Domain

ACT II: THE MYSTERY BREAKS OPEN

Lesson 5

from Luke 1:26-56

Reader

Hundreds of years later, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."

Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end."

"How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?"

The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month. For no word from God will ever fail."

"I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May your word to me be fulfilled." Then the angel left her.

At that time Mary got ready and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judea, where she entered Zechariah's home and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. In a loud voice she exclaimed: "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear! But why am I so favored, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill his promises to her!"

Mary now knows more than anyone else in the history of existence what God is doing and yet she has no idea what it really means. She knows she carries this promised child in her womb but she does not know what he will do, or how he will save.

Song

“What Child Is This?”

All

**What child is this who, laid to rest,
On Mary’s lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet,
While shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the King,
Whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
Haste, haste, to bring him laud,
The babe, the son of Mary.**

**Why lies he in such mean estate,
Where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christians, fear, for sinners here
The silent Word is pleading.
Nails, spear shall pierce him through,
The cross be borne for me, for you.
Hail, hail the Word made flesh,
The babe, the son of Mary.**

**So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh,
Come peasant, king to own him;
The King of kings salvation brings,
Let loving hearts enthrone him.
Raise, raise a song on high;
The virgin sings her lullaby.
Joy, joy for Christ is born,
The babe, the son of Mary.**

trad. English carol, 16th cent.; adapt. William C. Dix, 1865; Public Domain

Lesson 6

from Luke 2:1, 3-7

Reader

In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. And everyone went to their own town to register.

So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

Now the promised child is born.

ACT III: WE WAIT BY FAITH IN HE WHO CAME

Song

“A Breaking of Light”

Ensemble

There is a breaking of Light in this dark,
And it falls like anointing on the wounded of heart.
Blame for the ravage, the lives that are torn.
Will be placed on the head of this child who is born.

Your Father’s love is now living,
He has always been coming for you,
Your salvation is breathing,
He will make you his own, He’ll be crushed all alone;
He will break till your whole, He will die for your soul

Somewhere God said he’d bring life to dry bones
Flowing rivers from deserts, living flesh from cold stone
Weary and weeping have held to this news.
Now the waiting is over, for this word has come true.

Your Father’s love is now living,
He has always been coming for you,
Your salvation is breathing,
He will make you his own, He’ll be crushed all alone;
He will break till your whole, He will die for your soul.

And in his rising, strikes like a spark,
A great reversal, surpassing by far,
Healed by his anguish, joy through his blood,
His condemnation is raising you up.

All the pain that you’ve suffered, there is no part erased.
But it’s transformed to beauty, it’s your glories of faith,
Oh the awe as you trace out, all the paths of his love.
All his purpose converges in the grace of his Son.

There is a breaking of Light in this dark,
And he cries “It is finished” and he hangs by his arms.

Your Father’s love is now living,
He has always been coming for you,
Your salvation is breathing,
He will make you his own, He’ll be crushed all alone;
He will break till your whole, He will die for your soul.

Lesson 7

from 1 Corinthians 1:20-25

Reader

Where is the wise person? Where is the teacher of the law? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe. Jews demand signs and Greeks look for wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength.

Homily

Sam Haist

The Foolishness of God

Lesson 8

from Luke 2:8-20

Reader

The night Jesus was born was not special at all. Here was the promised eternal King who was God and human coming to save all of us from our broken sadness and there was no earthquake, no voice from heaven, just a normal night for everyone in the world. That is, except for a few blue collar shepherds, working through the night. It was to them that God made known the secret that he was planning for the whole world.

That night there were shepherds staying in the fields nearby, guarding their flocks of sheep. Suddenly, an angel of the Lord appeared among them, and the radiance of the Lord's glory surrounded them. They were terrified, but the angel reassured them. "Don't be afraid!" he said. "I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all people. The Savior—yes, the Messiah, the Lord—has been born today in Bethlehem, the city of David! And you will recognize him by this sign: You will find a baby wrapped snugly in strips of cloth, lying in a manger."

