Community Church of the Verdes

December 7, 2025

ORDER OF WORSHIP

Time for Centering

This morning, we continue our Advent sermon series, Songs of the Season, a journey through the cherished carols that help shape our understanding of the meaning and mystery of Christ's coming. These hymns are not just seasonal favorites; they are theological treasures—proclamations of hope, praise, promise, and deep biblical truth. As we pause each week to listen more intentionally to the songs we sing so easily, we discover the message of Advent anew.

Our focus this week is the beloved carol ***"Hark! The Herald Angels Sing."*** *Written in 1739 by Charles Wesley and later refined by George Whitefield, the hymn remains one of the clearest and richest summaries of the gospel found in the Christian hymn tradition. In just three verses it sweeps us from the angelic announcement of Christ's birth to a profound declaration of the Incarnation, and finally to the redemptive purpose for which Christ came.*

On Sunday we will explore the major themes woven throughout the hymn:

- ***Glory:*** *The angels proclaim the glory of God revealed in the humble birth of Christ.*
- ***Reconciliation:*** *The wonder that "God and sinners [are] reconciled" stands at the heart of the gospel and the heart of this carol.*
- ***Incarnation:*** *Wesley leads us to marvel at the mystery of Christ—"Veiled in flesh the Godhead see; Hail th'incarnate Deity."*

New Birth: *The carol points us toward transformation—Christ is "born to give them second birth."*

As we reflect on these truths, we are invited to join the angels in their song, lifting our voices in worship and wonder: ***"Glory to the newborn King!"***

Order of Worship

Prelude

Welcome & Announcements

Introit *Blessing "Love"* *(Dengler)*

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Let us pray together: (unison)
Gracious God, Grant that we may find peace as we prepare for our Lord's birth. May divisions in ourselves and in our families be peacefully resolved. May there be peace in our cities and in the countries of our world. Help us to see the paths of peace in our lives, and then give to us courage to follow them. Lord, let us remember that you only are the giver of lasting peace and that you are always with us. Amen.

**Hymn of Praise* *Lift Up Your Heads, O Mighty Gates* *#129*

Call to Confession

Prayer of Confession (spoken in unison) *(Book of Common Worship)*

Gracious God, our sins are too heavy to carry, too real to hide, and too deep to undo. Forgive what our lips tremble to name, what our hearts can no longer bear, and what has become for us a consuming fire of judgment. Set us free from a past that we cannot change; open to us a future in which we can be changed; and grant us grace to grow more and more in Your likeness and image; through Jesus Christ, the light of the world. Amen.

Silent Confession

Prayer Response *Hear Our Prayer, O Lord* *#306*

Hear our prayer, O Lord, hear our prayer, O Lord, incline thine ear to us, and grant us thy peace, Amen.

*Please stand as you are able

Assurance of Pardon

***Congregational Response** O Come, Let Us Adore Him #148*

O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him, O come let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.

**Passing of the Peace*

Call to Offering

Offertory *Christmas Gloria* *(arr. Larson)*

***Doxology** Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow #46*

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him, all creatures here below; Praise Him above, ye heavenly host: Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

**Prayer of Dedication*

Scripture *2 Corinthians 5:16-21*

Leader: The Word of the Lord

People: Thanks be to God.

Anthem *Blessed Is the Lord (Benedictus)* *(Forrest)*

Sermon *"Songs of the Season: Hark the Herald Angels Sing"*

Words of Invitation

Pastoral Prayer and Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

Words of Institution

Intinction

Prayer After Communion *(Adapted from Hold Fast to What is Good)*

Almighty God, we thank you once again for this meal, this day. Send us out into your world to be the presence of love and hope to all who despair and fear, that all may have life, and life abundant. Alleluia, Alleluia, Amen.

