TODAY'S ORDER OF WORSHIP

Welcome by: Bobby Rader /Opening Prayer by: Walden David

Morning Assembly Song Leader: Shannon Smith

#313 The Old Rugged Cross
#610 I Love My Savior, Too

Scripture Reading by: Matthew Girard

#480 Blessed Assurance

Lord's Supper and Contribution

#851 I'll Fly Away

Sermon: "He's Coming to Town"
1 Thessalonians 4:16-18

#915 Trust and Obey

#587 Sing and Be Happy

Closing Prayer by: Robert Ward

Welcome by: Bobby Rader

Evening Assembly Song Leader: Shannon Smith

#286 Wonderful Story of Love
#470 Victory in Jesus

Scripture Reading: Parker Balch
Opening Prayer: David Smith
#548 The Lily of the Valley

Sermon: "One Word: Crucify"
Mark 15:22-26

#909 There's a Fountain Free
#2 We Praise Thee, O God

Closing Prayer: David Warren

Other Opportunities For Spiritual Growth

Sunday: 9:00am — Bible Study Classes, 10:00am — Worship, 6:00pm — Worship
Wednesday: 10:00am — Ladies Bible Class, 7:00pm — Bible Study Classes

Dec. 8, 2019

"Stand Firm in…Liberty"

Galatians 5:1

O Little Town of Bethlehem

But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah,
who are too little to be among the clans of Judah,
from you shall come forth for me
one who is to be ruler in Israel,
whose coming forth is from of old,
from ancient days.

- Micah 5:2

Phillips Brooks was born in Boston in 1835. On his father's side, he was descended from John Cotton, the great 17th century Puritan minister. Whether that influenced his path or not, after graduating first from Harvard and then from the Virginia Theological Seminary, Brooks ended up becoming an outstanding preacher in his own right.

He first served at Episcopal churches in Philadelphia for a decade before returning to Boston in 1869. He spent the bulk of his career there as rector of Trinity Church, until his appointment as Bishop of Massachusetts in 1891. Trinity burned in the Great Boston Fire of 1872, and Brooks oversaw construction of the building that is still in use today, which has been named a National Historic Landmark as well as one of the "Ten Most Significant Buildings in the United States" by the American Institute of Architects. A statue of Brooks is located on the left exterior of the church, and he has been memorialized in the calendar of the Episcopal Church with a feast day on January 23, the day of his untimely death in 1893 at only 57 years old.

In his day, Brooks was often referred to as the "Prince of the Pulpit." He cut an imposing figure, standing 6'6" and possessing a powerful voice. It is said that he delivered his sermons at the rate of 250 words per minute. For comparison, your average conversation takes place at about 120 or so words per minute. Most radio broadcasters or people making a presentation speak at a rate of 150-160 words per minute. His estimated rate of delivery puts him in the territory of auctioneers, so I am somewhat skeptical of the claim.

But however he spoke, the effect was potent. His sermons and writings touched people like few in his day. His well-known contemporary, the philosopher and psychologist William James, was once asked to define spirituality; after hesitating a moment, he responded, "I don't know that I can put into words exactly what spirituality is, but I can show it to you in a person: Phillips Brooks." He was so highly regarded among such a broad swath of people that, as one account of his

Family News & Notes

WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH YOUR CHURCH FAMILY

Our Sick

Derrick Loften is at home recovering from burns.

Continued Prayers
(Need cards, phone calls & visits)

Gwen Pettit, Gary Nielsen, Harold & Geri Cryer, Steve Ward, Jackie David, Frank & Tina Garcia, Dayla Hale, Doris Trahan, Joe Edd Stifflemire, Barry Johnson

Shut Ins
(Need cards, phone calls & visits)

Jim Smith, Winona Angelle, Myrtle Sheffield, Dr. Ronald Davis, Larry Hicks, Mark Wilcox, Bill Lunceford, J. P. Williams

Our Missionaries

Aaron & Marisa Bailey in Mwanza, Africa, Rod Kyle in the South Pacific

Plastic Bags

The Food Bank is in need of plastic grocery bags and **egg cartons**. A barrel is in the foyer.

Nursery Help Needed

If you are interested in helping in the nursery during worship service, please let Barbara Cantu know. We are working on a new schedule for next year.

Upcoming Activities

Elders, Minister meeting Monday, Dec. 9th at 7:00 p.m.

Magnolia Place Health Care singing today at 4:00 p.m.

Primetimers will be having a Potluck meal on Tuesday, Dec. 10th at 6:30 p.m. Followed by a gift exchange and a great time. Gifts no more then $10 please. A sign up sheet is on the bulletin board.

Gift Basket Assembly, Saturday, Dec. 14th at 1:00 p.m. in the fellowship room. See Abbey Perkins for more information.

The Year End Party is scheduled for Sunday, Dec. 15th after evening service. More information to come.

We have a Houston Food Bank truck on Thursday, Dec. 19th at 8:00am.

The Youth and Families group will have their annual caroling event on Thursday December 19. We will meet at the church at 5:45 and take the bus to Magnolia Place, and probably make a couple of stops afterwards. This is always a good time and everyone is invited to join in!

"Stand Firm in…Liberty"

is the weekly bulletin of the Liberty Church of Christ 3201 North Main, Liberty Texas 77575
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Website: libertycofc.org Facebook page: Liberty Church of Christ

Privilege to Serve
Sunday, Dec. 8th

Communion Preparation: Jennifer McKelroy
Nursery Attendants: Debra Faneros, Melony Hicks

Communion Preparation for Sunday, Dec. 15th: Jo Ella McKewen
Nursery Attendants for Sunday, Dec. 15th: Marsha Rader, Lynette Ward

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his death put it, "They buried him like a king. Harvard students carried his body on their shoulders. All barriers of denomination were down. Roman Catholics and Unitarians felt that a great man had fallen in Israel."

Today, Brooks is probably best-known as the author of the Christmas carol *O Little Town of Bethlehem.* He had visited the Holy Land in 1865. Spending Christmas Eve in Bethlehem and worshipping in the Church of the Nativity, traditionally said to be built on the place of Jesus' birth, made a lasting impression upon him. Three years later, searching for a new carol for the children to sing in their Sunday School Christmas program, his memory of the visit inspired him to write the text.

He gave a copy to the Sunday School superintendent—who was also the church organist---Lewis Redner, asking him to compose a simple melody for the children to sing. Redner was a skilled musician but had never composed anything, and he found the task a struggle. On Friday before the song was to be practiced on Sunday, Brooks came round and asked if he had worked it out yet. He replied that he had not, but that it should be done by Sunday.

But on the Saturday night before, Redner's mind was more preoccupied with his Bible lesson for the next day that the song. He was stuck. As he later told it, he awoke suddenly in the night with the melody in his brain, fully formed, and jotted it down. On Sunday morning before he got to church, he filled in the harmony. The hymn was a hit with the children, but neither Brooks nor Redner thought it would last beyond Christmas 1868.

Perhaps the reason it has endured is the glimpse it gives us of the mysterious power of God, inscrutably working in the least-expected ways to accomplish his purpose. While with few exceptions the outside world little noticed a single baby born in the tiny of village of Bethlehem, God was entering that world in a new way, preparing to turn it upside down as the prophets had promised. *The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.* That reminder of God's ongoing redemptive work, patient, silent in the midst of all the darkness of this world is one we badly need. As the last line of the song prays, *O come to us, abide with us, Our Lord Emmanuel!* Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

Bryant Perkins