***Windows oN Christmas***

**Advent Worship Series – Week 1**

***The Window of Exaltation – The Angels***

**November 28, 2021**

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| **WORSHIP SERVICE OUTLINE**SEach worship outline contains all elements needed for your worship service. The order of each service presented is only a *suggestion*. No doubt changes will be needed to accommodate the flow and worship style of your corps. The outlines are flexible and allow opportunities to “cut and paste” as needed. If you are blessed with instrumental or vocal music resources, you may find there is more structured material here than needed.  |

**Introduction of Advent series:**

Life is all about perspective, and our own perceptions can be clarified and enriched by seeing life’s events through a number of different windows. A fresh look, a different angle can revolutionize our appreciation of truths that might be in danger of growing stale and tired. This Advent we will be looking through new windows gaining a fresh perspective provided by those who were there, allowing us to see and feel what they saw and felt, and to learn from their responses to these wonderful and powerful events of Christmas.

May we, with grateful hearts, join in the exaltation of the Christ, God’s glorious gift to us! Come and worship…worship Christ, the newborn King!

(*Windows on Christmas*, pp. 11-12, 32)

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| **SB#100/HC#280/SS#186/CF#5 – Angels, from the realms of glory** | TB-407 – Regent SquareHC-280SS-186CF-5 | HTD4-T12 (4 vs.)HCD26-T20 |
|  **Additional Optional Songs** |
| **CF#17/SS#187 – Angels we have heard on high** | CF-17SS-187 |  |
| **SB#103/CF#41 – Christians awake, salute the happy morn** | TB-476 – Christians awakeCF-41 | HTD10-T1 (3 vs.) |
| **SB#104 – Come, Thou long expected Jesus** | TB-370 – Hyfrydol | HTD1-T14 (3 vs.) |
| **SB#105 – Do you know the song that the angels sang** | TB-627 – Glory in the Highest | No HT CD |
| **SB#108/HC#270/SS#191/CF#1– Hark! the herald angels sing**  | TB-270 – sameHC-270SS-191CF-1 | HTD4-T5 (3 vs.)HCD25-T20 |
| **SB#112/HC#189 – It was on a starry night/A Starry Night**  | TB-535 – A starry nightHC-280 | No HT CDHCD16-T20 |
| **SB#39/HC#121 – Joyful, joyful, we adore Thee/Joyful, Joyful**  | TB-367 – EuropeHC-121 | HTD3-T11 (4 vs.)HCD11-T11 |
| **SB#114/HC#146/SS#137 – Light of the world/Here I am to Worship**  | TB-653 – Here I am to worshipHC-146SS-137 | No HT CDHCD13-T16 |
| **SB#125 – The angel Gabriel from Heaven came** | TB-624 – Gabriel’s Message | No HT CD |
| **SB#126/SS#197/CF#19 – The first Noel the angel did say** | TB-857 – The first NowellSS-197CF-19 | HTD6-T18 (3 vs.) |

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| **Drama – Gloria!** |

***Glory to the Newborn King***

**Call to Worship:**

The angels exalt Christ for who He is and for what He has done. They exalted Him in His birth, ministered to Him in His life, supported Him in His anguish, announced Him in His resurrection—all because He is the Christ. All because He chose to express His inexpressible love in such a mysterious and wonderful way—and pour it out on His wayward creation.

The angels know what we too easily forget: that the Lord Jesus Christ is ever and always deserving of the highest exaltation. And if the angels exalt the Christ for His grace, how much more should adoration of the Savior drive the hearts and passions of the men and women who have been granted this great grace!

This marriage of awe and exaltation from observing angels and redeemed humanity finds wonderful expression in one of the most familiar of Christmas hymns:

*Hark! the herald angels sing:*

*Glory to the newborn King!*

(*Windows on Christmas*, pp. 30-31)

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| **SB#108/HC#270/SS#191/CF#1– Hark! the herald angels sing**  | TB-270 – sameHC-270SS-191CF-1 | HTD4-T5 (3 vs.)HCD25-T20 |
|  **Additional Optional Songs** |
| **CF#17/SS#187 – Angels we have heard on high** | CF-17SS-187 |  |
| **SB#103/CF#41 – Christians awake, salute the happy morn** | TB-476 – Christians awakeCF-41 | HTD10-T1 (3 vs.) |
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**Announcements and Offering**

[*Announce that a special World Services offering will be collected on Sunday, December 19, 2021. Encourage congregation to think of ways to begin saving and multiplying their gifts!*]

*The Candle of Hope*

**Lighting of Advent Candle**

**Reader 1:** ***14*** *“The days are coming,” declares the Lord, “when I will fulfill the good promise I made to the people of Israel and Judah.*

***15*** *“In those days and at that time I will make a righteous Branch sprout from David’s line; he will do what is just and right in the land.* ***16****In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. This is the name by which it will be called: The Lord Our Righteous Savior.”*

Jeremiah 33:14-16 (NIV)

[*Light the first (purple) Advent candle*]

**Reader 2:** Today, we light the candle of hope. May it remind each and every one of us of God’s great promise to us. He is our hope, He is our Redeemer, and He is Savior.