Suddenly, the angel was joined by a vast host of others—the armies of heaven—praising God and saying,

"Glory to God in highest heaven,
and peace on earth to those with whom God is pleased."

When the angels had returned to heaven, the shepherds said to each other, "Let's go to Bethlehem! Let's see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."

They hurried to the village and found Mary and Joseph. And there was the baby, lying in the manger. After seeing him, the shepherds told everyone what had happened and what the angel had said to them about this child. All who heard the shepherds' story were astonished, but Mary kept all these things in her heart and thought about them often. The shepherds went back to their flocks, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen. It was just as the angel had told them.

Song

“Hark the Herald Angels Sing”

All

**Hark! The herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn King;
Peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled!”
Joyful, all ye nations rise,
Join the triumph of the skies;
With th’ angelic host proclaim,
“Christ is born in Bethlehem!”
Hark! The herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn King!”**

**Christ, by highest heav’n adored,
Christ, the everlasting Lord!
Late in time behold him come,
Offspring of a virgin’s womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see;
Hail th’ Incarnate Deity,
Pleased as man with men to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel.
Hark! The herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn King!”**

**Hail the heav’n-born Prince of Peace!
Hail the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
Ris’n with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by,
Born that man no more may die.
Born to raise the sons of earth,
Born to give them second birth.
Hark! The herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn King!”**

words Charles Wesley, 1739; music Felix Mendelssohn, 1840; Public Domain

Lesson 9

from 1 Peter 1:10-12, 1 Corinthians 2:9

Leader

So here we are, in the middle of God's plan of redeeming the world and bringing a new kingdom. The good news that the angels heralded to the shepherds has been unfolded even more to us now. We know that God came near to us, became just like us but without our pollution and then traded his life for ours, dying for our sin and raising us with him to share his eternal beauty. We know what happened to this child and what kind of messiah he would be. He would be the lamb who is a King through being sacrificed for his people.

All

**We live by his gift to us and he has put his Spirit in all who believe.
We are no longer born of Adam and Eve and the disease that we inherited.
We are born again, through faith in Jesus, to a life that is indestructible.**

Leader

These are the things that have been revealed to us in this final season of God's plan. As the apostle Peter writes to the churches:

Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care, trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of the Messiah and the glories that would follow. It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you, when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. Even angels long to look into these things.

All

**Hallelujah! God has given us his son,
And we believe that he will come again.
Though we do not see him now we love him.
Though we do not understand all that is happening now
we believe that no eye has seen,
no ear has heard,
no mind has imagined,
what God has prepared for those who love him.**

Song

“Silent Night”

All

**Silent night, holy night, all is calm, all is bright
Round yon virgin mother and Child. Holy Infant, so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.**

**Silent night, holy night, Son of God, love’s pure light;
Radiant beams from Thy holy face, with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.**

**Silent night, holy night, wondrous star, lend thy light;
With the angels let us sing, alleluia to our King;
Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born!**

words Joseph Mohr, c. 1818; vs. 1 & 3 tr. John F. Young, 1863; music Franz Gruber, 1820; Public Domain

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Nice to Meet You

We're glad you're here and we'd love to get to know you better. Please help us do that by filling out whatever information you are comfortable sharing below. Tear it off and put it in the offering plate, or bring it to the Welcome Table for a small gift! We'll be in touch.

I AM A...

- 1st/2nd-time Guest Out-of-Town Guest
 Regular Attendee Redeemer Member

FIRST & LAST NAME

- Male Female

Birthday _____

SPOUSE OR FRIEND

- Male Female

Birthday _____

CONTACT

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Email _____

Phone _____

I HAVE SOMETHING ELSE TO SAY!

REDEEMER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

1505 N. Delaware St.
Indianapolis, IN 46202
317.238.5487
www.redeemindy.org

Sunday Worship
8:30 & 11:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary

Classes
10:00 a.m.

Church Plants

FOUNTAIN SQUARE PRESBYTERIAN

901 Shelby Street
Indianapolis, IN 46203
303.408.9720
www.fountainsquarepres.org

Sunday Worship
10:30 a.m.