*The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit; the holy catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

***Closing Hymn**	*Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*	*#150*

Charge and Benediction

***Closing Response**	*One Candle Is Lit (Verse 2)*	*#128*

*Postlude

Music for today's worship includes:
Prelude: Wake, Awake, for Night Is Flying (Nicolai), Noel (Guilmant), His Name Shall Be (arr. Knight)
Communion: Come With Us, O Blessed Jesus (arr. Wood), Seed, Scattered and Sown (Feiten), You Satisfy the Hungry Heart (Kreutz), Here at Thy Table, Lord (Sherwin)
Postlude: Hail to the Lord's Anointed (#140)
Trio: Debby Wojtas, Sara Bruton, Jeffrey Stevens

Volunteers assisting with worship today:
Communion Table: Pat Strachan
Communion Stewards: Marilyn Creason, Karen Ritchie, Charla Smith and Tom Reinarts
Badge Table: Frank and Lori Bennett
Fellowship: Jackie Kingsbury, Carol Horonzy, Char Cram and Mary Eggebracht
Flower Committee: Sharon Severson, Diane Spang, Jennifer Ristau, Linda Paulos
Lector: Jerrie Ellis
Tellers: Frank Green and Carol Horonzy
Ushers: Tom & Lisa Young and Jean & Bob Brabec
Advent Readers: Tim & Kris Gabrielse
Road Signs: Ric Doerflinger and Bill Hickman

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome members and guests! If you are visiting for the first time, please stop by our badge table for a welcome gift. Visit our website www.verdefaith.org for additional information. **Please complete the Fellowship Pad** at the end of each pew; pass it along, and back. **Fellowship is held following worship** in Founders Hall.

Attendance at last Sunday's service was 226**;** 137 joined online.

Today's flowers were donated by: Michele Naumes: Our hearts are full of gratitude for the precious gift of daughters; for the joy they bring, the lessons they teach us and the love they inspire.

Stephen Ministers are trained, ready to listen, care, encourage, pray, and help through a crisis or difficult time. Contact one of our Leaders, Donna Angiolillo, Glenda Hage, Debbie Etcheson, John Pasnau, Dan or Judy Villanueva.

In need of prayers for you, your family, or friends? Contact Joan Brunner at 480-471-7274, or Pastor Steve with requests, or if you would like to serve on the team.

AA meetings are held weekly on Mondays at 8:00am in the library.

PAL (Parents of Addicted Loved Ones) meetings are held every other Tuesday at 6:30 pm in the library. Questions? Contact Greg & Weezy Smith at lift5800@gmail.com. *Meetings will start again in December.*

SPIRITUAL THEME IN LITERATURE

The Spiritual Theme in Literature book discussion will be led by Winnie Leathers and will begin on Thursday, December 11 from 10am—11:30am in the library. The book for December will be In The Garden of Beasts by Erik Larson. All are welcome. Upcoming book selections are: ***January—The Henna Artist by Alka Joshi; February—The Midnight Library by Matt Haig; March-American Dirt by Jeanine Cummins; April-Crying in H Mart by Michelle Zauner; May-Before We Were Yours by Lisa Wingate***.

BIBLE STUDY WITH ED CARPENTER

Thursday Bible study with Ed Carpenter will be in Founders' Hall at 7:30am and 4:00pm. Both sessions are covering the same material. The subject will be the Gospel of John. All are welcome.

SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

The Scholarship Committee is looking for a few new members. This committee meets only twice a year in the January/February timeframe. If you are interested, please contact Judy Mulvey at Judith.mulvey@gmail.com.

FROM THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE…

Dear Members of the Church of the Verdes,

We are excited to share that several Trustee positions are now open for nomination, and we invite you to consider whether this is your moment to step forward in service.

We are currently seeking nominees for the following Trustee roles:

- **Education**
- **Finance**
- **Fellowship**
- **Facilities**

If you feel inspired to apply your gifts, or know someone whose leadership would strengthen our community, we encourage you to volunteer your name or submit a nomination.

Thank you for considering this important opportunity to help shape the future of our church.

Warm regards,
The Nominating Committee
Church of the Verdes

CONTINUING OUR TRADITION

Each year Community Church of the Verdes and St. Dominic Mission, decorate the Sanctuary with poinsettias for Christmas.