**Reader 1:** Let’s pray: Father, during this Advent season may we be reminded of Your promises to us and Your fulfillment of them. Help us to prepare our lives for His Advent within us. In the precious name of Jesus, we pray. Amen.

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| **Children’s Moment – Window Watching** |

***The Window of Exaltation***

**Responsive Reading:**

**Leader:** The first angel we encounter in the Christmas story is Gabriel who visits planet earth to inform the principal players, and, ultimately, the world that the “fulness of time” has come—that long-awaited moment in history when the promised Messiah will arrive. This comes in a series of announcements, the first being the coming of the forerunner of the Messiah, John the Baptist (Luke 1:5-22).

**All:** Gabriel’s announcement came true, and John the Baptist arrived to “prepare the way of the Lord”—step one in the process of bringing Christ into the world.

**Men:** Six months later, Gabriel came to the village of Nazareth to give a message from God to a young woman named Mary (Luke 1:26-38).

**Leader:** Gabriel informed Mary that she had been selected for the role that had long been the desire of Jewish women—the privilege of giving birth to the promised Messiah. Her response was one of simple availability:

**Women:** *38“I am the Lord’s servant,” Mary answered. “May your word to me be fulfilled”* (Luke 1:38).

**Leader:** Following his visit to Mary, Gabriel also visited her husband-to-be, Joseph, and gave him the same message—Mary’s child was of God, not man (Matthew 1:20-25). Joseph could take her to be his wife with full confidence in her purity.

**Men:** Nine months later Gabriel returned with yet another message—this time not a message of anticipation, but one of arrival. The angel of the Lord appears in the Judean skies over the shepherds’ fields of Bethlehem.

**Leader:** ***10****But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people.****11****Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord.****12****This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”*

**Women:** ***13****Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,*

**All:** ***14****“Glory to God in the highest heaven,
    and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.”*

Luke 2:10-14 (NIV)

**Leader:** We have heard this story so many times that we have become inoculated against its power and majesty. We talk about angelic appearances like they were an everyday occurrence—but they weren’t then, and they aren’t today.

(*Windows on Christmas*, pp. 19-23)

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| **Song – Mighty God**(Tune: “Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing”)Words by Geron Davis, Dave Clark and Tony Wood ©2016 Word Music, Woodspring Music, Tony Wood Songs | TB-374 – Nettleton HC-189SS-79 | No HT CDHCD17-T19 |
| 1. God of glory, King of Heaven, for this moment robed in flesh.Prince of power, strength and honor, now contained in tenderness.*Chorus:**Hear the shouts from Heaven’s hallways, saints and angels all applaud!**Praise the Infant in the manger; glory to our mighty God.*2. Here to break the bonds of evil, here to set the captives free.He will triumph; He will conquer, and deliver you and me.3. Let us live with hope and courage through the trials we face in life.He will be our Strength in weakness, our Defender in each fight. |
|  **Additional Optional Songs** |
| **HC#72 – Emmanuel** | HC-72 | HCD6-T12 |
| **HC#220 – Incarnate** | HC-220 | HCD20-T20 |
| **SB#111/SS#192/CF#24 – It came upon the midnight clear** | TB-133 – sameSS-192 CF-24 | HTD9-T7 (3 vs.) |
| **SB#82/HC#82/SS#38 – Jesus, name above all names** | TB-714 – sameHC-82SS-38 | No HT CDHCD7-T12 |
| **SB#114/HC#146/SS#137 – Light of the world/Here I am to Worship** | TB-653 – Here I am to worshipHC-146SS-137 | No HT CDHCD13-T16 |
| **SB#117/CF#20 – O come, O come, Immanuel** | TB-444 – sameCF-20 | HTD11-T8 (3 vs.) |
| **HC#45 – While We are Waiting, Come** | HC-45 | HCD3-T15 |

