If you were going to tell the story of Jesus, where would you start? You might begin with his birth. That’s a good place to begin telling the story of anyone. But Matthew begins with Abraham and follows with 15 verses of names. Matthew’s point is not to give us Jesus’ family tree. This is not the Bible’s version of ancestry.com. Matthew is telling a story of what God has already done. Remembering what God has already done helps us pay attention to what God might do next.
GOD’S PEOPLE GATHER

Prelude

Call to Worship

We gather in the presence of a God who has made promises:
that the broken can be mended,
and the grieving can be comforted,
and the hopeless will find hope.
Together, we lean into these promises,
sometimes with strong faith,
sometimes with big questions,
but always with hope.
For a light shines in the darkness,
and the darkness does not overcome it.

Lighting of the Advent Candles

Judy & Bud Cooper (8 a.m.)
Michael, JoyBeth, Zachary, Nick, Andrew & Emily Orr (9:30 a.m.)
Patrick & Caroline Davidson (11 a.m.)

*Hymn

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

1 Come, thou long-expected Jesus,
born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us;
let us find our rest in thee.

Israel’s strength and consolation,
hope of all the earth thou art;
dear desire of every nation,
joy of every longing heart.

2 Born thy people to deliver,
born a child and yet a king,
born to reign in us forever,
now thy gracious kingdom bring.

By thine own eternal Spirit
rule in all our hearts alone;
by thine all-sufficient merit
raise us to thy glorious throne.
*Prayer of Confession

Gracious God,
your promises stand steady through all generations.
Renew us in hope,
that we might stand tall in faith.
It is easy for us to become overwhelmed:
our world is filled with too much violence,
our schedules are filled with too much chaos,
our hearts are filled with too much hurt.
Too often, we allow those stories to define our days.
So come to us, O God, and tell us your story once again,
as we seek to set fear aside
and walk in your light. (Silent prayer)

*Assurance of God’s Grace

*Response

Angels We Have Heard on High

GLORIA
**PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD**

Prayer for Illumination  
Dee Couch (8 a.m.), George Beaumont (9:30 a.m.), Pam Hanson (11 a.m.)

Scripture Reading  
Matthew 1:1-16

**Sermon**  
The Story Goes On  
Rev. Tom Are, Jr.

**RESPONSE TO THE WORD**

*Hymn*

**Once in Royal David’s City**  
IRBY

1. Once in royal David’s city stood a lowly
   cattle shed, where a mother laid her baby in a
   manger for his bed. Mary was that mother
   mild; Jesus Christ, her little child,
   lowly, lived on earth our Savior holy.

2. He came down to earth from heaven who is God and
   Lord of all, and his shelter was a stable, and his
   cradle was a stall; with the poor and meek and
   sadness, and he shares in all our gladness.

3. Jesus is our childhood’s pattern; day by day like
   us he grew; he was little, weak and helpless; tears and
   smiles like us he knew; and he feels for all our
   Lord in heaven above; and he leads his children
   on to the place where he is gone.

4. And our eyes at last shall see him, through his own re-
   deem-ing love; for that child so dear and gentle is our
   Christ, her little child, our Lord in heaven above;
   saved, and he shares his glory, and we share his love.

TEXT: Cecil Frances Alexander, 1848, alt.
MUSIC: Henry John Gauntlett, 1849; harm. Arthur Henry Mann, 1919
Offertory  
*Response  

Walk in the Light  
Angels, from the Realms of Glory  

traditional spiritual, arr. by André Thomas; Village Choir  
REGENT SQUARE  

All creation, join in praising God the Father, Spirit, Son, 
evermore your voices raising to the eternal Three in One:  
come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn king!

*Prayer of Dedication

The Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper

Invitation

Prayer of Thanksgiving

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 evil.  
For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

Words of Institution

Sharing the Elements

(At the indication of the pastor, we will all be invited to partake of the bread  
together, giving visible expression to the unity we share as Christ’s body.  
You are invited to partake of the cup as it is served to you.)

