



How does a
weary world
rejoice? *We root ourselves
in ritual*

Cover Art: "Revelation" by Lisle Gwynn Garrity, Inspired by Luke 2:21-38
Acrylic painting on canvas with digital drawing

I wonder what Mary and Joseph expect when they enter the temple to dedicate their newborn son. This customary ritual quickly unravels into an astonishing scene. A stranger named Simeon pronounces Jesus to be a "light" and "revelation," and his dying wish is fulfilled. A prophet named Anna also draws near to the child, praising God for the redemption he will bring.

Simeon and Anna's words fill Mary and Joseph with amazement. But that can't be the only emotion taking up space in the room. For Simeon turns to Mary, perhaps privately, to continue sharing his message: the boy will also become the cause of great turmoil, the catalyst for opposition. He will expose the inner thoughts of many. A sword will pierce her innermost being. The mother of God will grieve as she bears witness to the suffering of the child she birthed.

In this image, Simeon bestows his blessing and prophecy with the urgency of a man desperate to say everything that needs to be said before his time runs out. Anna looks off into the distance, as if peering into the future. Her devotion to God over the years has sharpened her gaze; she knows redemption when she sees it.

In the top left, I depicted Jesus' hand being cradled by the hands of his parents. This tender moment is frozen in time, like a Polaroid photograph placed in a scrapbook. Mary and Joseph treasure their child as they receive the fullness of his calling. I imagine them memorizing each wrinkle and tiny fingernail, treasuring the smallness of a hand that will one day become a strong fist, fighting for justice for the oppressed and liberation for those held captive.

—Rev. Lisle Gwynn Garrity

*With Christ as the Cornerstone, we will build a church of living stones,
where every member is a minister and is equipped to express God's love
by word and deed to all people.*

Based on 1 Peter 2:5, 6

The Worship of God

First Sunday after Christmas

December 31, 2023

Gathering Music

“I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day”

WALTHAM;
Words by Henry W. Longfellow,
Music by Jean Baptiste Calkin

“Here in This Place”

GATHER US IN;
Words and Music by Marty Haugen

“Longing for Light, We Wait in Darkness”

CHRIST BE OUR LIGHT;
Words and Music by Bernadette Farrell

“Angels, from the Realms of Glory”

REGENT SQUARE;
Words by James Montgomery,
Music by Henry T. Smart

Prelude

Caroline Carlson

Welcome

Anna Beth Cross

Call to Worship

One: Every year we celebrate Christmas.

All: Every month we break bread.

One: Every week we gather for worship.

All: Every day we count our blessings.

One: Every minute God is near.

All: Yes, every minute God is near.

One: These are the rituals of our faith.

All: Let us worship Holy God.

† *Please rise in body or spirit.*

✠ Opening Song

“Good Christian Friends, Rejoice”

IN DULCI JUBILO;
Medieval Latin Text trans. and para.
John Mason Neale, German Folk Melody
harm. David Hugh Jones

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

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 forevermore.
Christ was born for this!
Christ was born for this!

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 everlasting hall.
Christ was born to save!
Christ was born to save!

*During the last stanza of our Opening Song,
all children are invited to come forward for today’s children’s sermon.*

Children’s Sermon

April Alston

Pastoral Prayer

Offertory Song

“Spirit of Christmas”

Words and Music by
Christian McIvor ©2014

Verse 1:

On Christmas Eve, I walk through the falling snow
As the lights in the windows and up on the housetops glow.
Smells of balsam and cedar and gingerbread fill the air
As children by firesides hang their stockings with care.

Verse 2:

On city streets, carolers sing and brass bands play
Songs of faith, good cheer, hope, reindeer, and Santa’s sleigh.
Signs and messages posted on storefronts and windowsills
Remind us to love one another and spread good will.

Chorus:

This year there’s one thing that I’d like to see
After the lights all come down from the tree,
That the spirit of Christmas and the peace we all share
Stay in our hearts and our minds all through the year.

Verse 3:

Back home on the mantle are cards from family and friends
Telling of holiday joy and the love that they send.
Gifts and packages under the tree await the dawn
To be opened before one more Christmas come and gone. (Chorus)

Bridge:

And the seasons, they will turn,
I’ll remember what I’ve learned.
Each and every single day,
I can show the world the way to love. (Chorus)

✠ Christmas Doxology

**Praise God for gifts of hope and peace,
Praise God for gifts of joy and love,
Praise God for sending Christ to dwell
On earth for us, Emmanuel.
Amen.**

OLD HUNDREDTH; Words by Roger Lynn,
Music from the *Genevan Psalter*

✠ Prayer of Dedication

Trish Boone

Scripture Reading

Luke 2:21-38

Chrissy McIvor

Sermon

“Roots Run Deep”

Christian McIvor

Silent Reflection

Invitation

Christian McIvor

† **Musical Response 258** “Go, Tell It on the Mountain”

Refrain:

Go, tell it on the mountain,
Over the hills and everywhere;
Go, tell it on the mountain
That Jesus Christ is born!

Verse 1:

While shepherds kept their watching
O'er silent flocks by night,
Behold! Thro'out the heavens
There shone a holy light.

(Refrain)

Verse 2:

The shepherds feared and trembled
When lo! Above the earth
Rang out the angel chorus
That hailed our Savior's birth.

(Refrain)

Verse 3:

Down in a lowly manger
The humble Christ was born,
And brought us God's salvation
That blessed Christmas morn.

(Refrain)

Celebrating Community

Anna Beth Cross

Benediction

Christian McIvor

Postlude

Pam Weis

Song texts printed in this bulletin used by permission with
CCLI License #295340 and OneLicense License # P-400143.

Graphic Design by Rev. Lauren Wright Pittman | Liturgy by Rev. Sarah Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org
Cover Art: "Revelation" by Lisle Gwynn Garrity

Greystone Staff

Chrissy Tatum Williamson, Senior Pastor
April Alston, Associate Minister, Children and Preschool
Anna Beth Cross, Associate Minister, Students and Digital Discipleship
Christian McIvor, Minister of Worship, Music, and the Arts
Pam Phillips, Weekly Preschool Director
Steve Rose, Property Manager
Annette Variano, Administrative Assistant

**Scan to Connect
With Us:**



Office Hours.: 8:30-4:30 PM (M-Th) | Ph: (919) 847-1333 | Email: office@greystonechurch.org
Website: www.greystonechurch.org | Facebook: @greystonebaptistchurch | Instagram: @greystonechurch
Greystone Baptist Church | 7509 Lead Mine Road, Raleigh, NC 27615

Thank you to Cranberry Tree Farms for their gracious donation of wreaths
and for the beautiful Christmas trees in the Sanctuary.