**Prayers of the People – Prayers of Praise**

**Pastoral Prayer**

**Sermon – *The Window of Exaltation***

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| **HC#120 – In the Manger** | HC-120 | HCD10-T20 |
|  **Additional Optional Songs** |
| **SB#565/HC#89/SS#43– All I once held dear/Knowing You** | TB-725 – Knowing YouHC-89SS-43 | No HT CDHCD7-T19 |
| **HC#179 – Come to Jesus** | HC-179 | HCD16-T19 |
| **HC#72 – Emmanuel** | HC-72 | HCD6-T12 |
| **HC#156 – Enter In** | HC-156 | HCD14-T16 |
| **SB#77/HC#154/SS#31 – Fairest Lord Jesus** | TB-206 – AscalonHC-151SS-31 | HTD5-T1 (3 vs.)HCD14-T11 |
| **SB#492/HC#65/SS#7 – God will make a way** | TB-639 – same HC-65SS-7 | No HT CDHCD5-T15 |
| **HC#169 – Hallelujah** | HC-169 | HCD15-T19 |
| **HC#220 – Incarnate** | HC-220 | HCD20-T20 |
| **SB#376/HC#219 – King of kings, majesty** | TB-722 – same HC-219 | No HT CDHCD20-T19 |
| **HC#123/SS#55 – Shine on Us** | HC-123SS-55 | HCD11-T13 |
| **SB#124/SS#196/CF#25 – Silent night! Holy night!**  | TB-842 – Stille NachtSS-196CF-25 | HTD4-T15 (3 vs.) |
| **SB#439/HC#139 – There is a message** | TB-879 – same HC-139 | No HT CDHCD12-T19 |
| **HC#136 – We All Bow Down** | HC-136 | HCD12-T16 |
| **HC#45 – While We are Waiting, Come** | HC-45 | HCD3-T15 |
| **SB#153/CF#35 – Thou didst leave thy throne/O come to my heart, Lord Jesus**  | TB-94 – MargaretCF-35 | HTD10-T6 (4 vs.) |
| **SB#158 – Who is He in yonder stall** | TB-287 – Who is He? | HTD10-T19 (6 vs.) |

**Advent Blessing:**

Be people of hope.
Let hope live in your heart and share the hope of Christ with all you meet.
Share hope by noticing someone else’s humanity.
Share hope by listening to someone’s story.
Share hope by praying for our world.
In this Advent season, we need to see, feel, and share hope.
As you go out into the wonder of God’s creations, share hope with those you meet.

Amen.

(By Rev. Susannah DeBenedetto, Christ Congregational Church

and Takoma Park Presbyterian Church, Takoma Park, MD)

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| **SB#116/HC#140/SS#194/CF#6 – O come, all ye faithful** | TB-496 – Adeste FidelesHC-140SS-194CF-6 | HTD3-T1 (3 vs.)HCD12-T20 |
|  **Additional Optional Songs** |
| **SB#73/HC#141/SS#28 – All hail the power**  | TB-306 – CoronationHC-141SS-28 | HTD5-T5 (4 vs.)HCD13-T11 |
| **SB#112/HC#180 – It was on a starry night/A starry night** | TB-535 – sameHC-280 | No HT CDHCD16-T20 |
| **SB#77/HC#151/SS#31 – Fairest Lord Jesus** | TB-206 – Ascalon HC-151SS-31 | HTD5-T1 (3 vs.)HCD14-T11 |
| **SB#106/HC#260/SS#189/CF#43 – Go, tell it on the mountain** | TB-631 – sameHC-260SS-189CF-43 | HTD11-T4 (2 vs., start with chorus)HCD24-T20 |

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| **Advent 2021 Week #1** |
| **DRAMA****Gloria!****By Martyn Scott Thomas**© Copyright 2020 by Martyn Scott Thomas. All rights reserved. Used by permission. |
| **Topic:** | Christmas – the Angels |
| **Scripture:** | Luke 2:8-15 |
| **Synopsis:** | Two Angels speak of the first Christmas. |
| **Characters:** | Angel 1Angel 2 |
| **Props/Costumes:** | Angelic or white clothing. |
| **Setting:** | Bare stage. |
| **Running time:** | 3 minutes |

[*The Angels enter from the back, moving up opposite aisles to the stage.*]

**Angel 1:** [*shouting to the congregation* *as he moves up the aisle*] Glory to God in the highest heaven!

**Angel 2:** [*shouting to the congregation* *as he moves up the aisle*] And on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests!

