

THE

BRIARWOOD WEEKLY

• DECEMBER 11, 2020 •

THE KINGS OF CHRISTMAS

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Grace and peace and *Merry Christmas!* It is safe to say that 2020 has been an interesting year for multiple reasons and a challenging year for our Lord's Church as we stay *On Mission, On Message and In Ministry*. But, God has been gracious and has not only allowed us to maintain (with safety) ministry at Briarwood but has opened the door for us to safely celebrate several of our Advent ministries of worship and outreach.

Our worship ministry is providing two presentations of *Hallelujah* with Orchestra, Ballet, Choir and Drama on Saturday, Dec. 19 at 6:00 p.m. and Sunday, Dec. 20 at 6:00 p.m. This event has filled, but the Sunday night presentation will also be available via livestream. On Christmas Eve, we will have three *Family Candlelight Celebration Services* at 3:00, 5:00 and 7:00 p.m., and two *Candlelight Communion Services* at 9:00 and 11:00 p.m. Please *register yourself and those you are bringing* for the service that you wish to attend at briarwood.org/candlelight.

If you haven't had the opportunity to obtain the devotional, *Love Came Down at Christmas* by Sinclair Ferguson, it is available in the Briarwood Bookstore. Order at bookstore@briarwood.org or call 205-776-5210.

May I, in the midst of this challenging year tell you what a great joy it is for Cindy, me and our entire family to not only celebrate the Advent of Christ with believers, who by God's grace, are "overcomers," but to do so with a heart desire and the blessings of unity as together we seek to, "*Equip Christians to Worship God and Reach Birmingham to Reach the World for Christ.*"

Blessings,



Briarwood
Presbyterian Church, PCA

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CONVERSATIONS

WITH HARRY AND BRUCE

Pastor Reeder and Bruce Stallings
answer questions submitted to
askthepastor@briarwood.org
this Sunday night at 6:00 p.m.

Available on briarwood.org, Facebook,
Roku, AppleTV and the Briarwood App.



Christmas Eve

Briarwood will offer five candlelight services this December 24~

- Our Family Candlelight services will be at 3:00, 5:00 and 7:00 p.m. The 5:00 p.m. service will also be available on livestream.
- Our Communion Candlelight services will be at 9:00 and 11:00 p.m. and offer the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Elements are gluten-free. An alms offering for the Mercy Ministry will be received.

Due to attendance restrictions this Christmas, registration is required for this year's candlelight services. Register now at briarwood.org/candlelight.

A PCA Christmas Offering will be taken at all five services by using special envelopes in the pews. This offering provides monthly supplemental income to our retired and disabled pastors, missionaries, church lay workers, their widows and dependent children through the Ministerial Relief Fund guidelines.



This dramatic presentation by our Music, Ballet and Drama Ministries will be Dec. 19 and 20 at 6:00 p.m.

Reservations have been filled.

The Sunday presentation will also be available online at briarwood.org/livetv and on Facebook, Roku, AppleTV and the Briarwood App.

As 2020 Comes to an End •

The Accounting Office will close for the year on Dec. 31 at 5:00 p.m. Contributions received in the mail must be postmarked or cancelled by Dec. 31 to qualify as a gift in the year 2020. Contributions with Jan. 2021 postmarks will be considered 2021 contributions. Online contributions received before midnight on Dec. 31 will be considered 2020 contributions. Online gifts received after midnight Dec. 31 will be considered 2021 contributions.

December giving—we plan for a “double month”—please pray for the needed \$2.1 million for General Fund and Faith Promise commitments.



Celebration of Worship

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

MORNING SERVICES OF DIVINE WORSHIP – December 13, 2020

Worship Leaders

Dr. Harry L. Reeder III, Pastor/Teacher

Mr. Bruce Stallings, Executive Pastor

Rev. Daniel Cason, Pianist

Dr. John Haines, Worship Pastor

Mr. Hunter Goff, Organist

THE GATHERING OF GOD'S PEOPLE

And all who believed were together and had all things in common. Acts 2:44

The Call to Worship and Preparation from the Psalms

Psalms 97:1

[All:] The LORD reigns, let the earth rejoice!

The Prelude and Time of Meditation and Confession

"O Come, All Ye Faithful" (arr. Cothorn)

Briarwood Brass Ensemble

Our glorious Savior and Redeemer, when the angels split open the skies over Bethlehem on that night long ago, their message was that of "Peace on earth!" Yet today, we are prone to wander from the very One who came to fulfill this promise to give us everlasting peace. Remind us anew, Lord, that the message the angels brought that night is one that can only be fulfilled as we yield our lives completely to You. As we prepare to celebrate Your birth, O Lord, may we be given a foretaste of the eternal peace that is yet to come.

