



How does a weary world rejoice?

We root ourselves in ritual



"Revelation" by Lisle Gwynn Garrity | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

Memorial Presbyterian Church

SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY

1st Sunday of Christmas

December 31, 2023

HOW DOES A WEARY WORLD REJOICE?

Muscle Memory

*When the world falls apart around me,
when the rug is pulled,
and the house is on fire,
when all I can do
is swallow the cry in my throat,
take me to the table.
Tell me how people have fed each other.
Tell me how they've torn the bread
with wrinkled hands
and children's hands.
Tell me how they've said, This love is for you,
as they looked you in the eye.
Then take me to the font.
Float my hands in the pool.
Let me feel weightless.
Tell me to leave my burdens there.
Then take me to the front doors.
Remind me how we throw them open.
Take me to the creaky pews,
pews that have held the straightened spines
and silent prayers of so many.
Take me to church.
Move me through the rituals.
Tell me why it matters,
so that next time,
when someone else's world falls apart,
I will have the muscle memory to share.*

Prayer by Rev. Sarah Speed/ A Sanctified Art LLC/Sanctifiedarts.org

WELCOME

PRELUDE

Voluntary

Leon Boellmann

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Every year we celebrate Christmas.

Every month we break bread.

Every week we gather for worship.

Every day we count our blessings.

Every minute God is near.

Yes, every minute God is near.

These are the rituals of our faith.

Let us worship Holy God.

*SONG OF PRAISE

Once in Royal David's City

Hymnal, No. 140

*CONFESSION AND PARDON

Vince Leseney

So let us embrace this holy tradition together. Let us pray:

**God of rhythms, we confess:
our faith would not be what it is without rituals.
Unlike you, we depend on bread and water.
We have to return to this space again and again
to hear old, familiar stories.
For if we stopped,
we know it would not take long before we lost our way.
Forgive us for our fragility, and thank you for giving us
ordinary rituals and rhythms to hold onto.
With grateful and humble hearts we pray,
amen.**

(Time of silent reflection)

*THE PEACE

Since God has forgiven us in Christ, let us forgive one another.

The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

And also with you.

*SONG OF RESPONSE

Gloria (refrain only)

Hymnal, No. 113

Gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

TIME WITH YOUNG DISCIPLES

PRAYER FOR UNDERSTANDING

Larry Upton

SCRIPTURE READING

Isaiah 63:7-9

Page No. 605

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

SCRIPTURE READING

Luke 2:21-38

Page No. 833

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

MESSAGE

We Root Ourselves in Ritual

Tracy L. Evans

*SONG OF FAITH

Still, Still, Still

Hymnal, No. 124

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM OF MILES WALLACE FORTHMAN

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH: Apostles' Creed

Do you believe in God the Father?

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

Do you believe in Jesus Christ?

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,**

**suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

THANKSGIVING OVER THE WATER

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

THE BAPTISM

PRAYER AND WELCOME

SHARING JOYS AND CONCERNS

LORD'S PRAYER

Hymnal, p. 35

*Please pray the Lord's Prayer
in the language and wording most familiar to you.*

THE OFFERING

OFFERTORY

*DOXOLOGY

Praise God. From Whom All Blessings Flow

Hymnal, No. 606

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

*SENDING SONG

Go, Tell It on the Mountain

Hymnal, No. 136

*BLESSING AND CHARGE

*POSTLUDE

Sonata in B minor, K. 87

Domenico Scarlatti

*Please rise in body or spirit.

A Statement of Faith for this First Sunday of Christmas

We believe that faith is a journey
marked by rituals and rhythms.
We come to worship.
We confess our sins.
We pass the peace.
We offer grace.
We hear the Word.
We baptize children.
We break the bread.
And we tell the story
of a loving God.
And through these sacred rituals,
we are reminded:
we are not alone.
God is near,
and we have work to do.
May this belief
shape the rhythm of our lives.
Amen.

We invite anyone who wishes to consider membership in this church to contact the pastor or a member of the session. You may also indicate interest in membership by checking the appropriate column in the ritual of friendship booklet. Membership in this church is a step made by profession of faith, reaffirmation of faith or transfer of church letter.

Lectionary Readings for January 7: Genesis 1:1-5; Psalm 29; Acts 19:1-7; Mark 1:4-11.