If you would like to purchase a poinsettia in memory or honor of a loved one:

- **USE THE ENVELOPES PROVIDED**
- **PRINT CLEARLY**
- **PLACE THE ENVELOPE ALONG WITH $10 (CASH OR CHECK) INTO THE OFFERING PLATE, OR DROP IT BY THE OFFICE.**

Make checks payable to Community Church of the Verdes

DEADLINE: DECEMBER 21, 2025

The list will be published in the bulletins at Christmas

You may pick up your poinsettia after the St. Dominic Mass on Christmas.

MISSIONS

Lunch making and delivery for Justa Center: The third Thursday of the month at 9:00am.
FHCMA Food Closet: toothpaste, canned fruit, Saltine, and Ritz crackers.
Extended Hands Food Bank: non-perishable food items.
Pad Project Ministry: Monday's at 1:00pm
Prayer Shawl Ministry: 2nd Friday of the month @ 9:00am

December Mission Drive
Harvest Compassion Center

This month, we are collecting items for **Harvest Compassion Center**. They support the underserved in Phoenix in Christ's name with respect and compassion by providing food, clothing, and hygiene items.

Please help by donating:

- **Ramen**
- **Cereal**
- **Toilet paper**

Items can be placed in the Blue Bin in the Narthex or in the church office doorway. **NEW:** For easy Amazon ordering, contact Nancy Lowe at 203-395-9872 or ntart94@gmail.com Thank you!

What Is a Stephen Minister Like?

They Are among Us

No, we're not talking about angels or aliens. We're talking about individuals who care about others. The Scriptures describe their service well: "Remember those in prison as if you were their fellow prisoners, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering" (Hebrews 13:3). If you or someone you know wants to do more as a Christian caregiver, consider Stephen Ministry. This is our congregation's one-to-one caregiving ministry. A training class is starting soon.

If you think you might be interested, talk with one of our Stephen Ministry Leaders: Donna Angiolillo, Debbie Etcheson, Glenda Hage, John Pasnau or Danny and Judy Villanueva; and/or attend an informational meeting in the Church Library after today's worship service.

OPERATING FUND

YTD Actual contributions through November 30 were $562,649

YTD Budgeted contributions through November 30 were $555,000

Support CCV Ministries & Missions with Online Giving

Thank you for your continuing support!

Please consider these other funds open to special giving in your estate planning...

Legacy Endowment Fund – current balance $380,912
The purpose of the Endowment Fund is to expand and enrich the mission of the congregation, to initiate new ministries or significantly change the scope of existing ministries. No more than 5% of the three year average fund assets may be distributed in any one year.

Memorial Garden Fund – current balance $485,918
The purpose of the Memorial Garden Fund is to provide for the perpetual operation and maintenance of the Memorial Garden. Established in 1990, the Memorial Garden provides a resting place for the interment of the ashes of loved ones. It is open to current and former members and residents of Rio and Tonto Verde.

Scholarship Fund – current balance $20,153
The Scholarship Fund promotes scholarships among young people involved in institutions we support through Mission giving. Recipients are chosen from applicants who are demonstrating academic excellence, commitment, and service in or to one of the following non-profit institutions or community: Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA), NPH (formerly Friends of the Orphans), Sunshine Acres. The Scholarship Fund's sole support is contributions from our members. Donors cannot be related to recipients.

Did you know?... If you are age 70 1/2 or older, you can make a gift from your IRA to support the church. It will not add to your federal taxable income; It counts toward your required minimum distribution, and allows you to experience a tax benefit, even if you do not itemize deductions. You should discuss any such gifts, before making them, with your financial advisor.

The church is very appreciative of gifts from trusts, foundations, and stocks. Occasionally, these gifts are received with no indication of who the donor is. So that we may properly recognize and record the gift, we ask that you either notify the church office or have your financial representative document the donor {and intent} when it is sent to us.

