Inspired by the bold and boundless hospitality of Jesus, we are “open to all,” which means we welcome and accept all people into the life of our Church without regard to race, gender, sexual orientation, age, economic status, political affiliation, physical or mental capacity, or religious belief. We believe that God’s call is given to all people, and we embrace the Spirit that continues to cross boundaries in order to unite the world.

Prelude
“Wachet Auf, Ruft Uns Die Stimme”
John Richardson, organ
Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Call to Worship
Rev. Dr. W. Benjamin Boswell

Bidding Prayer
Rev. Dr. W. Benjamin Boswell

Opening Hymn
“Once in Royal David's City”
Chancel Ensemble
Christopher Dougherty, treble
IRBY

Lighting of the Candle of Love
Lorin and Geoff Bent
with Winnie and Jack

Welcome of Our Guests
If you are our guest today, please text “guest” to 474747 so we may offer you our gratitude for joining us today.

Rev. Carrie Veal

Anthem
“E’en So, Lord Jesus, Quickly Come”
Chancel Ensemble
Paul Manz (1919-2009)

First Lesson: God comforts people and calls them to prepare for redemption.
Leader: The story of God for the people of God,
People: Thanks be to God.
Rev. Dr. W. Benjamin Boswell, reader

Isaiah 40:1-5

Anthem
“Jesus Christ, the Apple Tree”
Youth Choir
arr. Mark Patterson (b. 1969)

Second Lesson: The Messiah’s birthplace in Bethlehem is foretold.
Leader: The story of God for the people of God,
People: Thanks be to God.
Rev. Mia M. McClain, reader

Micah 5:2-5a

Carol
“It Came Upon a Midnight Clear”
CAROL
Lillie Judge, soprano
Third Lesson: God promises a child known as “God with us.”

Leader: The story of God for the people of God,
People: Thanks be to God.

Rev. Joseph D. Aldrich, reader

Isaiah 7:10-14

Anthem
“Come Sing and Dance”

Rev. Deborah Moore Clark, soprano; Janice Bradner, piano

Herbert Howells (1892-1983)

Sharing Our Gifts
Gifts to “Loose Plate Offering” will benefit the Ministry of Outreach partners.

Fourth Lesson: The prophet foretells Jesus’ mission on earth.

Leader: The story of God for the people of God,
People: Thanks be to God.

Rev. Leigh Anne Hagerman, reader

Isaiah 61:1-3

Chancel Ensemble

Chancel Ensemble

Fifth Lesson: The angel Gabriel salutes Mary.

Leader: The story of God for the people of God,
People: Thanks be to God.

Rev. Carrie Veal, reader

Luke 1:26-38

Carol
“The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came”

Lillie Judge, soprano

GABRIEL’S MESSAGE

Sixth Lesson: Mary is greeted by Elizabeth and proclaims her joy.

Leader: The story of God for the people of God,
People: Thanks be to God.

Allen Davis, reader

Luke 1:39-56

Anthem
“Ave Maria”

Chancel Ensemble

Nathaniel Dett (1882-1943)

Kinder and Carol Choirs

“Christmas Bells”

Mary Ann Cooper (b. 1950)

Seventh Lesson: Jesus is born in Bethlehem.

Leader: The story of God for the people of God,
People: Thanks be to God.

Marina Luckhoo, reader

Luke 2:1-7

Carol
“Angels We Have Heard on High”

Chancel Ensemble

GLORIA

Eighth Lesson: The shepherds go to the manger.

Leader: The story of God for the people of God,
People: Thanks be to God.

Tucker Pearsall, reader

Luke 2:8-20
Anthem
“Shepherds, Arise”
Chapel Choir
Dan R. Edwards (b. 1951)

Ninth Lesson: The Word was made flesh and we have seen its glory.
Leader: The story of God for the people of God,
People: Thanks be to God.
Ryan LaPrade, reader

Carol
“Joy to the World”
Chancel Ensemble
ANTIOCH

Benediction
Rev. Dr. W. Benjamin Boswell

Postlude
“Magnificat VI: Gloria”
John Richardson, organ
Marcel Dupré (1886-1971)

Leading worship today with Rev. Dr. W. Benjamin Boswell, Senior Minister,
are Rev. Joseph D. Aldrich, Associate Minister,
Rev. Mia M. McClain, Associate Minister,
Rev. Leigh Anne Hagerman, Church Administrator,
Rev. Carrie Veal, Minister of Children and Community Life,
Allen Davis, Director of Youth Ministries,
Marina Luckhoo, Pastoral Intern,
Tucker Pearsall, Chair-Elect, Board of Deacons,
Ryan LaPrade, Incoming Chair-Elect, Board of Deacons,
and Rich Holmes, Chair of the Ministry of Stewardship.