Prayer of Response
1 O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel.

2 O come, thou Dayspring, come and cheer
our spirits by thine advent here;
disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
and death’s dark shadows put to flight.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel.

3 O come, Desire of nations, bind
all peoples in one heart and mind;
bid envy, strife, and discord cease;
fill the whole world with heaven’s peace.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel.

*Benediction

*Response

Walk in the light, beautiful light.
Come where the dewdrops of mercy shine bright.
Shine all around us by day and by night.
Jesus, the light of the world.

*Postlude

*All who are able may stand

© A-705103 for all hymns
The following are daily Bible readings offered for your own personal devotion. You are invited to read the text, think about the reflection and questions and allow these to lead you in a time of prayer. Pray for your own journey of faith. Pray for Village Church and our mission. Pray for God’s world.

Monday, Nov. 30 2 Peter 1:1-11
The author of this letter stands in awe of the promises of God. That is a good and faithful thing, for these promises are so great, how could we respond in any other way? We are then presented with a list of attributes to pursue in light of God’s promises, and here the awe may fall away. Self control, endurance, godliness, goodness, affection… they all sound good, but to live up to this list is a mighty task. Rather than be discouraged, however, consider seeking out small ways you might seek improvement in one area each day. Sometimes striving toward high expectations can in fact bring out the best in us.

Tuesday, Dec. 1 2 Peter 1:12-21
Memory is important. It informs our faith and gives us confidence that God will keep God’s promises… because that has always been God’s way. “I think it right to refresh your memory,” the author writes. Remembering is a holy practice. When you remember God’s faithfulness to you, what comes to mind?

Wednesday, Dec. 2 2 Peter 3:1-10
Advent is all about waiting — waiting for Christmas, waiting for the arrival of the Christ child. That means waiting for something we know has already happened. But we also wait for something we have not yet seen, the return of Christ. The arrival of God’s promised day. Waiting is hard, and God’s timing often feels so different from our own. What are you waiting for? How do you wait?

Thursday, Dec. 3 2 Peter 3:11-18
Regard the patience of the Lord as salvation, this passage instructs us. Patience is so often something we approach out of necessity, rather than out of delight. It can so quickly turn to impatience. Each can be faithful, depending on circumstance. Where in your life might you consciously choose to be joyfully patient?

Friday, Dec. 4 Matthew 22:1-14
This parable about dress codes is a tough read. And yet it suggests, albeit in a difficult way, that there are times and circumstances that deserve nothing less than our very best. God will take us as we are, to be sure, but God also longs for us to offer our best effort. In our busy days, this likely means setting some priorities. What is your priority this week?

Saturday, Dec. 5 Psalm 80
Let your face shine, that we may be saved. In a season of darkness and light, we pray for the light. The psalmist was familiar with that prayer. The world can often seem so dark. And yet we declare that salvation is coming. Where do you see light today?
TODAY AT VILLAGE

WELCOME TO VILLAGE CHURCH! Please join us every week. Coffee and lemonade are available in Rooms 232 and 233 following worship services.

THE FLOWERS IN FRIENDSHIP HALL TODAY are given to the Glory of God in loving memory of Jay Higdon by Ken and Mary Higdon.

ADVENT WORKSHOP - Join us this afternoon for our annual event for children and families from 3:30-5:30 p.m in Friendship Hall.

WORSHIP BAGS are available for children to use as tools in worship. At the end of the worship service, please return the bags to the baskets located outside of Friendship Hall. Thank you.

CHILDREN AND FAMILY MINISTRY

THE CHILDREN’S CHRISTMAS PLAY IS BACK ON CHRISTMAS EVE! - Look for information to be emailed to you or in children’s Sunday School classrooms. There are speaking, singing and non-speaking parts available. Email either jenny.hull@villagepres.org or cheryl.couch-thomas@villagepres.org for more information.

PRESCHOOL CHURCH SCHOOL - Parents may check in their preschool-age child on the first floor in the Preschool wing. Church school classes are available 9:30 a.m and 11 a.m.