The Food & Shelter item of the month for January is peanut butter. **Please place your donations in the box by the church information table.**

Hearing-assistance devices and **large print hymnals** are available from the head usher.

Once in Royal David's City 140

1 Once in roy - al Da - vid's cit - y stood a low - ly
 2 He came down to earth from heav - en who is God and
 3 Je - sus is our child - hood's pat - tern; day by day like
 4 And our eyes at last shall see him, through his own re -

cat - tle shed, where a moth - er laid her ba - by in a
 Lord of all, and his shel - ter was a sta - ble, and his
 us he grew; he was lit - tle, weak and help - less; tears and
 deem - ing love; for that child so dear and gen - tle is our

man - ger for his bed: Mar - y was that moth - er
 cra - dle was a stall; with the poor and meek and
 smiles like us he knew; and he feels for all our
 Lord in heaven a - bove; and he leads his chil - dren

mild; Je - sus Christ, her lit - tle child.
 low - ly, lived on earth our Sav - ior ho - ly.
 sad - ness, and he shares in all our glad - ness.
 on to the place where he is gone.

Still, Still, Still


124

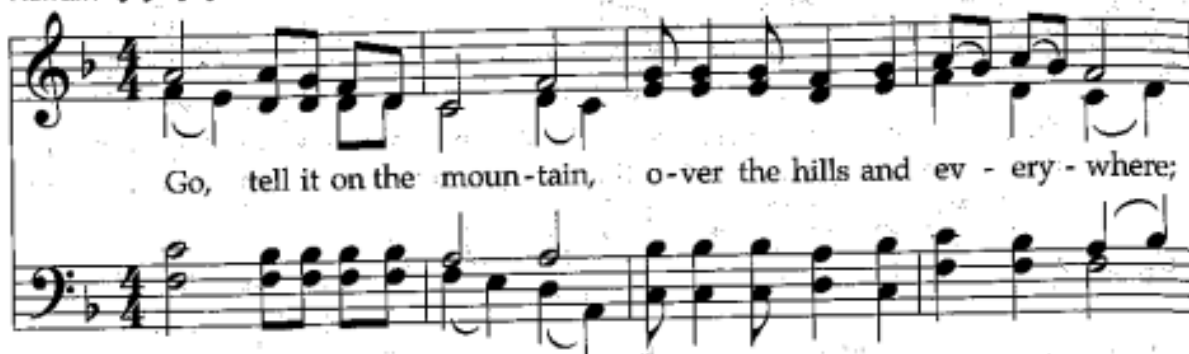
1 Still, still, still, he sleeps this night so chill! The vir - gin's
2 Sleep, sleep, sleep, he lies in slum - ber deep while an - gel

ten - der arms en - fold - ing, warm and safe the child are hold - ing,
hosts from heaven come wing - ing, sweet - est songs of joy are sing - ing.

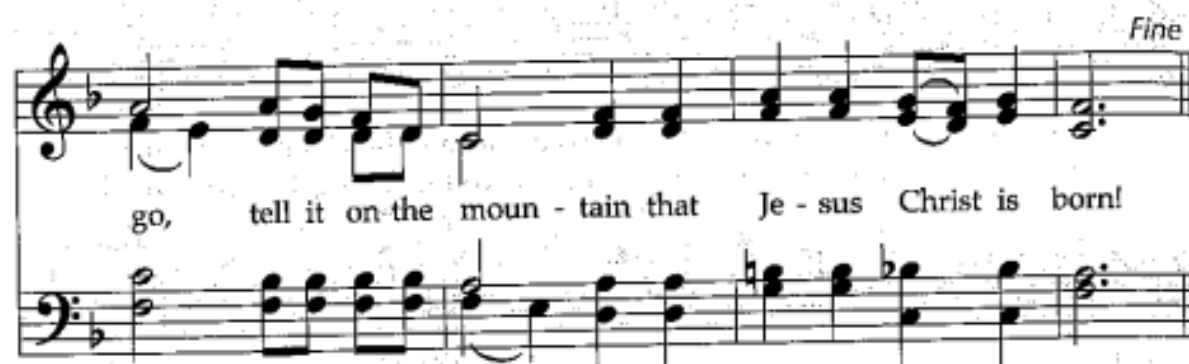
Still, still, still, he sleeps this night so chill.
Sleep, sleep, sleep, he lies in slum - ber deep.