The Invocation

The Lighting of the Advent Candle and Advent Reading

Neil and Courtney Hatchett (8:00)

Keith and Missy Keller (9:30)

Gene and Sharon Head (11:00)

*The Greeting of Grace and Peace

*The Carol of Ascents

"The First Noel" Carol 136

The first Noel, the angel did say,
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep,
On a cold winter's night that was so deep.

[Refrain:]

Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, Born is the King of Israel.

They looked up and saw a star Shining in the east, beyond them far,
And to the earth it gave great light,
And so it continued both day and night. (Refrain)

[Praise Team:]

*And by the light of that same star Three wise men came from country far;
To seek for a King was their intent,
And to follow the star wherever it went. (Refrain)*

[Women:]

This star drew nigh to the northwest, O'er Bethlehem it took its rest,
And there it did both stop and stay,
Right over the place where Jesus lay. (Refrain)

[Men:]

Then entered in those wise men three, Full rev'rently upon their knee,
And offered there in His presence
Their gold, and myrrh, and frankincense. (Refrain)

[All:]

Then let us all with one accord Sing praises to our heav'nly Lord,
That hath made heav'n and earth of naught,
And with His blood mankind hath bought. (Refrain)

***The Confession of Truth**

Numbers 24:17, Revelation 22:16

[Leader:] *I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near:*

[All:] **A star shall come out of Jacob, and a scepter shall rise out of Israel.**

[Leader:] *I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you about these things for the churches.*

[All:] **I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star.**

[Leader:] *The Word of the Lord.*

[All:] **Thanks be to God!**

THE PETITIONING OF GOD'S PROVIDENCE

The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working. James 5:16b

The Pastoral Prayer of Intercession

THE ADORATION OF GOD'S GLORY

*"To Him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing
and honor and glory and might forever and ever!" Revelation 5:13b*

The Presentation and Consecration of God's Tithe and Our Offerings

*Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion,
for God loves a cheerful giver. II Corinthians 9:7*

***The Singing of Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs**

"We Three Kings" Carol 166 • "As With Gladness Men of Old" Carol 163

We three kings of Orient are: Bearing gifts we traverse afar—
Field and fountain, moor and mountain—Following yonder star.

[Refrain:]

O star of wonder, star of night, Star with royal beauty bright,
Westward leading, still proceeding, Guide us to thy perfect light.

[Praise Team:]

*Born a King on Bethlehem's plain: Gold I bring to crown Him again,
King forever, ceasing never Over us all to reign. (Refrain)*

[Women:]

Frankincense to offer have I: Incense owns a Deity nigh;
Prayer and praising, all men raising, Worship Him, God on high. (Refrain)

[Men:]

Myrrh is mine: its bitter perfume Breathes a life of gathering gloom—
Sorr'wing, sighing, bleeding, dying, Sealed in the stone-cold tomb. (Refrain)

[All:]

Glorious now behold Him arise: King and God and Sacrifice;
Alleluia, Alleluia! Earth to heav'n replies. (Refrain)

As with gladness men of old Did the guiding star behold;
As with joy they hailed its light, Leading onward, beaming bright,
So, most gracious Lord, may we Evermore be led to Thee.

[Women:]

As with joyful steps they sped To that lowly manger bed,
There to bend the knee before Him Whom heav'n and earth adore,
So, may we with willing feet Ever seek the mercy seat.

[Men:]

As they offered gifts most rare At that manger rude and bare,
So may we with holy joy, Pure and free from sin's alloy,
All our costliest treasures bring, Christ, to Thee our heav'nly King.

[All:]

Holy Jesus, every day Keep us in the narrow way;
And when earthly things are past, Bring our ransomed souls at last
Where they need no star to guide, Where no clouds Thy glory hide.

THE PROCLAMATION OF GOD'S WORD

Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. Colossians 3:16

***The Prayer of Illumination**

***†The New Testament Reading**

Matthew 2:1-12

The Exposition of God's Word

Pastor Reeder

II. Advent in Biblical Perspective

The Kings of Christmas

“Magi and Kings from the East”

Matthew 2:1-12

THE CONSECRATION OF GOD'S PEOPLE

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I Corinthians 1:3

***The Pastoral Benediction**

***The Congregational Affirmation**

“O Come, Let Us Adore Him” Carol 82 v. 1

O Come, Let us adore Him, O Come, Let us adore Him,

O Come, Let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.

The Postlude

“Angels We Have Heard on High” (Chadwick)

* The congregation is requested to stand, if able.

The 8:00 and 11:00 Sunday morning services are broadcast live on WLJR 88.5 FM, and are also available online at briarwood.org/livetv. Watch the recording anytime at briarwood.org/archivetv.

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Scripture quotations are from the Holy Bible, English Standard Version.