

**St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Perth  
Sunday, December 25<sup>th</sup>, 2025  
Rev. Gerry Gallant**

**For Unto Us a Child is Born  
Christmas Day  
Isaiah 9:2-7**

**Welcome**

**Call to Worship**

Brothers and sisters, on this holy day we gather not because we have climbed our way to God, but because God has come to us.

**We come not as those who have found the light, but as those upon whom the light has shone..**

Come now, not to admire a story, but to worship a Savior.

**Let us lift our hearts, our voices, and our lives to Jesus Christ—the Wonderful Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace.**

**Prayer of Adoration and Invocation**

Almighty and gracious God,

We praise You that Christmas is not our reaching for You, but Your reaching for us.

You did not leave us in the gloom of our sin or the weight of our rebellion, but in mercy You sent Your Son.

You sent light into darkness, hope into despair, and life into death.

We thank You that the eternal Word took on flesh,

that the Son was given for us and for our salvation,

that the government rests upon His shoulders, and that His reign is sure.

As we gather before You now, fix our eyes not on sentiment, but on truth;

not on nostalgia, but on glory;

not on ourselves, but on Christ.

By Your Spirit, open our hearts to worship You in reverence and in awe,

for we ask this in the mighty name of Jesus, our King and our peace.

**Amen.**

**Call to Confession**

Today we celebrate that Jesus, our Lord,  
 came to earth as a human, just like us but without sin.  
 He came so that we who sin may be freed from sin.  
 With the peace that comes from knowing Jesus came,  
 let us confess our sins and be forgiven.

**Prayer of Confession**

**Merciful God,**  
**We confess that though the light has come into the world, we often prefer the**  
**darkness.**  
**We confess that we trust in our own strength, our own wisdom, and our own control,**  
**placing burdens on our shoulders that belong only on Christ's.**  
**We have looked for peace in places that cannot give it.**  
**We have sought security in powers that cannot save.**  
**We have tried to govern our own lives rather than submit to Your reign.**  
**Forgive us for our pride.**  
**Forgive us for our fear.**  
**Forgive us for our unbelief.**  
**We confess that we have contributed nothing to our salvation except the sin that**  
**made it necessary.**  
**Have mercy on us, O God, for the sake of Jesus Christ,**  
**the child born for us, the Son given for us,**  
**the Lamb who takes away the sin of the world.**  
**Cleanse us, restore us, and teach us to rest in the finished work of Christ,**  
**in whose name we pray.**  
**Amen.**

**Assurance of Pardon**

I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people.  
 Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you;  
 he is the Messiah, the Lord.

**The Lord's Prayer**

**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 the Evil One.**  
**For Thine is the Kingdom, the power, and the glory,**  
**Forever and ever. Amen.**

## Hymn

### Scripture

#### Isaiah 9:2-7

<sup>2</sup> The people who walked in darkness  
have seen a great light;  
those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness,  
on them has light shone.

<sup>3</sup> You have multiplied the nation;  
you have increased its joy;  
they rejoice before you  
as with joy at the harvest,  
as they are glad when they divide the spoil.

<sup>4</sup> For the yoke of his burden,  
and the staff for his shoulder,  
the rod of his oppressor,  
you have broken as on the day of Midian.

<sup>5</sup> For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult  
and every garment rolled in blood  
will be burned as fuel for the fire.

<sup>6</sup> For to us a child is born,  
to us a son is given;  
and the government shall be upon his shoulder,  
and his name shall be called  
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

<sup>7</sup> Of the increase of his government and of peace  
there will be no end,  
on the throne of David and over his kingdom,  
to establish it and to uphold it  
with justice and with righteousness  
from this time forth and forevermore.  
The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

### Sermon

Merry Christmas, Brothers and Sisters.

On this morning across the globe people will be gathering with lights, songs and celebration. For many of them Christmas is a time of warm feelings, family gatherings, decorated trees and

gift giving and receiving. However, for the faithful, Christmas is not a time of nostalgia, tradition or sentimentality, it is the story of God inserting himself directly into the fate of His people. It celebrates the moment when the eternal breaks into the temporal, while the infinite takes on flesh, when the God who created all things steps into His creation. Christmas is about God coming to His people.

Isaiah 9 tells us of the coming Messiah and it was a message that the people needed to hear. The prophet delivered this message to a people who were living in a time of political collapse, moral corruption, spiritual darkness, fear of enemy nations, and a deep internal division. The people of God had fallen to the ways of the world, many were turning to false idols, consulting mediums, seeking worldly approval and rejecting the Word of the Lord. The final verse of Isaiah chapter 8 states:

**Isaiah 8:22**

**<sup>22</sup> And they will look to the earth, but behold, distress and darkness, the gloom of anguish. And they will be thrust into thick darkness.**

They were not living in a time of peace and prosperity, they were in a time of despair and darkness to which they could see no end. And it was into that darkness that God spoke his promise.

