Notes for Today’s Worship

About the Worship Leader
Jill Crainshaw is the Blackburn Professor of Worship and Liturgical Theology at Wake Forest University School of Divinity and our resident boot-wearing liturgist. Her research interests include worship and liturgical theology, vocational formation for ministry, and feminist perspectives on church leadership.

Worship

Today’s worship service was planned by Jill Crainshaw, Lindsey Altvater (MDiv ’16), and Ken Pettigrew (MDiv ’16).

We welcome Jennifer Alexandra Johnston (Alex) as our guest cellist for today’s service.

Some of the ideas explored in today’s sermon are based on writings by Kayla McClurg (of the Church of the Saviour) for Sunday, November 30, 2014, and on a poem by James Weldon Johnson, “The Creation.”

The Call to Worship is a paraphrase of a prayer by Thomas Shuman.

The cover image is from the 2012 Hubble Space Telescope Advent Calendar:

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Gathering

Prelude: "Song of Autumn" by Gabriel Faure

*Call to Worship

Emily Lemoine (MDiv ’17)
Nic Williams (MDiv ’16)

One: O that you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at your presence--as when fire kindles brushwood and the fire causes water to boil--to make your name known to your adversaries, so that the nations might tremble at your presence!

All: We have heard of your power, Shaper of stars; from those set free from injustice; from our children who whisper of your joy; from greeters of dawn’s fresh start; from late risers who listen to the stories of the needy.

One: We have heard of your light, Bright Star of the morning; which can illumine the shadows of our lives; which can show the path to God’s heart; which can point the way to where we become servants of the gospel.

All: O that you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at your presence--as when fire kindles brushwood and the fire causes water to boil--to make your name known to your adversaries, so that the nations might tremble at your presence!

*Song: "I Wonder as I Wander" (page 4)

Centering

Scripture Reading: Mark 13:24-26

Monica Banks (MDiv ’17)

Meditation "My Lord! What a Morning"
Proclaiming
Scripture Reading: Isaiah 64:1-9
Demi McCoy (MDiv '17)

Sermon: ‘Til Every Soul Feels Its Worth
Jill Crainshaw

Responding
Song: "O Holy Night"

O Holy night, the stars are brightly shining;
it is the night of our dear Savior’s birth.
Long lay the world in sin and error pining
till he appeared and the soul felt its worth.
A thrill of hope, the weary world rejoices,
for yonder breaks a new and glorious morn.
Fall on your knees! O hear the angel voices!
O night divine, O night, when Christ was born.
O night divine, O night, O night divine.

Prayers of the People
Ken Pettigrew (MDiv '16)

Sending
*Song: "Creator of the Stars of Night" (page 5)

Benediction
Jill Crainshaw

* Please stand in body and/or spirit.
I WONDER AS I WANDER

1. I wonder as I wander, out under the sky, How
2. When Mary birthed Jesus, 'twas in a cow's stall, With
3. If Jesus had wanted for any wee thing, A
4. I wonder as I wander, out under the sky, How

Jesus the Savior did come for to die For
wise men and farmers and shepherds and all. But
star in the sky or a bird on the wing, Or
Jesus the Savior did come for to die For

poor ord'nary people like you and like I; I
high from God's heaven a star's light did fall, The
all of God's angels in heav'n for to sing, He
poor ord'nary people like you and like I; I

(Optional Coda)

wonder as I wander, out under the sky.
promise of ages it then did recall.
surely could have it, 'cause He was the King.
wonder as I wander, out under the sky. Out under the sky.
Creator of the Stars of Night

1 Creator of the stars of night, your people's ever-
2 When this old world drew on toward night, you came; but not in
3 At your great name, O Jesus, now all knees must bend, all
4 To God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit,

last ing light, O Christ, redeemer of us all,
splendor bright, not as a monarch, but the child
hearts must bow: all things on earth with one accord,
Three in One, praise, honor, might, and glory be.

we pray you, hear us when we call.
of Mary, blameless mother mild.
like those in heaven, shall call you Lord.
from age to age eternally. Amen.

The Latin original of this text for Advent dates from at least the 9th century, and the English version was created a millennium later as part of the 19th-century recovery of early Christian hymns. It is provided here with its traditional plainchant setting.

MUSIC: Sarum plainsong, Mode IV, 9th cent.; harm. Alfred V. Fedak, 2011
Text Alt. © 1940 Church Pension Fund
Music Harm. © 2011 Alfred V. Fedak

(Conditor alme siderum)
Alternately harmonized, 671 (alternate tune: Puér nobis nascitur)
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