136 Go, Tell It on the Mountain

Refrain 

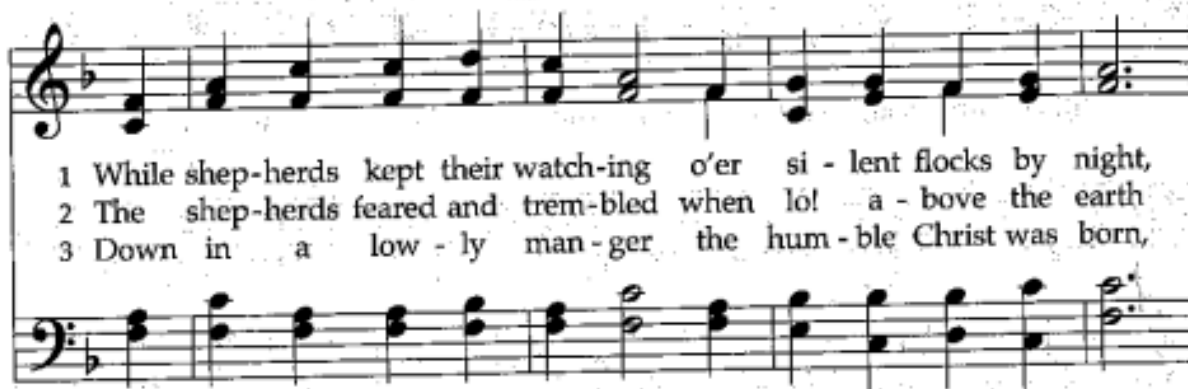


Go, tell it on the moun-tain, o-ver the hills and ev - ery - where;

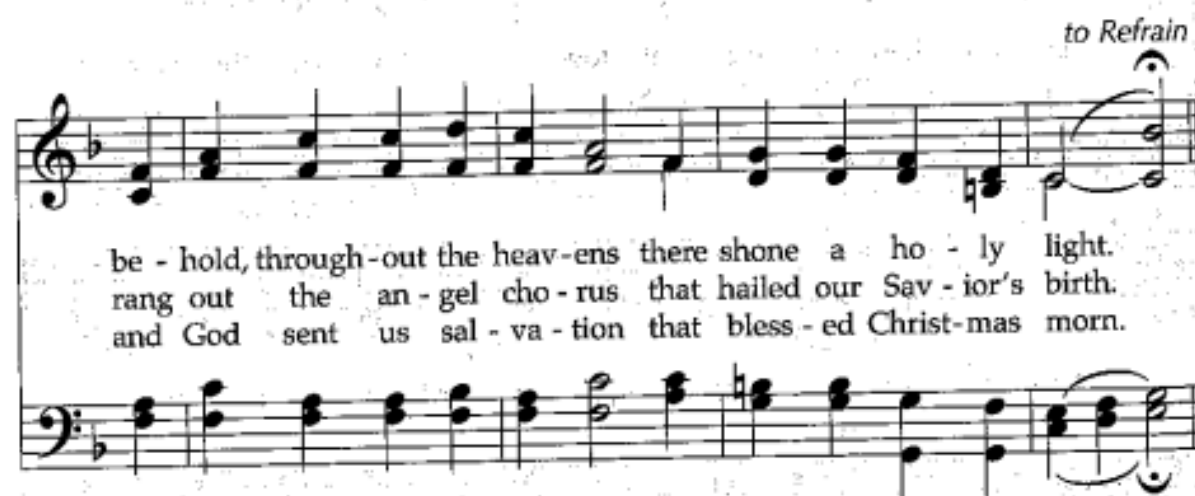


go, tell it on the moun - tain that Je - sus Christ is born!

Fine



1 While shep-herds kept their watch-ing o'er si - lent flocks by night,
 2 The shep-herds feared and trem-bled when lo! a - bove the earth
 3 Down in a low - ly man-ger the hum - ble Christ was born,



be - hold, through-out the heav-ens there shone a ho - ly light.
 rang out the an - gel cho - rus that hailed our Sav - ior's birth.
 and God sent us sal - va - tion that bless - ed Christ-mas morn.

to Refrain