

Christmas Day Meditation
Sunday, December 25, 2016
The Rev. Hannah Dreitcer
Westminster Presbyterian Church
Springfield, Illinois

The title of the meditation: Light To All People

Text: The Word became flesh and lived among us.... John 1:14

Let us pray: Holy One, you spoke and your Word became flesh, breathing a new song of joy and praise into the world. Grant that we may bear the good news of your salvation, proclaiming your promise of peace to the ends of the earth. Amen.

How beautiful upon the mountain are the feet of the messenger who announces peace and brings good news!

How beautiful are your feet?

Think about your feet. Wiggle your toes. Roll your ankles. Flex your feet—feel the stretch along the back of your calves. Where have your feet taken you? Where have your feet walked you? When have you run or danced, or played or jumped?

And stomp your feet! The messenger of peace ran upon the mountains to bring good news of God's reign! Go tell it on the mountain that Christ is born! Stomp your feet! Make a joyful noise to the Lord with your feet! To whom have your feet brought you? What good news have you delivered with your feet? Whom have you served with the actions of your feet?

The Word became flesh and lived among us! Christ had toes like ours, ankles like ours, legs like ours—feet like ours. How beautiful are your feet!

O sing to the Lord a new song, for God has done marvelous things! God's right hand and God's holy arm have gained victory. Let the floods clap their hands!

How beautiful are your hands?

Look at your hands! Move your fingers, shake out your hands, fold them, stretch out your fingers and your wrists. Shake hands with your neighbor. Give someone else a high five! Give someone ELSE a high five. What have your hands held? What have your hands done? What have your hands built, or created, or cooked? What music have your hands made?

Floods, clap your hands! Clap your hands! Make a joyful noise to the Lord with your hands! Who has held your hands? Whose hands have you held? Whom have you healed with your hands? Whom have you served with your hands?

The Word became flesh and lived among us! Christ had fingers like ours, wrists like ours, palms like ours—hands like ours. How beautiful are your hands!

Break forth into singing, O Zion! Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth! Sing praises to the Lord!

How beautiful is your voice?

How do you sing the good news? When have you shouted with joy? When have you laughed? What good news has your tongue spoken? What kindness have you spoken? What courage have you spoken? Whom have you served with your voice? Announce the good news! Tell someone near you Merry Christmas! And tell someone else!

How beautiful is your voice! For the Word became flesh and lived among us, and Christ had a voice like ours. And the messenger announces peace in a voice full of labored breathing, for the messenger has been running over the mountains to share the news.

Put your hand on your heart. Feel your heart beating. Feel your breath—God’s animating spirit—move through you. Imagine how fast your heart would beat if you were to run. Imagine how quickly your breath would move.

And Jesus, this Word of God, was made flesh through labored breathing, as Mary labored to bring him into the world. And Christ had a heartbeat like ours, and breath like ours.

So break forth into singing, O Zion! Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth! Shout out the news: Christ is born! **(Christ is born!)** Christ is born! **(Christ is born!)** Christ is born! **(Christ is born!)**

For God spoke to us through the prophets in many and various ways, but **then**—God spoke to us by a Son. And this Word was made flesh and lived among us in flesh like ours, in bodies like ours.

How beautiful is our flesh! How beautiful is all flesh, how beautiful are all bodies when we use our bodies to announce peace and to declare the good news of God’s kingdom. For this Word did not become the flesh of an emperor, but the flesh of a child. This Word first became flesh and lived among us as a baby, an unexpected baby without a home and without citizenship.

Think about a baby. Is there a baby near you? Have you heard a baby cry? Imagine holding a baby in your arms. How small, how vulnerable, how beautiful!

And also how loud, and potentially smelly, and how needy. Speaking to us by the Son, God first calls to us as an infant sleeping in a manger because the world would not make room.

And so when God speaks to this Christmas morning we are called not by the imperial command of a king, but by the invitation of a baby’s needs. We are called by need, not decree, and so we are called to respond not in terror, but in love. We are called not to respond out of the fearful obedience of a servant, frightened of punishment, but rather out of the joyous love of a parent tending to a child.

The infant Christ invites us to see the needs of the world as a mother sees the needs of her child. The infant Christ calls us to respond to the distress of the world as a father responds to the

distress of his child. The infant Christ calls us to feed and tend and heal and comfort all the hungers and pains and broken places of the world as brothers and sisters gently tend to and care for their new babies.

Consider your feet. Consider your hands. Consider your voice. The Word became flesh and lived among us with hands and feet and voice and heartbeat!

To whom can you speak a word of peace, or healing, or kindness, or love? What hands can you hold, or shelter can you build, or meal can you cook? To whom can you go, and whom can you carry, and with whom can you dance? What mountains will you go out and climb?

How will you announce peace? How will you share the good news? How will you use your feet—your beautiful feet! —and your hands and your voice and your breath to respond in love and tend to the world's needs?

So break forth into singing, O Zion! Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth! Shout out the news: Christ is born! **(Christ is born)** Christ is born! **(Christ is born)** Christ is born! **(Christ is born)**

Alleluia!