KIDS’ KINGDOM CHURCH SCHOOL - Parents may check in their elementary (K-5) aged students on the 3rd floor. 9:30-10:30 a.m.

CLUB V6 (6TH GRADE) - Fun and relevant discussions for today’s ‘tweens. 9:30-10:30 a.m. in Room 302.

ADULT EDUCATIONAL MINISTRY

VILLAGE FORUM - Rejoice! Reflections on Four Seasonal Hymns - As the church proceeds through Advent, the season of preparation and anticipation, the Village Forum class, taught by Rev. Brian Ellison, will take up two well-known hymns to help us prepare for the celebration of Christmas in the fullness, using the carols’ music, words and histories to focus on the meaning of the incarnation. O Come, O Come Emmanuelle and O Little Town of Bethlehem will be up for conversation today as we think (and, yes, sing) about the glory of the newborn King. On Dec. 13, Rev. Ellison will focus on two more classic hymns, Silent Night, Holy Night and Hark! The Herald Angels Sing. Dr. Gus Breytspraak will continue to lead a discussion of the video series, “People of Faith: Christianity in America,” on Dec. 6 and Dec. 20. 9:30 a.m. Room 126.

SPRING 2016 VILLAGE U REGISTRATION OPENS DEC. 7 - Check out the Spring Village U course offerings on the Village U web page at villagepres.org. A handful of printed catalogs are placed throughout the church. Some classes have a small fee for materials and resources. Child care will be available for most classes for a one-time $40 fee for the spring term; reservations will be required in advance. Registration for Village members begins on Monday, Dec. 7. Registration for the general public begins on Monday, Dec. 14.

ONGOING CLASS - The Path with Heart class, a women’s adult study of various books on contemporary issues, meets on Monday mornings at 10 a.m. in Room 305. The class will be reading A Lamp in the Darkness by Jack Kornfield, and the book comes with a CD of guided meditations by the author.

CONNECTIONAL MINISTRIES

WEDNESDAY NIGHT DINNER DEC. 2 – Our menu is lentil with beef soup, creamy corn & vegetable soup, baked potato bar with toppings, salad bar & dessert. Price is $7 for full buffet, $6 for salad bar, dessert & drink, $3–children ages 3–10, ages 2 & under are free. Call 913-671-2334 or email stacy.fischer@villagepres.org, or go to www.villagepres.org under Connectional Ministries to make a reservation.
CHRISTMAS WEDNESDAY NIGHT DINNER DEC. 9 - Our menu is carved roast beef with horseradish crème, shrimp and grits, potato/vegetable station, assorted appetizers and salads, Artisan rolls, assorted cakes and cheesecakes. Price is $7 for full buffet, $6 for salad bar, dessert & drink, $3 – children ages 3-10, ages 2 & under are free. Reservations are needed no later than Sunday evening, Dec. 6. Call 913-671-2334 or email stacy.fischer@villagepres.org, or go to www.villagepres.org under Connectional Ministries to make a reservation.

ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION COMMITTEE

CHRISTMAS LIGHTS RECYCLING IN DECEMBER - During December and the first two weeks in January, the Environmental Action Committee will be partnering with Southeast Enterprises to recycle Christmas lights. Bring your old or broken Christmas lights to church and place them in the barrel that will be located inside the south entrance of the church. If you have questions, call Gary Tegtmeier at 913-362-8596.

MISSION

FOOD PANTRY - It’s Thanksgiving weekend, the days are getting colder and a warm bowl of hearty soup hits the spot on these days. The hearty soups at the Food Pantry are always in high demand! Please help by bringing in several cans of hearty soup with you on your visits to church this month. Warm, full tummies make for warm smiles. With winter around the corner, the Clothes Closet, is asking for warm blankets.