WEEKLY CALENDAR

Monday, December 8
8:00am AA Meeting (Library)
12:45pm Membership Committee (Library)
2:00pm Performing Arts Committee (Library)
3:30pm St. Dominic's Mission Pastoral Council (Boardroom)

Tuesday, December 9
1:00pm Stephen Ministry Leaders (Stephen Ministry Room)
2:00pm Stephen Ministers Meeting (Library)
4:00pm Finance Committee Meeting (Boardroom)
6:30pm PAL Meeting (Library)

Wednesday, December 10
4:00pm Choir Rehearsal (Sanctuary)

Thursday, December 11
7:30am Bible Study (Founders Hall)
10:00am Spiritual Themes In Literature (Library)
4:00pm Bible Study (Founders Hall)

Friday, December 12
9:00am Prayer Shawl Ministry (Sunday School Room)

Saturday, December 13
No activities scheduled

Sunday, December 14
8:30am Worship Service (Sanctuary)
9:30am Fellowship (Founders Hall)
10:00am St. Dominic (Sanctuary)
11:00am St. Dominic Fellowship (Founders Hall)

2026 IS NOW OPEN TO PURCHASE FLOWERS FOR THE CHURCH

The following dates are available to purchase flowers:

January 4th and 25th

February 8, 15 and 22nd

March 8, 15, 22, and 29th

The rest of the year is wide open for all Sunday dates.

The cost is $50. For more information, please call or stop by the office.