**Angel 1:** [*repeating and moving center stage*] Glory to God in the highest heaven!

**Angel 2:** [*repeating and moving center stage*] And on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests!

**Angel 1:** The moment for which we’ve waited for years has finally come!

**Angel 2:** The birth of the Messiah, God’s chosen one!

**Angel 1:** And for this special occasion, a special song.

**Angel 2:** And for this song, an angelic choir.

**Angel 1:** The skies were filled . . .

**Angel 2:** And the shepherds trembled.

**Angel 1:** But our song brought them peace . . .

**Angel 2:** And great joy for all people.

**Angel 1:** The time had come for God to intervene personally into humankind.

**Angel 2:** The time had come for him to send his Son, the Messiah.

**Angel 1:** A sign was given to the shepherds:

**Angel 2:** A baby wrapped snugly in strips of cloth, lying in a manger.

**Angel 1:** Then it was our turn to sing.

**Angel 2:** Our time to join the celebration.

**Angel 1:** [*proclaiming*] Glory to God in the highest heaven!

**Angel 2:** [*proclaiming*] And on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests!

**Angel 1:** [*encouraging the congregation*] Join with us . . .

**Angel 2:** As we celebrate the birth of the Christ child.

**Angel 1:** Glory to God in the highest heaven!

**Angel 2:** And on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests!

**Angel 1:** [*repeating*] Glory to God in the highest heaven!

**Angel 2:** [*repeating*] And on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests!

**Angel 1:** [*leading as he exits*] Glory to God in the highest heaven!

**Angel 2:** [*leading as he exits*] And on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests!

[*Blackout*]

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| **Advent 2021 Week #1** |
| **CHILDREN’S MOMENT****Window Watching****By Katie Laidlaw**\* Utilized during COVID-19 Pandemic |
| **Topic:** | The Angels |
| **Scripture:** | Matthew 1; Luke 1 |
| **Synopsis:** | Detective Candy Cane seeks to crack the cases of the involved parties of the Christmas story. Looking through the windows of Mary, Joseph, the Shepherds and the Angels in order to find the true meaning of Christmas.  |
| **Character:** | Detective Candy Cane |
| **Props/Costumes:** | Detective wear (glasses, magnifying glass, mustache, pencil, notepad, trench coat/sweater) |

**Script:**

I’m looking for some evidence about a case I have been given to solve… Let me introduce myself. I am Detective Cane… Candy Cane. I have been assigned to crack a few cases during this Christmas season. This week, I have all of this evidence… but I can’t seem to figure out why there is so much singing! I’m seeing in our evidence that these creatures, called “angels,” appeared to several people over the course of the Christmas story.

The angel first appeared to a husband and wife named Zechariah and Elizabeth. The angel told them “Do not be afraid!”—probably while singing some high-class opera! [*Give quick opera sample*]

It says here in my notes that Zechariah and Elizabeth were very old and always wanted to have a baby. The angel appeared to them to tell them great news – they were going to have a baby! Supposedly, this baby was going to lead people to the Messiah, Jesus!

Our next piece of evidence tells us that the angel visited a young girl named Mary. The angels appeared and said, [*opera singing*] “Do not be afraid!” Listen, if someone came towards me singing opera, I would be terrified! My evidence tells me that the angel told Mary that she was going to give birth to a son and name Him Jesus.

Next, the angel appeared to a man named Joseph. Can you guess what the angel said to him? [*opera singing*] “Do not be afraid!” This is what the angel keeps telling the people.

I am noticing a pattern here. As a detective, I am trained to notice patterns in my evidence. The angel said to Joseph, “Mary is pregnant with a Son named Jesus.” This matches up!

Next, the angel appears to some shepherds. You know, the guys with the tall candy cane-looking sticks. Shepherds walk around in order to keep the sheep safe and in their pack. When the angel appeared to the shepherds, the angel said something. What do you think it was? [*opera singing*] “Do not be afraid!” But this time, the angel tells the shepherds, “The Savior has been born in Bethlehem.”

If I’m understanding all of this evidence correctly, I am gathering that the main message is that a Savior has been born. I think some important questions to ask are: 1) Why do we need a savior? 2) Why do we not need to be afraid? 3) Why is there so much singing?

You see, I found out in my investigation and research that the word “Angel” means “messenger.” I also found out why angels sing so much! There is a fancy, big word called, “exaltation.” Can you say that with me? “Ex-al-ta-tion”

It means “to have joy or be jubilant,” which is why the angels sing so loud!

I need to do some further investigation. Can you help me with something? On the count of 3, can you give me your best opera note? I want to see something… ready? 1, 2, 3! [*opera singing*]

Hmmmm. That makes sense! I think that is how it sounded on the night Jesus was born.

Psalm 100 tells us: “Make a joyful noise to the Lord. Serve the Lord with gladness and come into His presence with singing.”

