

ORDER OF WORSHIP

Christ the Redeemer Presbyterian Church

December 24, 2006

Christmas Eve¹

Welcome Pastor Doug Warren

A Word About Worship and this time of Preparation: We have the incredible privilege of coming into the presence of the living God. Please take a few moments now to silently prepare your heart. As others around you are in prayer and contemplation, please consider their need for quiet.

*A Note to Parents: There is a **nursery** available at your discretion throughout the service. Please ask one of the greeters if you need help finding your way*

Instrumental Prelude “Angels We Have Heard on High” *arr. Jake Paris*

Advent Candle Lighting The Immanuel Candle The Cosgrove Family

Leader: Why do we light the advent candles?

Family: *Jesus said, “I am the Light of the world. He who follows me will not walk in darkness but will have the Light of Life.”*

Leader: What is the meaning of the lighted Immanuel candle?

Family: The lighted candle is a reminder that Jesus, our Immanuel (which means God with us) will abide with His people always.

Leader: What was the emblem of God’s presence that He gave to Moses and His people at Mount Sinai?

Family: *The emblem of God’s presence that He gave His people at Mount Sinai was the Tabernacle. The Tabernacle, which means dwelling place, was a portable tent designed by God for His people to meet Him in worship. It was filled with various articles which were signs to teach God’s people about the Messiah to come who would dwell with His people forever.*

Leader: What does the New Testament say about why Jesus is called Immanuel?

Family: *The book of Matthew tells us that Jesus is called Immanuel because He was born of a virgin as was prophesied by the prophet Isaiah. “All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: "The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call Him Immanuel"—which means, "God with us." Likewise the book of John tells us, “The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us. We have seen His glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.”*

Call to Worship Isaiah 9:6-7 Pastor Per Almquist

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David’s throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this. Let us worship the Lord our God.

Prayer Pastor Almquist

AMERICAN SERVICE OF LESSONS AND CAROLS

***Carol (195)** “Joy to the World! The Lord is Come” *Watts/L. Mason*

First Lesson Genesis 3:8-15 Mrs. Monique Paris

When they heard the sound of GOD strolling in the garden in the evening breeze, the Man and his Wife hid in the trees of the garden, hid from GOD. GOD called to the Man: "Where are you?" He said, "I heard you in the garden and I was afraid because I was naked. And I hid." GOD said, "Who told you you were naked? Did you eat from that tree I told you not to eat from?" The Man said, "The Woman you gave me as a companion, she gave me fruit from the tree, and, yes, I ate it." GOD said to the Woman, "What is this that you've done?" "The serpent seduced me," she said, "and I ate." GOD told the serpent: "Because you've done this, you're cursed, cursed beyond all cattle and wild animals, cursed to slink on your belly and eat dirt all your life. I'm declaring war between you and the Woman, between your offspring and hers. He'll wound your head, you'll wound his heel."

Vocal Solo “I Wonder as I Wander” *John Jacob Niles*

Second Lesson Genesis 22:15-18 Mr. Nathan Pillsbury

The angel of GOD spoke from Heaven a second time to Abraham: "I swear—GOD's sure word!—because you have gone through with this, and have not refused to give me your son, your dear, dear son, I'll bless you—oh, how I'll bless you! And I'll make sure that your children flourish—like stars in the sky! like sand on the beaches! And your descendants will defeat their enemies. All nations on Earth will find themselves blessed through your descendants because you obeyed me."

Vocal Solo “El-Shaddai” *Michael Card*

Third Lesson Isaiah 9:2, 6-7 Miss Karis Warren
For a child has been born—for us! the gift of a son—for us! He'll take over the running of the world. His names will be: Amazing Counselor, Strong God, Eternal Father, Prince of Wholeness. His ruling authority will grow, and there'll be no limits to the wholeness he brings. He'll rule from the historic David throne over that promised kingdom. He'll put that kingdom on a firm footing and keep it going with fair dealing and right living, beginning now and lasting always. The zeal of God-of-the-Angel-Armies will do all this.

