SERVICE OF WORSHIP

December 6, 2015 • 8, 9:30 and 11 a.m.

ABOUT TODAY’S SERVICE

Zechariah was in the temple and the angel appeared. The word “angel” literally means “messenger.” An angel is a holy messenger. This angel brought good news to Zechariah, news so good it left him speechless. What we may overlook, however, is just how long Zechariah had to wait for good news. It is news he had been waiting for all of his adult life. While he waited, he was in the temple; it’s the best place he knew to be when good news had yet to arrive.
GOD’S PEOPLE GATHER

Prelude

Call to Worship

Come now to this place of rest and renewal;
let your spirit rejoice in the presence of God.

We sing of God’s steadfast love for all people.
We pray for God’s peace to dwell in our hearts.
We trust that God will keep God’s promises.

God strengthens those who are weak
and comforts those who are broken-hearted.

God’s light is the life for all.

Lighting of the Advent Candles

Darryl & Mary Bertsch and Doug Hoglund (8 a.m.)
Tony, Jan & Brian Liu (9:30 a.m.)
David, Rebecca, Shannon, Adam & Isaac Enslow (11 a.m.)

*Hymn

Comfort, Comfort Now My People
GENEVAN 42

1 “Com-fort, com-fort now my peo-ple; tell of peace!” So says our God.
2 For the her-ald’s voice is cry-ing in the des-ert far and near,
3 Straight shall be what long was crook-ed, and the rough-er plac-es plain.

“Com-fort those who sit in dark-ness mourn-ing un-der sor-row’s load.
call-ing us to true re-pen-tance, since the reign of God is here.
Let your hearts be true and hum-ble, as be-fits God’s ho-ly reign.
Prayer of Confession

Incarnate God,
We sing of a silent night,
but we long to hear from you.
We sing of joy to the world,
but we are too familiar with sorrow.
We sing O come all ye faithful,
but our own faith is often lacking.
Draw near to us, O child of Bethlehem.
Come into our broken places with your light and your life. (Silent prayer)

Assurance of God’s Grace
*Response

Angels We Have Heard on High

GLORIA

*Passing of the Peace

Words of Welcome

PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

Call to Prayer

Come and Fill Our Hearts
CONFITEMINI DOMINO

Come and fill our hearts with your peace. You alone, O Lord, are holy.
Come and fill our hearts with your peace. Alleluia.
Prayers of the People and 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.

Anthem

Lost in the Night

music and words from a traditional Finnish hymn; Village Choir and More Love Chorale

Prayer for Illumination

Bruce Williams (8 a.m.), Kevin Hennessy (9:30 a.m.), Charles Schultz (11 a.m.)

Scripture Reading

Luke 1:5-25

Sermon

Before the Angel Appears

Rev. Tom Are, Jr.

RESPONSE TO THE WORD

*Bless Be the God of Israel

MERLE’S TUNE

1 Blest be the God of Israel, who comes to set us free;
2 God from the house of David a child of grace has given;
3 On those who sit in darkness the sun begins to rise,

who visits and redeems us, who grants us liberty.
a Savior comes among us to raise us up to heaven.
the dawning of forgiveness upon the sinner’s eyes.

The prophets spoke of mercy, of freedom and release;
Before him goes the herald, forerunner in the way,
God guides the feet of pilgrims along the paths of peace.

God shall fulfill that promise and bring the people peace.
the prophet of salvation, the harbingers of day.
O bless our God and Savior with songs that never cease!

‡Hymn

Blest Be the God of Israel  
MERLE’S TUNE
Offertory

Lo, How A Rose E’er Blooming
traditional German carol; Devin Burton, soloist

*Response

Of the Father’s Love Begotten
DIVINUM MYSTERIUM

Christ, to thee with God the Father, and, O Holy Ghost, to thee,
hymn and chant and high thanksgiving and unwearied praises be.
Honor, glory, and dominion, and eternal victory, evermore and evermore! Amen.

*Prayer of Dedication

*Hymn

Angels We Have Heard on High
GLORIA

1. Angels we have heard on high, which inspire your heavenly song?
sweetly singing o’er the plains, Gloria in excelsis Deo!
and the mountains in reply Gloria in excelsis Deo!
echoing their joyous strains.
Gloria in excelsis Deo!
Gloria in excelsis Deo!

2. Shepherds, why this jubilee? Come to Bethlehem and see
Why your joyous strains prolong? him whose birth the angels sing;
What the gladsome tidings be come, adore on bended knee
Gloria in excelsis Deo! Christ, the Lord, the newborn King.
Gloria in excelsis Deo!
Gloria in excelsis Deo!

3. Come to Bethlehem and see Come to Bethlehem and see
him whose birth the angels sing; come, adore on bended knee
what the gladsome tidings be Christ, the Lord, the newborn King.
Gloria in excelsis Deo!
Gloria in excelsis Deo!
Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Congregational Meeting (11 a.m.)

*Benediction

*Response

Love Has Come

Love has come and never will leave us! Love is life everlasting and free.
Love is Jesus within and among us. Love is the peace our hearts are seeking.
Love! Love! Love is the gift of Christmas. Love! Love! Praise to you, God on high!

*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, Dec. 7**

We are all called by God, and Amos is a wonderful reminder of that. Amos is not from the ecclesiastical chain. He is not a prophet, nor the son of one. He is an everyday person, a herdsman, someone who cares for the sycamore trees. And God calls him to prophesy to God’s people, Israel. Amos only speaks when he is spoken to, and it’s not about “thus Amos says;” but “thus says the Lord.”