Even if things are hard and we are afraid… even if things are troubling and we cannot understand why things happen, or maybe we feel alone or like no one understands or cares… we need to sing with gladness and joy. We need to rejoice because Jesus was born to save us! Jesus came to be the Savior so that we could live with joy! This is something to sing about, even if it scares other people! We should be so filled with joy about Jesus that we might have to say, “Don’t be afraid!” I’m going to worship Jesus because He saves!

I think I have cracked our case for this week. I might have a new case for you next week!

[*Close with prayer*.]

**Main Points:**

* Angels (the messengers) were sent to speak peace and assurance of things to come
* We shouldn’t be afraid because God has a plan
* We should exalt the Lord and worship Him even in hard times because Jesus came to save us

**Questions:**

* What are you afraid of? Why?
* How can God help us when we’re afraid?
* How can we worship the Lord in hard times?
* Why does Jesus deserve our worship?
* How would you react if an angel came to speak to you?

 ***Windows oN Christmas***

**Advent Sermon – Week 1**

***The Window of Exaltation – The Angels***

**November 28, 2021**

**By Captain Peter Mount**

**TITLE: *The Window of Exaltation***

**SCRIPTURE: Luke 1:26-38**

**ILLUSTRATION:** Share a story about “window shopping.” Make the point that as we go window shopping, we see what shops are offering!

**TRANSITION:** Introduce the series, “*Windows on Christmas*.”

Talk about what Advent offers to us and how it applies to our daily lives.

Encourage congregation to look through the various windows of Christmas – beginning with today’s theme, *The Window of Exaltation*.

**WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT ANGELS**

**QUESTION:** What do we know about angels?

**SCRIPTURE:** READ Psalm 8:5-8

* Angels are created beings! There is a hierarchy in the creation order:
	1. Trinity (Before creation – the Creators/Triune God)
	2. Angels or heavenly beings (Created)
	3. Humankind (Created – a little lower than the angels)
	4. Rest of creation (Created – Man has authority/power over created things on earth).
* Throughout Scripture we see Angels playing a large part in God’s plan:
* Genesis 19 – The angels brought a message of **WARNING** to Sodom and Gomorrah.
* Exodus 23:20-23 – Angels gave **DIRECTION** for Israel.
* Daniel 3 – Angels gave a message of **RESCUE** in the account of Shadrach, Meschech, and Abednego.
* John 4:11 – Angels brought a message of **COMFORT** to Jesus after he had been tempted in the wilderness.
* Luke 24 – The Angels were at the empty tomb and gave a message of **EXALTATION.**
* Angels are also given authority by God
* Matthew 4:6 (quoting Psalm 91:11) – He will command His angels concerning you.

**CONTEXT:** As we can see from the Old Testament and the New Testament, Angels are always proclaiming a message from God or exalting and worshiping the Triune God. However, Angels also have free will (as all created beings do).

**SCRIPTURE:** READ 2 Corinthians 11:13-15. It is important to remember that Angels, as created beings, have a choice to be obedient to God or to rebel.

**TRANSITION:** In the Advent account we see angels modeling both the proclamation of a message and the worship of the Triune God.

**ANGELS—PROCLAIMING AND EXALTING**

**POIN**T: The Angels bring the proclamation of a message and worship.

**SCRIPTURE:** READLuke 1:26-38

**CONTEXT:**

* Luke 1:28 – God ordained the opportunity. The angel was sent to her, from God, with a specific message.
* Luke 1:30-31 – The angel proclaims a message of comfort and reassurance.
* Luke 1:32-33 – The angel is exalting and worshipping. The angel’s act of worship is giving Jesus the worth He is due and acknowledging who He is.
* Luke 1:35-36 – The angel proclaims again. This is a message of explanation.
* Luke 1:37 – The angel is exalting God as omnipotent (which means all-powerful). This reminds us that nothing is impossible with God.

*(More scriptural support, if needed: Luke 2:8-12 – The angel again proclaiming, exalting, and worshiping the Triune God.)*

**TRANSITION:** We are not and will never be angels, so what does this have to do with us?

**HUMANKIND**

Humankind and angels are both created beings of God! Therefore, as we have already seen, we can only exalt and worship if we know and love the One we are worshipping!

**CLOSING CHALLENGE**

Do you know the God of creation, the Savior of the world and the Spirit that guides us each and every day?

We can only proclaim a message of exaltation with a heart full of the joy of the Lord.

Do you have the joy of the Lord?

No? Then seek Him out this Christmas season. He is right there waiting to reveal himself to you!

Yes? Is that joy and love being seen in and through everything you say, do and think?