The Life-Light was the real thing:
Every person entering Life
he brings into Light.
- John 1:9
First Sunday after Christmas  
December 26, 2021

Prelude  
*Five Carols*  
arr. Peter Schickele

Greeting  
Rev. Colin Knapp

*Call to Worship  

*Please stand as you are able*

Arise, shine, for your light has come,  
and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.

For darkness shall cover the earth,  
and thick darkness the peoples;  
but the Lord will rise upon you,  
and His glory will appear over you.

Nations shall come to your light,  
and kings to the brightness of Your dawn.

The people who walked in darkness  
have seen a great light;  

those who lived in a land of deep darkness,  
on them light has shined.

Let us celebrate the light of the world,  
for upon us has the Light shined.

*Opening Hymn*  
*Good Christian Friends, Rejoice*  
p. 4

*Opening Prayer  

Confession  

When Mary and Joseph arrived in Bethlehem  
They found there was no room.
We confess that in the midst of all our anxieties
We have not made room in our hearts for others.

We confess that, paralyzed by fear, prejudice or apathy
We have not made room in our homes for the stranger.

We confess that, we have missed this season of joy, hope, and love
We have lived with ingratitude, and not seen You in our midst

We confess that, forgetting the grace we have been given,
We have not freely extended grace to those who appear different from us.

We confess that in the busyness of Christmas time
We have not made room in our lives for You.

Silence...

Gracious God, forgive us and renew us.
Use this sacred season to break open our hearts,
throw open the doors to the stranger, open our eyes to Your presence
and open our arms wide to welcome you and one another.

Assurance

Children’s Message  Maureen Deahl
Scripture Reading  John 1:1-14

One: This is the word of God for us, the people of God.  All: Thanks be to God.

Sermon  Something You Can Hold  Rev. Colin Knapp
Prayer for the Offering  Nancy Miller

Offering Hymn  In the Bleak Midwinter (stzs 1,2,4)  p. 5

Prayers of the People  Hear our Prayer, And in Your Love, Answer

*All are encouraged to pray the Lord’s Prayer in the manner of their choosing*

You’re welcome to submit your prayer concerns. If there are prayer requests that you have and would like to share them, please fill out the card located in the pews and place them in the prayer box at the back of the Sanctuary. Prayer cards can also be given to a pastor before the service.
132 Good Christian Friends, Rejoice

1 Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice;
give ye heed to what we say: Jesus Christ is born to-day;
ox and ass before him bow, and he is in the manger now.
Christ is born to-day! Christ is born to-day!

2 Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice;
now ye hear of endless bliss: Jesus Christ was born for this!
He has opened heaven's door, and we are blest for evermore.
Christ was born for this! Christ was born for this!

3 Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice;
now ye need not fear the grave: Jesus Christ was born to save!
Calls you one and calls you all to gain the ever-lasting hall.
Christ was born to save! Christ was born to save!

Carols using two languages, like this one dating from at least the 14th century, belong to a special group called "macaronic," the original languages here being German and Latin. Though the present version is only in English, it is sung to the traditional German folk melody.

MUSIC: German folk melody, 14th cent.; arr. David Hugh Jones, 1953
In the Bleak Midwinter

1. In the bleak mid-winter, frosty wind made moan;
2. Our God, heaven cannot hold him, nor earth sustain;
3. Angels and archangels may have gathered there;
4. What can I give him, poor as I am?

earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone;
heaven and earth shall flee away when he comes to reign:
cherubim and seraphim thronged the air;
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;

snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow,
in the bleak mid-winter a stable place sufficed
but his mother only, in her maiden bliss,
if I were a wise man, I would do my part;

in the bleak mid-winter, long ago,
the Lord God incarnate, Jesus Christ,
worshiped the beloved with a kiss.
yet what I can I give him: give my heart.

Though this text describes winter weather in England rather than in Palestine, the poet is using familiar surroundings as a means of making the Nativity more immediate and personal. The tune name honors a Gloucestershire village near the composer’s birthplace in Cheltenham.
Announcements

Rev. Colin Knapp

*Closing Hymn  
*It Came Upon a Midnight Clear (stzs 1,2,5)

*Benediction  
Rev. Colin Knapp

Postlude  
Resonet In Laudibus  
arr David Paxton

123  It Came Upon the Midnight Clear

1 It came upon the mid-night clear, that glorious song of old,
2 Still through the cloven skies they come, with peaceful wings unfurled,
3 Yet with the woes of sin and strife the world has suffered long;
4 And you, beneath life’s crushing load, whose forms are bending low,
5 For lo, the days are hastening on, by prophets seen of old,

from angels bending near the earth, to touch their harps of gold:
and still their heavenly music floats o’er all the weary world:
behind the heavenly hymn have rolled two thousand years of wrong:
who toil along the climbing way with painful steps and slow,
when with the ever-circling years shall come the time foretold,

“Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heaven’s all-gracious King”:
above its sad and lowly plains they bend on hover- ing wing,
and we at war on earth hear not the tidings that they bring;
look now, for glad and golden hours come swiftly on the wing:
when peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling,

The “it” of the first line of this text by a Unitarian minister does not refer to the birth of Jesus, but to “that glorious song of old,” the angelic tidings of peace on earth. The restored third stanza laments how often the noise of human strife has obscured that message.
Nursery Care during worship is available for children ages 5 and under. Please see an usher for location.

Today’s Liturgist is Nancy Miller. Ushers are Lee Capps and Bill Kent. Our Online Worship Coordinator is Delena Wilkerson and Chuck Behensky. Our Sextons are Claudia Divis and Leslie Lauderdale. We give our thanks for their important contributions to our worship gathering.

In case of a pastoral emergency please contact Pastor Colin Knapp, colin.knapp@pilgrimoakpark.org.

Healing prayer! At this time the deacons will be offering prayers with you by phone. If you would like healing prayer please call your deacon.

Announcements

In response to the recent increase in Covid-19 cases due to the variants and vaccine hesitancy, Pilgrim has decided that masks will be required whenever someone is in the church. Social distancing is also encouraged. We will continue to monitor the situation and make adjustments as necessary as we continue to follow health and safety guidelines.

United Church of Christ Special Offering
Pilgrims are invited to donate to the UCC’s special offering, the Christmas Fund/Veterans of the Cross, intended to provide direct financial support to those who serve the church (or who have served in the past) and are facing financial difficulties. You can donate through the website, by using the Tithe.ly app, or by sending a check to the church with ‘Christmas Fund’ on the notation line.
Women’s Retreat at Pilgrim Park
Saturday, January 29 & 30, 2021
Be sure to register for the annual women and girls retreat, which will take place January 29 and 30 at Pilgrim Park in Princeton, IL. Women and girls of all ages are invited to attend this weekend of fellowship, games, devotions, and getting to know one another. Cost is approximately $111 per person for a 1-night double occupancy room and 4 meals. Registration forms can be found in the December Tidings or on the website. Any questions should be directed to Leslie Sutphen (sutphenl@yahoo.com).

Pilgrim Annual Meeting - Via Zoom
Saturday, February 5, 2022, 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM
We hope you all can attend the Annual Business Meeting on Saturday, February 5th at 9:00am via zoom. This will be an important meeting where we will discuss our future plans for Pilgrim Church including the election of new officers, and our financial situation. Please send any questions you may have regarding the Annual Meeting to our Moderator, Debbie Kent, at moderator@pilgrimoakpark.org.

Thank you for your interest and involvement with this important meeting.

Pilgrim Church Council

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