Community Church of the Verdes

Performing Arts Committee

Presents Live Concerts

All Concerts at 7pm

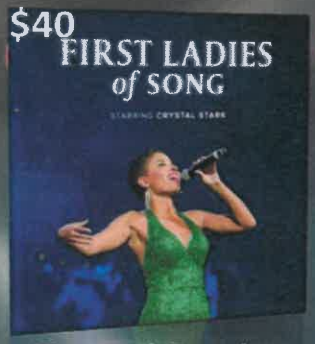
$40

Scott Keo
Michael Bublé Tribute
January 16, 2026

$40

Yachtzilla
Classic Soft Rock
February 20, 2026

$40

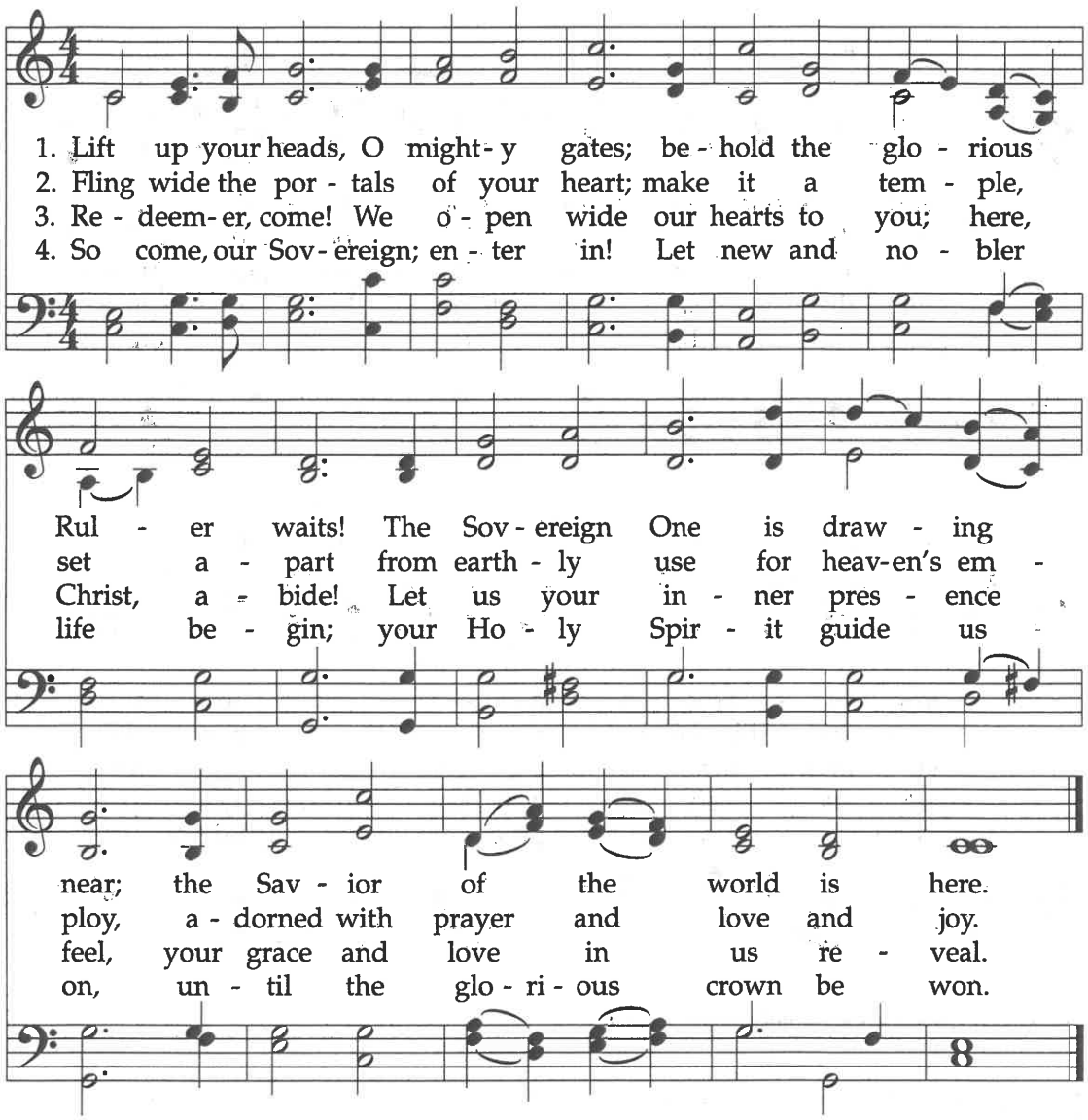


Crystal Stark
Iconic Women Artists
March 13, 2026

3—Concert
Bundle $100

Scan for more details

Lift Up Your Heads, O Mighty Gates 129



WORDS: Georg Weissel, 1642; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1855, alt. TRURO
MUSIC: *Psalmodia Evangelica*, 1789 LM

Text revisions courtesy of United Church Board for Homeland Ministries/The Pilgrim Press

Luke 2:10–14

150 Hark! the Herald Angels Sing

Descant

3. All hail the Sun of

1. Hark! the her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the
2. Christ, by high - est heaven a - dored; Christ, the ev - er -
3. Hail the heaven - born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of

Righ - teous - ness! He is risen with heal-ing

new - born King; peace on earth, and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners
last - ing Lord! Late in time be - hold him come, off-spring of the
Righ-teous-ness! Light and life to all he brings, risen with heal - ing