STAR FAMILIES - The Operation Breakthrough truck will be in our south parking lot on Sunday, Dec. 13, to receive Christmas donations. Monetary donations to Village Church for Star Families will be accepted for holiday meals through Dec. 13. Just $30 will feed a family of three or less and $60 a family of four or more. Please note Operation Breakthrough in the memo of your check. Contact Marilyn Borel at rmborel@sbcglobal.net or 913-708-1917 for more information.

MUSIC MINISTRY

THE CHRISTMAS CAROL SING – 6:45 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 9, in Friendship Hall. Come enjoy this program that includes holiday favorites, and some Christmas “Swing”, along with traditional Christmas Carols for everyone to sing. Invite your friends and family. Admission is free. Call 913-671-2334 for more information.

SECOND THURSDAY RECITAL WITH SOPRANO JAYNE SIEMENS - 12:15 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 10, in the Chapel. Soprano Jayne Siemens will perform “Christmas Laments & Celebrations” accompanied by Mark Ball on piano. Admission is free.

PASTORAL CARE AND COUNSELING

REMEMBRANCE SERVICE, DEC. 6 - Join us on Sunday, Dec. 6, at 5 p.m. in Friendship Hall to thank God for those loved ones we deeply miss. This special service includes prayers, music, reflection, candle lighting and the proclamation of God’s holy Christmas promise: there’s a light in this world that the darkness will never overcome. If your loved one passed away during 2015 and Village Church was informed, his or her name will be included in the program. If you would like to include any other names, please contact Linda Alley at 913-671-2367 or linda.alley@villagepres.org by noon tomorrow, Monday, Nov. 30.

POINSETTIAS PROVIDE CHRISTMAS CHEER - If you would like to take a poinsettia to a member who cannot make it to church during the Advent season, please come to the lower south hallway (near reception) between services on Dec. 13. Choose a card with a name and address, pick up a poinsettia, and deliver it between Dec. 13-16. Feel free to help deliver more than one!
**YOUTH MINISTRY**

**HIGH SCHOOL & MIDDLE SCHOOL SUNDAY SCHOOL** - Meet in the Youth Loft at 9:30 a.m. Room 333. We will be attending worship together.

**NO CHEER H.S. YOUTH GROUP TONIGHT.**

**TWOSDAYS** - Middle schoolers join us Tuesdays after school from 4-5:30 p.m. in the Youth Loft, Room 333.

**1st WEDNESDAY NIGHT DINNER** – meet this Wednesday at 5:15 p.m. up in the Youth Loft, Room 333 and bring $10 for dinner.

**GPS M.S. YOUTH GROUP** - meets on Wednesday evenings from 6:30-8 p.m. in the Youth Loft, Room 333.

**WINTER SKI TRIP FORMS** - are available online at villagepresyouth.org/forms. All 7-12 graders are welcome for a great weekend of skiing!

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**POINSETTIA MEMORIALS** - A poinsettia that decorates the Sanctuary this Advent season may be purchased in memory of a loved one. Make your check ($10) payable to Village Church, clearly printing the memorial name with your donation. Send to the church, Attn: Janice Gill, by Tuesday, Dec. 15. Call 913-671-2362 for more information.

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**CONGREGATIONAL MEETING SUNDAY, DEC. 6, TO VOTE ON THE NEW ASSOCIATE PASTOR FOR YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY**

We have more great news! The APNC (Associate Pastor Nominating Committee) has been very hard at work, and they have identified a candidate to serve as our associate pastor for Young Adult Ministry. The Session has called a congregational meeting to act on the recommendation of the APNC on Sunday, Dec. 6, immediately following the 11 a.m. worship service in Friendship Hall. The candidate will be present in other worship services.

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**JOIN US FOR VILLAGE CHURCH HISTORY AS WE RETURN TO THE SANCTUARY**

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 13**
**Upcoming Advent Activities for Children & Families**

**Advent Family Workshop – 3:30-5:30 p.m. today, in Friendship Hall**
Don’t miss our traditional family activity. Make your own Advent Wreaths and gifts for Christmas. There will be crafts for all age levels and, of course, cookie decorating, popcorn and festive music. Free and open to the public.