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and his name shall be called**

**Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.  
<sup>7</sup>Of the increase of his government and of peace  
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to establish it and to uphold it  
with justice and with righteousness  
from this time forth and forevermore.  
The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.**

The prophet Isaiah declares, **‘The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;’** Notice that he does not say that the people have found a light, he says that they saw a light. It was the light that came to them. They did not discover a way out of the dark, they did not enlighten themselves, they did not fix the world around themselves. The light of God shone upon them, God’s grace came upon them, God reached out to his people in his divine mercy.

The prophet continues and says, **“For unto us a child is born.”**

The hope of the world does not come as a mighty warrior mounted on a stallion; he does not appear as a king or emperor upon His throne. He does not come as a great philosopher dispensing his wisdom to eager listeners, he does not come as a politician wielding social power.

Instead, the hope of the world arrives as a newborn infant, weak and dependent, vulnerable to everything in His life. God does not save through human strength, but through divine weakness. The birth of the Messiah reveals a God that does not wait for humanity to come to him, but a God who comes to his people and dwells among them.

The child is born; the son is given. This is theology as we are meant to understand it. The humanity of Christ was born; the divinity of Christ was given. Jesus was fully man and fully God. His life did not begin in the manger on that fateful day, He is eternal, He existed long before Mary and Joseph, long before Bethlehem, before David, before Abraham, before Moses, and even before Adam.

### **John 1:1**

**1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.**

The manger was not the origin of the Son; it was his point of arrival in God’s plan of redemption. This destroys the world’s attempt to reduce Jesus to a moral teacher, a spiritual example, a religious leader or a symbolic figure. That baby in the manger is the eternal Son of God, given to the world by the Father.

Isaiah then declares that **‘the government shall be upon his shoulder’** In this declaration Christians can find hope. When Isaiah spoke these words the people of God were ruled over by corrupt king and government officials, living under the constant threat of powerful enemy nations. They longed for peace, stability and security. And to those people through the prophet Isaiah God speaks, telling them that all the authority of the universe will rest on the child. Not on kings, emperors, presidents or prime ministers. Not on parliaments, or courts, not on armies or empires. Human governments will rise and fall, rulers will come and go, and through it all Christ will reign.

This declaration was not given in future tense. It was given in present continuous, meaning it was a present reality that was unending. Even when the world seems chaotic, even when it seems like evil is triumphing, even when the darkness seems overwhelming, even when the government corruption seems complete, the throne is not threatened, the kingdom is secured, Christ rules.

Isaiah then gives us four titles for the Messiah, theological declarations of who Christ will be to His people.

He is the Wonderful Counselor, bit just wise, but wisdom itself. Not simple one who provides advise, but one who reveals the very mind of God to His people. He never misjudges, misunderstands, misleads or miscalculates. His counsel is always perfect. This is good news for those whose souls are weary, whose hearts are confused, who feel overwhelmed in this world. He sees what we cannot see and knows what we cannot know, so we should set aside our pride and turn to Him and seek His counsel.

He is Mighty God. Isaiah does not leave any room for questions or doubts. The child is not merely powerful, or God-like, he is not just blessed by God. HE IS GOD, full deity wrapped in flesh, infinite power in infant form. In him the fullness of God dwells bodily. The baby in the manger is the sovereign, omnipotent and eternal God.

He is the Everlasting Father. This does not mean that Christ is the Father in the trinity, but that he is fatherly to His people. He is protective, compassionate, providing, guiding and unchanging. Human fathers fail, some are absent, some are harsh, some are passive and all are imperfect. Christ is the everlasting Father, one who never abandons, never fails, never withdraws his compassion and love, His care is eternal.

He is the Prince of Peace. This is the one we cling to most in the chaos of the world we live in. The world talks about peace a lot, political peace, emotional peace, relational peace, we have all kinds of peace that we seek to deal with external conflicts in our lives. However, the biggest conflict we have in our life is not external, it is internal, spiritual. Our greatest need in this world is not comfort or stability, external forms of peace, it is internal peace, it is reconciliation with God. When we humble ourselves and give our lives over to Jesus Christ we are justified by

faith, and we have peace with God. This is why we need the Prince of Peace, to restore that relationship, to pay the debt of our sins and bring us back into the family of God.

And, <sup>7</sup>**Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end**, 'Every earthy kingdom expands, peaks, declines and collapses. Not Christ's, His kingdom grows, advances, conquers, transforms and endures. The Gospel spreads, even as the world fights against it, hearts are regenerated, lives are redeemed and people are saved. His reign is unstoppable. Isaiah speaks of the throne of David, reminding us that Christmas was not an isolated event, but the fulfillment of God's covenant promises in the Old Testament to Abraham, to David, to Israel and to all the nations.