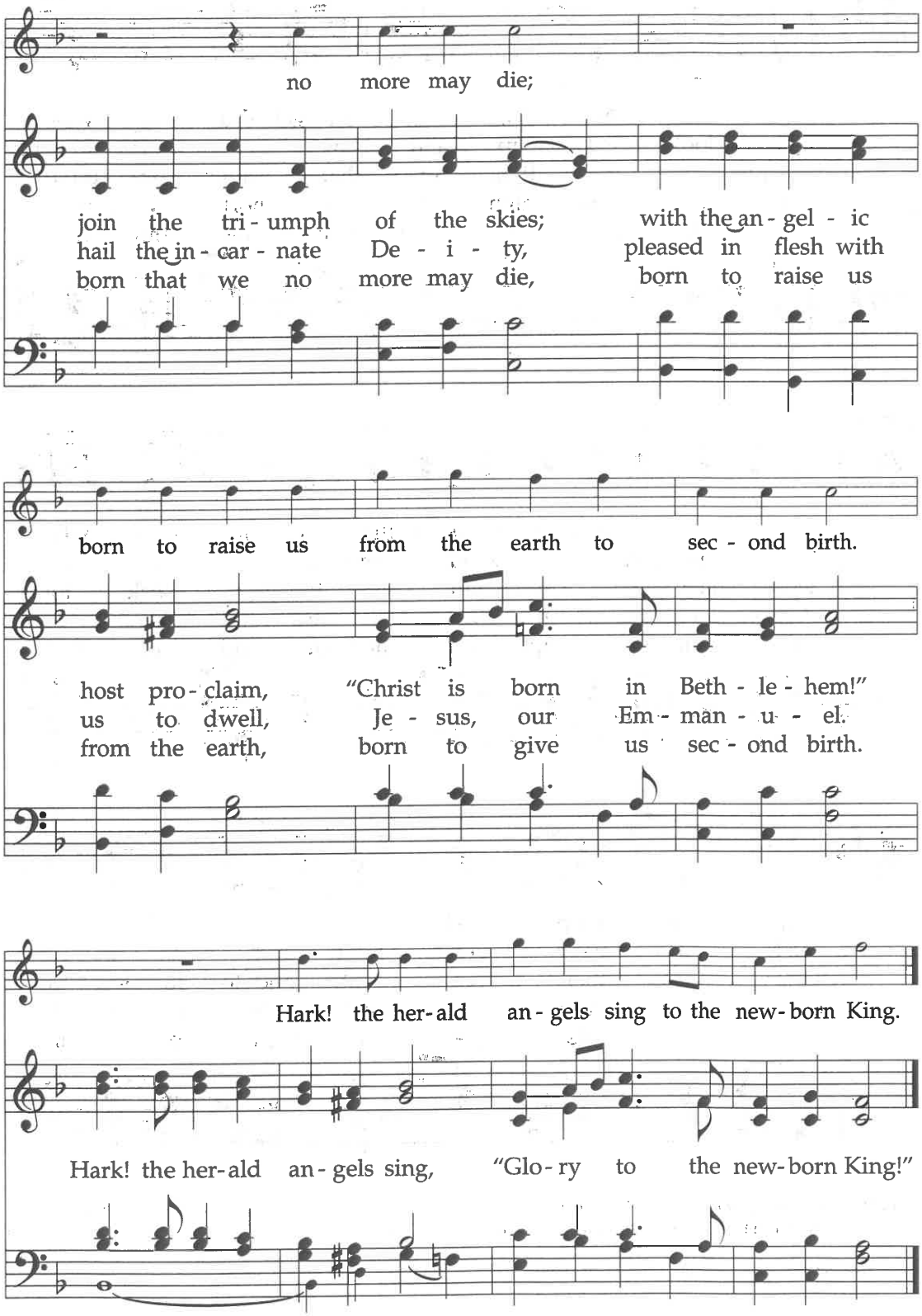
in his wings. His glo - ry by,

rec - on - ciled!" Joy - ful, all ye na - tions, rise,
Vir - gin's womb. Veiled in flesh the God - head see;
in his wings, mild he lays his glo - ry by,

WORDS: Charles Wesley, 1739, alt.
MUSIC: Felix Mendelssohn, 1840; arr. William H. Cummings, 1856; desc. Paul Liljestrand

MENDELSSOHN
77.77D w. refrain

Desc. © 1976 Paragon Music Corp; all rights reserved; used by permission of Benson Music Group, Inc.


no more may die;
join the tri - umph of the skies; with the an - gel - ic
hail the in - car - nate De - i - ty, pleased in flesh with
born that we no more may die, born to raise us
born to raise us from the earth to sec - ond birth.
host pro - claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"
us to dwell, Je - sus, our Em - man - u - el.
from the earth, born to give us sec - ond birth.
Hark! the her - ald an - gels sing to the new - born King.
Hark! the her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new - born King!"

Vision Statement

To be a Christ centered church that inspires individuals to grow closer to God and to serve others with loving and compassionate hearts.

Faith Statement ~ The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit; the holy catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

Community Church of the Verdes
25603 Danny Lane, Suite 1
Rio Verde, Arizona 85263
Office Hours: Monday-Thursday 9:00am-3:00pm
Friday—9:00am—12:00pm
Telephone: (480) 471-7239
www.verdefaith.org

Pastor: Rev. Stephen Beard
Pastor's cell: (732)546-5332
Pastor's email: sbeard@verdefaith.org
Director of Music: Tom Wojtas
Office Manager: Tami Burke

A/V Operator: Skyler Evans
Vocalists: Debby Wojtas, Jeffrey Stevens, Sara Bruton

Board of Trustees

Class of 2026
Jody Anschutz (Fellowship)
Gary Etcheson (Facilities)
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Jared Reisinger (Technology)

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Julie Peacock (Membership)

Affiliated with the International Council of Community Churches

We are a Stephen Ministry Congregation

Find us on Facebook "Community Church of the Verdes"