Leading worship through music are
Dr. Matt Caine, Minister of Music and Worship,
Charlotte C. Judge, Associate Director of Music,
John Richardson, Organist,
the Kinder Choir, Carol Choir, Chapel Choir, Youth Choir,
Lillie Judge, Soprano,
Rev. Deborah Moore Clark, Soprano,
Janice Bradner, Pianist,
and the Chancel Ensemble.
THEOLOGY OF WORSHIP

Why do we worship?
Worship at Myers Park Baptist is the gathering of a diverse, intergenerational, ecumenical community of faith, celebrating God’s active and timeless presence in the world. In worship, God re-forms our hearts, minds and bodies, and ignites our imaginations with sacred stories—stories that invite us to question, explore mystery, express joy and grief, and deepen our faith. We worship to learn how to develop caring, empowering relationships with each other, and to stay centered in God as the world swirls around us. We worship to be inspired and prepared to exemplify the compassion and justice of Jesus in our church family and in the world. Through worship, God frees and transforms us in heart, mind and body, so we can make a difference within ourselves, in our relationships and in our community.

How do we worship?
Focusing on God, worship at Myers Park Baptist unfolds consistently with the Isaiah 6 scriptural model: praise, confession, pardon, calling to respond, commitment and sending out. All our worship services are built on this ancient structural form, regardless of worship style, venue or theme. Communal practices within worship — radical hospitality, confession and assurance of pardon, passing the peace, silence and listening, spirited hymn singing, presentations of gifts, and active participation in Communion—transform worshipers into newness with God and one another. Themes for services, based on lectionary scriptures, annually portray the narrative arc of God’s redeeming love for humankind.

HOW TO JOIN MYERS PARK BAPTIST CHURCH

Becoming a member of Myers Park Baptist is as easy as filling out a Joining Card. To receive a card or learn more, stop by the Welcome Table in Heaton Hall Foyer.

MOBILE GIVING

You can now text your contributions and offerings to MPBC! It is secure, simple, and efficient:

- Start a new text message to phone number 77977.
- In the message of the text, enter giveMPBC (not case-sensitive).
- The system will return a message to you; click on the link provided and follow the instructions.
- You will then receive a receipt to confirm your gift was received. It is that simple!

Questions? Contact Rev. Leigh Anne Hagerman, Church Administrator, at 704.334.7232 x116 or lhagerman@myersparkbaptist.org
OUR COVENANT

We, the members of the Myers Park Baptist Church, are a people on a journey of faith. By God’s grace we are experiencing God’s love through Jesus Christ and in the community of the faithful. We are discovering in this experience our freedom to become new creatures and our responsibility to be faithful stewards of our lives and of this world.

We will be open to all new light, strengthened by God and each other in our faith. We will sustain a critical examination of Scripture, belief and ritual as interpreters of God’s active presence in the world. We will accept controversy as a reality of life together and an opportunity for growth toward maturity. We covenant to be a community of God’s new creation and affirm that we are open to all and closed to none.

We covenant to nurture this Church as a community of faith and as an instrument for reconciliation in this world: by worship, by Christian education, by the dedication of our personal and material resources and by all the other ways we express the significance of our lives with God and one another.

We covenant together to be priests celebrating God’s presence in community and in the world, believing we are participants in God’s kingdom on earth.

OUR MINISTERS

Rev. Dr. W. Benjamin Boswell
Senior Minister I bboswell@myersparkbaptist.org

Dr. Matt Caine
Minister of Music and Worship I mcaine@myersparkbaptist.org

Rev. Joseph D. Aldrich
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Rev. Mia M. McClain
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Rev. Leigh Anne Hagerman
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