***Carol (201)** “O Little Town of Bethlehem” *P. Brooks/arr. Chris Rice*

Fourth Lesson Luke 1:26-38 Mrs. Cynthia Setchell

In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to the Galilean village of Nazareth to a virgin engaged to be married to a man descended from David. His name was Joseph, and the virgin's name, Mary. Upon entering, Gabriel greeted her: Good morning! You're beautiful with God's beauty, Beautiful inside and out! God be with you. She was thoroughly shaken, wondering what was behind a greeting like that. But the angel assured her, "Mary, you have nothing to fear. God has a surprise for you: You will become pregnant and give birth to a son and call his name Jesus. He will be great, be called 'Son of the Highest.' The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David; He will rule Jacob's house forever—no end, ever, to his kingdom." Mary said to the angel, "But how? I've never slept with a man." The angel answered, The Holy Spirit will come upon you, the power of the Highest hover over you; Therefore, the child you bring to birth will be called Holy, Son of God. "And did you know that your cousin Elizabeth conceived a son, old as she is? Everyone called her barren, and here she is six months pregnant! Nothing, you see, is impossible with God." And Mary said, Yes, I see it all now: I'm the Lord's maid, ready to serve. Let it be with me just as you say. Then the angel left her.

Instrumental Solo “The First Noel” *arr. Chris Rice*

Fifth Lesson Luke 2:1-7 Mr. Donnelly Warren

About that time Caesar Augustus ordered a census to be taken throughout the Empire. This was the first census when Quirinius was governor of Syria. Everyone had to travel to his own ancestral hometown to be accounted for. So Joseph went from the Galilean town of Nazareth up to Bethlehem in Judah, David's town, for the census. As a descendant of David, he had to go there. He went with Mary, his fiancée, who was pregnant. While they were there, the time came for her to give birth. She gave birth to a son, her firstborn. She wrapped him in a blanket and laid him in a manger, because there was no room in the hostel.

*** Please stand, if you are able. Thank you.**

Vocal Ensemble “Behold the Star” *arr. William Dawson*

Sixth Lesson Luke 2:8-16 Beth & Kyle Almquist

There were shepherders camping in the neighborhood. They had set night watches over their sheep. Suddenly, God's angel stood among them and God's glory blazed around them. They were terrified. The angel said, "Don't be afraid. I'm here to announce a great and joyful event that is meant for everybody, worldwide: A Savior has just been born in David's town, a Savior who is Messiah and Master. This is what you're to look for: a baby wrapped in a blanket and lying in a manger." At once the angel was joined by a huge angelic choir singing God's praises: Glory to God in the heavenly heights, Peace to all men and women on earth who please him. As the angel choir withdrew into heaven, the shepherders talked it over. "Let's get over to Bethlehem as fast as we can and see for ourselves what God has revealed to us." They left, running, and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger. Seeing was believing. They told everyone they met what the angels had said about this child. All who heard the shepherders were impressed.

***Carol (200)** “It Came Upon a Midnight Clear” *E. Sears*

Seventh Lesson John 1:1-14 Pastor Warren

The Word was first, the Word present to God, God present to the Word. The Word was God, in readiness for God from day one. Everything was created through him; nothing—not one thing! —came into being without him. What came into existence was Life, and the Life was Light to live by. The Life-Light blazed out of the darkness; the darkness couldn't put it out. There once was a man, his name John, sent by God to point out the way to the Life-Light. He came to show everyone where to look, who to believe in. John was not himself the Light; he was there to show the way to the Light. The Life-Light was the real thing: Every person entering Life he brings into Light. He was in the world, the world was there through him, and yet the world didn't even notice. He came to his own people, but they didn't want him. But whoever did want him, who believed he was who he claimed and would do what he said, He made to be their true selves, their child-of-God selves. These are the God-begotten, not blood-begotten, not flesh-begotten, not sex-begotten. The Word became flesh and blood, and moved into the neighborhood. We saw the glory with our own eyes, the one-of-a-kind glory, like Father, like Son, Generous inside and out, true from start to finish.

Prayer IRBY

Offertory “I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day” *H.W. Longfellow/J. Marks*

Scripture Meditation “The Life-Light Blazing in the Darkness” Pastor Warren

***The Prayer and Blessing** Pastor Warren

All: **Almighty God, you have given your only-begotten Son to take our nature upon Him, and to be born this day of a pure virgin: Grant that we, who have been born again and made your children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by your Holy Spirit; through our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom with you and the same Spirit be honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.**

Minister: May He who by His incarnation gathered into one things earthly and heavenly, fill you with the sweetness of inward peace and goodwill; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be upon you and remain with you always. Amen.

We will distribute extra bells to join our accompaniment for the following carol.