**'The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.'** Christmas is not the result of human effort, wisdom and righteousness. It is the result of God's love, God's grace and God's mercy for his people. Salvation does not rest on human shoulders, but on God's. Your salvation is not held together by the strength of your grip on God, instead it is based upon God's grip on you

Why did Christmas have to happen? Why would the eternal Son take on flesh? Why the manger? Why Bethlehem? Why weakness? The New Testament gives the answer: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. Christmas without the cross is like a sentence without a verb, a story without a conclusion. The child was born to die. He took on a body so that that body could be broken, and He took on blood so that that blood could be shed. Christmas is not primarily about His birth; it is about His mission. He came not merely to be admired, but to be crucified.

The manger only makes sense in the shadow of Calvary. The wood of the manger points to the wood of the cross. The swaddling cloths foreshadow the burial cloths. The angels announcing peace announce the One who would purchase peace with His blood. The baby Mary held would one day be held to a cross by Roman nails. The child the shepherds worshipped would become the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Christmas is not sentimental; it is sacrificial.

And here is the glory of Christmas: the government now rests on the shoulders that once bore a cross. The same head crowned with thorns will wear many crowns. The same hands pierced by nails now rule with sovereign power. The King who reigns is the Savior who suffered.

We still live in a world trapped the tension Isaiah describes, one of darkness and distress

We need to remember that Christ reigns already, yet His reign is not yet fully realized.

Already sins are forgiven, hearts are renewed, the Spirit indwells, the Gospel advances, and the kingdom grows. Not yet has every knee bowed, every tear been wiped away, every enemy

defeated, and every injustice overturned. Christmas is meant to remind us that the King has come, and the King is coming again.

Christmas proclaims the Gospel: God acted first, God provided the Savior, God accomplished redemption, God applies salvation, and God preserves His people. We contribute nothing to the saving work of Christ except the sin that made it necessary. The child born in Bethlehem did not come to make salvation possible; He came to achieve it. He will save His people from their sins.

So Christmas demands a response for each of us. It calls for us to worship, to submit, and to trust. If the government rests on His shoulders, it does not belong on ours. Because of Christ, we can live without fear. Our peace does not depend on political stability, economic security, personal success, or physical health. Our peace depends on Christ, the Prince of Peace.

Christmas speaks to every heart. To the hurting, a Savior has come. To the guilty, a Redeemer has come. To the fearful, a King has come. To the weary, a Shepherd has come. To the sinner, a Substitute has come. To the dying, resurrection has come. Whatever your condition, the message is the same: for unto you a child is born.

*Today Christ is not merely a baby in a manger. He is the reigning King calling sinners to Himself. He says, "Come to Me." Not clean yourself up first, not prove yourself worthy, not earn My love —just come. He is a Wonderful Counselor for the confused, a Mighty God for the powerless, an Everlasting Father for the abandoned, and the Prince of Peace for the troubled.*

*Hope has come. Faith has substance. Joy has a source. Love has a name. His name is Jesus.*

Let us pray,

Blessed Immanuel,  
 Lord Jesus Christ,  
 Son of God and Son of Man,  
 we thank you for taking on yourself our nature,  
 coming down from heaven and becoming fully human,  
 and making us partakers of the divine nature.  
 You revealed to us the loving heart of your Father.  
 You brought us peace and quenched his divine anger against us.  
 By your blessed birth we are made new creatures.  
 You are our great High Priest through whom we have access to the Father.  
 Enable us, O blessed Lord and loving Immanuel,  
 to confess your appearing in the flesh,  
 always to be mindful of your great love and humiliation,  
 most heartily to rejoice and comfort ourselves in the same,

and evermore partake of its power.  
Open our hearts and lips that with the holy angels we may ever praise and magnify you.  
Finally take us into your heavenly kingdom,  
that we may praise and serve you there, forever, and ever.  
Blessed be the Lord, God of Israel.  
Blessed be his holy name.  
Let the whole earth be full of his glory. **Amen.**

### Closing Hymn

#### Pastoral Prayer

Faithful God and Sovereign Lord,  
We thank You that the zeal of the Lord of hosts has accomplished our salvation.  
What we could not do, You have done.  
What we could not achieve, You have secured.

We pray now for Your people, gathered here and scattered abroad.  
For those who rejoice, anchor their joy in Christ alone.  
For those who grieve, draw near as the Everlasting Father who never abandons His children.  
For the anxious and the fearful, rule their hearts as the Prince of Peace.  
For the weary and the burdened, remind them that the government rests on His shoulders, not theirs.

Strengthen Your church to live as citizens of an unshakable kingdom.  
Give us courage to trust You in a chaotic world,  
faith to believe Your promises when circumstances are dark,  
and love that reflects the grace we have received.

Keep us watching and waiting for the day when the King who has come will come again,  
when every knee will bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,  
to the glory of God the Father.  
We pray all this in the name of our Savior and reigning King, Jesus Christ.  
**Amen.**

**Benediction**

Brothers and sisters, go now in the peace that Christ has accomplished.

The light has come.

The King reigns.

Your sins are forgiven, your future is secure, and your hope is sure.

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ,

the love of God the Father,

and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit

be with you now and forever.

And may you go in confidence, knowing that the government rests upon His shoulders,  
and of His kingdom and peace there will be no end.

**Amen.**