

## 25 December 2022 – Christmas Day<sup>1</sup>

### Welcome / Announcements / Land Acknowledgement

*We recognize that the land where we gather for worship belongs to God, as does all of creation. We also know that this is the unceded territory of the Lkwungen and WSÁNEĆ people. As we pray, reflect, and celebrate in this place, we do so as guests lamenting the injustice in our history. We ask that the God of love and justice lead us along the path of reconciliation, bringing accountability and healing. May we be inspired to forge new relationships of respect and solidarity.*

### PWS&D Message      ***Christ is Born!***

Even in the face of poverty, injustice and disaster, hope finds a way.

For 75 years, our church has been faithfully putting Christ's words into action—reaching out to people affected by poverty and disaster around the globe. With Presbyterian World Service & Development, we are able to answer God's call to serve those in need, wherever they may be. Together with our partners, we are making a positive impact.

Inspired by God's promise of abundant life, we are responding to hunger, poverty, injustice and disaster. We are responding to care for the poor, sick and marginalized. Together, we are helping to restore human dignity, ease the burden of want, and promote community cooperation that benefits all. As a representation of Christ's hope, peace, joy and love, we are committed to a sustainable, compassionate and just society.

As we celebrate Christ's birth this season, let us remember our neighbours near and far. Your prayers, gifts and actions make this mission possible. Thank you for supporting PWS&D this Christmas.

➤ ***Christmas Present***

***solo (Steve Sturgess)***

### Call to Worship / Advent Candles

*(Light the candles of Hope, Peace, Joy and Love)*

God sent angels to sing about Jesus.

**Jesus is here!**

Shepherds went to find Him.

**Jesus is here!**

We can find Him, too.

**Jesus has come for us.**

*(Light the Christ candle)*

## Gathering Prayer and the Lord's Prayer

God who saves us, help us as we listen to the story of the shepherds. As we celebrate Christmas, remind us that Jesus is with us. Help us to grow in love for him and for our neighbours. We pray together as Jesus taught... ***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***

### ***Meet Jesus***

A saviour had been promised for centuries by God's prophets. Jesus' name means "the Lord saves." Gabriel told Mary what his name would be, and another angel told Joseph the same thing in a dream. Jesus has many other names—anointed Saviour, Prince of Peace, Son of the Most High, Son of God, Great Shepherd of the Sheep, Messiah, and Emmanuel, God with us. He came in the line of King David. Through Him, God's promise to David of an eternal lineage out of the family of Jesse came to fruition. He was fully divine and fully human. He was God in human flesh, sent so that we could be close to God. Jesus is Christ, our King.

➤ ***What child is this***

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## Prayer for Understanding

**Loving God, your Word became flesh in Jesus Christ and lived among us, full of grace and truth. Send us your Holy Spirit this day, so that we may hear a word of grace and truth once again and be empowered to live it out in our lives. Amen**

Scripture: **John 1: 1-14** [NT 91]

**Carolyn Hoekstra**

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being.

What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He

came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

**Luke 2: 8-20** [NT 58]

**Steve Sturgess**

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see – I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger."

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us."

So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart.

The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

➤ *Angels we have heard on high*

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### Questions / Reflection

1. Do you think Mary and Joseph were surprised to have visitors? Why?
2. I wonder who the shepherds told about Jesus' birth.  
I wonder who I/we/you can tell about Jesus.

3. Share a miraculous experience you have had or heard about like the shepherds had.

➤ *Joy to the world*

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### Activity – *making a luminary*

A luminary is a lamp. Create one using a clear glass jar. Take black construction paper and cut a strip as tall as the jar. Punch holes in it with a single hole punch or cut small star shapes out of the paper. Wrap the paper around the jar, trim off the extra paper and glue or tape the ends together. Place a battery-operated candle or tea light inside. Talk about how Jesus came to be the light of the world. How does light shine in the darkness?

(If you are at home, I hope you have the supplies to make a luminary. If not, light a candle and turn off your lights to reflect on how Christ's light shines in the darkness.)

### Offering and Prayer     *Praise God from whom all blessings flow*     306

Christmas celebrates the miracle of God's love, born for us in Christ Jesus, to change the world with acts of mercy and generosity, hope and healing. Share in that miracle by giving what you can, knowing God can do more than we can ask or imagine with our gifts.

**Generous and loving God, your gift to us in Christ Jesus still draws us to the manger and opens our hearts with wonder. Bless our gifts in his name, so that they may draw others to your love and the blessing we have found in the One born for us. Amen**

➤ *Go, tell it on the mountain*

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### Closing Prayer

Holy God, you sent Jesus to be the light of the world. Help us to see Jesus and to see his light in others. Help us to celebrate that you kept your promise and sent a saviour for us. May we remember him not just today but every day. Amen.

### Blessing

Go, children of God: rejoice and sing – dance and shout! The God of everlasting light – creative word and wisdom – giver of grace and truth be with you now and forever. So may the tenderness of God enfold you, the promise of the Christ uphold you, and the strength of the Spirit lead you on, to greet the year ahead, filled with grace and truth.

➤ *We are marching (repeat)*

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<sup>1</sup>Service idea from Journey to Christmas Advent Devotional (PCC)