**Christmas Night Out – 5:30-8:30 p.m. Friday, Dec. 4, Village Church Child Care**
Send your kids to this fun-filled night from 5:30-8:30 p.m. while you enjoy a night out. Children ages 2-10 will enjoy activities, games and cookies to decorate. Cost is $15 per child with a $30 maximum per family.

**Mesner Puppet Theater - 6:30 p.m. Friday, Dec. 4, in Friendship Hall**
Mesner Puppet Theater presents “Anansi the Spider,” a lively telling of four classic folk tales from Africa and the Caribbean. All these humorous stories feature a trickster spider that sometimes gets tricked himself. In “How the Stories Came to the World,” “Tiger Becomes a Riding Horse,” “The Magic of Five,” and “Dinner for Two,” Anansi the Spider offers universal lessons of wit and cleverness. Call 913-671-2355 for more information. Admission to the puppet show is free.

**VCCFDC Christmas Sing & Pancake Dinner with Santa - 5 p.m. Friday, Dec. 11, in Friendship Hall**
Come see our little ones from the Village Church Child & Family Development Center present their version of the nativity at 5 p.m. in Friendship Hall. VCCFDC will host its first “Pancake Dinner with Santa” immediately following the performance. Enjoy all-you-can-eat pancakes by Chris Cakes. Tickets are $10 for adults, $8 for children age 2 and up. Children under 2 eat free. Get your child’s picture taken with Santa. Contact Peggy Tingle at 913-671-2311 or email peggy.tingle@villagepres.org for tickets. Proceeds will help pay for new playground equipment for the VCCFDC.

Go to villagepres.org for a complete listing of Advent activities.

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**The Giver that Keeps on Giving**

**Commitment Sunday** - Thank you to everyone who has completed their pledge for 2016. Your commitment to continue and grow the ministries and mission of Village Church is heartwarming.

If you have not yet returned your commitment card, take a moment and complete your card or go online to www.villagepres.org/Giving to submit your pledge electronically.
ADVENT SERMON SERIES

This Little Light of Mine

John begins the Gospel this way: the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. It is an honest confession of the hope we witness in the one who rested in manger straw. He is light; but there is darkness as well. His light shines not only before us, but through us. Given the pervasiveness of what John would call darkness in the world, our light can seem pretty small. But this little light is enough. That is our honest confession of hope. This Advent series will offer reflections on the power of God’s light in our lives. If you are needing a little hope these days, you will want to be with us in worship.

Nov. 29 The Story Goes On
Dec. 6 Before the Angels Appear
Dec. 13 This Baby Needs a Place
Dec. 20 God in the Ordinary
Christmas Eve This Little Light of Thine

MINISTERS
All members of the congregation

MINISTRY TEAM

Rev. Thomas L. Are, Jr., senior pastor  Mark Ball, director of music
Dr. Elisa Bickers, principal organist  Rev. Len Carrell, pastor of pastoral care
Cheryl Couch-Thomas, director of children and family ministry  Marjean Lindquist, director of child care
Kathy Lueckert, director of finance and administration  Rev. Jenny McDevitt, pastor of pastoral care
Matthew C. Shepard, associate director of music
Rev. Diane Quaintance, interim director of adult educational ministry
Molly Sirridge, director of stewardship & endowments  Rev. Zach Walker, pastor of youth ministries
Deborah White, director of mission  Cindy A. Wilcox, director of connectional ministries
Rev. Dr. Robert H. Meneilly, pastor emeritus

The 9:30 a.m. service is broadcast live on 1660 AM KMBZ, The Business Channel.
Streaming video of all the Sunday morning Sanctuary services
is available at villagepres.org. Click the Quick Link “Live Service Broadcasts.”
We kindly request that cell phones be turned off during worship.
Large-print Bibles and hymnals are available for worship. Ask an usher if you need these items.
Please note that additional parking is available across Mission Road in the Prairie School parking lots.
If you are not taking your bulletin with you, please hand it to an usher so it may be recycled.