**Tuesday, Dec. 8**

In this passage we find Amos as the advocate for the powerless. In his call to be prophet, we find him making an appeal to God. God shows Amos three different examples of how the people are not measuring up to how God has commanded them to care for the poor. And twice do we hear Amos pray for the people of Israel, whom he names Jacob. Saying, “forgive” them for they are “so small.” Amos stands as an example that a prophetic ministry is also one of pastoral care.

**Wednesday, Dec. 9**

These two couplets of verses play on the paradox of scripture. On one hand, God shows Amos a basket full of “summer fruit,” and then God says, “I will send a famine on the land.” At first the songs of the people will be one of wailing and lament, but then there will be silence. God tells Amos, the end has come…“I will never again pass them by,” and the famine God will send on the land is not of bread, or a thirst for water, but “of hearing the word of the Lord.” What famine would the world experience with the absence of the word and presence of God?

**Thursday, Dec. 10**

This passage can be one of the most confusing if we are looking for it to prove the resurrection. Even for the Sadducees, their challenge is met with an appeal for the interpretation of the scriptures, and not for a literal reading of them. The Sadducees challenge Jesus because in their understanding Moses never speaks of such outrageous things. But for Jesus the resurrection is not about some wishful belief or thinking or even the immortality of the soul, but in the promise that God’s love is more powerful than death; that we belong to God, and not even death can pull us away from God’s love.

**Friday, Dec. 11**

The tests just keep coming to Jesus, don’t they? Here, it is the Pharisees’ turn. They ask Jesus what is the greatest commandment. And Jesus answers them with a double dose of love. Because to love God is to love our neighbor, and to love our neighbor is to show God’s love. This is not some new teaching from Jesus. The Ten Commandments are divided in just this way. The first four commandments are how we honor God, and the remaining six are how we honor each other.

**Saturday, Dec. 12**

This is a beautiful song that sings of God’s greatness and goodness, of God’s steadfast love for creation. It sings of images of a creator who simply speaks, and out of nothing, all things come into being. It tells of how all of the earth is full of God’s steadfast love, and how we as its “inhabitants” shall “stand in awe” of a God who loves in this way. It also contrasts our awe for the faithfulness of God, with that of “kings” and “warriors” and “war horses” as those of a “vain hope for victory.” “Our soul waits for the Lord” for God is “our help and shield.”
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 Dorothy and Ken Thein by their family.

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING TO VOTE ON THE NEW ASSOCIATE PASTOR FOR YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY - We have great news! The APNC (Associate Pastor Nominating Committee) has been very hard at work, and they have identified a candidate to serve as our next associate pastor for Young Adult Ministry. The session has called a congregational meeting to act on the recommendation of the APNC today, immediately following the 11 a.m. worship service in Friendship Hall. The candidate will be present in other worship services.

REMEMBRANCE SERVICE THIS EVENING - Join us at 5 p.m. tonight 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.

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.

NO CHURCH SCHOOL on Dec. 20 to allow our volunteer teachers to worship with their families.

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 Emmanuel 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, today and Dec. 20. 9:30 a.m. Room 126.

SPRING 2016 VILLAGE U REGISTRATION OPENS TOMORROW - 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 tomorrow. 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

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 no later than this evening. Call 913-671-2334 or email stacy.fischer@villagepres.org, or go to 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 is 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 - Thanksgiving is behind us and the Food Pantry distributed over 450 Thanksgiving Baskets to our clients - thank you! The Food Pantry is asking for personal care items to fill our shelves - bars of soap, toothpaste, small bottles of dish soap, shampoo, hand lotion and tissues. These items cannot be purchased with our clients’ food stamps. The Clothes Closet needs pants hangers and winter coats - clean, gently used and in all sizes.

JOY OFFERING DEC. 20 - The proceeds from the Joy Offering support retired church workers and eight Presbyterian schools and colleges, while the Christmas Project provides assistance to local social service agencies who help others with holiday and emergency assistance needs. Envelopes for this offering have been placed in the Friendship folders on each aisle.

DECK THE VILLAGE TREES WITH HATS AND MITTENS - This Village tradition returns for the holiday season. From now through Dec. 25, come decorate our Christmas trees with hats and mittens to give to families served by the Village Clothes Closet/Food Pantry. The trees are located outside the Children’s Library on the second floor and at the south entrance to the church. The pantry serves 500 households a month and your contribution will literally help spread the warmth of the season to many of these families. Contact Deborah White, director of mission, at 913-671-2369 or deborah.white@villagepres.org with any questions.

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 – 6:30 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.
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.


YOUTH MINISTRY

HIGH SCHOOL & MIDDLE SCHOOL SUNDAY SCHOOL - Meet in the Youth Loft at 9:30 a.m. Room 333.

CHEER H.S. YOUTH GROUP TONIGHT - Meets tonight from 6:30-8:30 p.m. in the Youth Loft.

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

GPS M.S. CHRISTMAS PARTY – Join us this Wednesday evening from 6:30–8 p.m. in the Youth Loft, Room 333. Wear your favorite festive sweater!

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

PROGRESSIVE DINNER AT CHEER – High schoolers, join us from 6:30-8:30 p.m. on Dec. 13, for our annual Progressive Dinner. Meet in the Youth Loft, Room 333.
Upcoming Advent Activities for Children & Families

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 ages 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.

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

To all who have made their commitment for 2016, we want to tell you how much we appreciate your support and thank you for your generosity.
If you haven’t filled out your commitment card and returned it to church, there is still time! You can go to www.villagepres.org/Giving/Annual Commitment Form. Just fill in the form and submit.
Another way is to complete the form that was mailed to you and return it in the envelope that was enclosed with the form.
Finally, if you need help in completing your form, call Molly Sirridge, director of stewardship at 913-671-2325. She will be glad to help you.
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.

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 Angel Appears
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

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