***Carol (224)** “Go, Tell It on the Mountain” *Spiritual*

¹ This evening is intended to heighten our anticipation of the long expected Savior, Christ the Lord. As we wait upon His return, we join with all of His followers throughout time and around the globe who yearn to see Him face to face.

Reflections

“If man has in fact committed cosmic treason against God, what reason could we possibly have that God should provide any way of redemption? In light of the universal rebellion against God, the issue is not why is there only one way, but *why is there any way at all?*”

— R.C. Sproul

“Jesus came in the flesh not to *bring* the judgment, but to *bear* it; not to slay with the sword of his lips, but to receive the nails in his hands and the spear-thrust in his side. In no other way could his kingdom come and God's will be done in earth as in heaven. The kingdom established by grace must be advanced in grace, then consummated in glory. Not by political power, but by the power of the Spirit, is the gospel carried to the nations.”

— Edmund P. Clowney

“Christ does not ask His followers to ‘make a few minor adjustments’ or ‘try a bit harder to be religious.’ His words call for radical transformation— first in thinking, next in living. He leaves no alternative, no middle ground, when He exhorts us to decide either for or against kingdom living. He expects (and deserves) our allegiance, our obedience, our very lives.”

— Charles R. Swindoll

CHRIST THE REDEEMER

Highlights.....December 24, 2006

Christmas Eve

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Tonight!

Thank you for participating in this special worship service. We hope that tonight has been a time of refreshment as we have together considered the true meaning of Christ's birth. We have been blessed by your presence and we hope that God speaks to you personally in this Christmas season. Please come back and join us for our regular worship service each Sunday at 10:30 am. The service tonight will be followed by some holiday refreshments. Please stay and enjoy them and get better acquainted with one another.

Sunday School

There will be no Sunday School on December 31st. We will resume classes January 7th.

Harpist next Sunday

There will even be a wonderful harpist to help make our singing festive. Bring friends and family members to the 10:30 worship service next Sunday.

Dates to Remember

CTR Prayer Meetings

Fridays at 6:30 am

Session Meetings (*monthly*)

First and third Tuesday nights 6:00-9:00

Church Retreat

September 21 & 22, 2007

End of Year Giving

Any financial gifts that you want to be included in the year of 2006 must be put in the offering no later than 12/31/06. If the gift is mailed, it must be postmarked no later than 12/30/06.

MINISTRY STAFF

(207) 878-1211

www.MainePCA.org

Douglas Warren

Pastor

Per Almquist

Associate Pastor

Evan Pillsbury

Musician-in-Residence

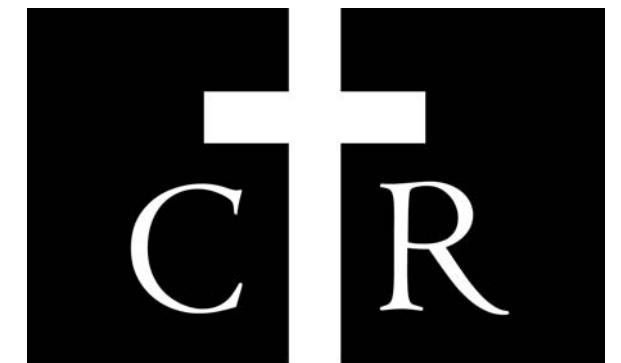
Joanne Crosby

Office Manager

Service at Breakwater School 856 Brighton Ave Portland, ME. @ 10:30 AM

Christ the Redeemer Presbyterian Church exists to
Worship Christ in Community,
As We Celebrate and Extend His Grace
to Portland, New England, and the world.

Christ the Redeemer Presbyterian Church is a congregation of the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA), a denomination committed to the historic Christian faith.



CHRIST *the*
REDEEMER

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



S A T U R D A Y , D E C E M B E R 2 4 , 2 0 0 6

5:00 PM

SERVICE OF LESSONS & CAROLS

Guest Artist: Sara Sturdivant, mezzo-soprano

House Trio: Matthew Pillsbury, pianist; Mike Marchand, bass; Jake Paris, hand percussion

Vocal Ensemble: Carolyn Hoehner, Sheryl Hoehner, Dana Perkins, Evan Pillsbury, Kathryn Pillsbury, Matthew Pillsbury, Nathan Pillsbury, Sharie Pillsbury, Cynthia Setchell

*Worshipping Christ in Community
As We Celebrate and Extend His Grace
To Portland, New England and the World*