



Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

December 24, 2023

* *Indicates when to stand as you are able*

C: *Indicates the congregation's response*

PM: *Indicates Presiding Minister*

AM: *Indicates Assisting Minister*

PRELUDE: 7:00 *"Silent Night" violin trio (Franz Gruber, arr Paul Barker)*

Performed by Hannah Beach and Ruth and Julia Cook

10:00 *"Christmas Fantasy" for violin and organ (Sigurd M. Ogaard),*

Performed by Ruth and Lisa Cook

WELCOME

* **ENTRANCE HYMN:** *Oh, Come All Ye Faithful (ELW 283)*

Oh, come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant!

Oh, come ye, oh, come ye to Bethlehem;

Come and behold him born the king of angels:

Refrain

Oh, come, let us adore him, oh, come, let us adore him,

Oh, come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

The highest, most holy, light of light eternal,

Born of a virgin, a mortal he comes;

Son of the Father now in flesh appearing! *Refrain*

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,

Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!

Glory to God in the highest: *Refrain*

CHRISTMAS DIALOG

PM: Jesus Christ is the Light of the world!

C: **He is the Light no darkness can overcome.**

PM: At darkest night we gather to celebrate the great light of our salvation.

C: **With the heavenly host we sing, "Glory to God in the highest heaven."**

PM: In Christ, God's Word is made flesh and lives among us.

C: **With the shepherds, we will tell of the wonders we have seen and heard.**

* **HYMN:** *Go, Tell It on the Mountain (ELW 290)*

Refrain

Go tell it on the mountain, over the hills and ev'rywhere;

Go tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born!

While shepherds kept their watching o'er silent flocks by night,

Behold, throughout the heavens there shone a holy light. *Refrain*

**Down in a lonely manger the humble Christ was born;
And God sent us salvation that blessed Christmas morn. *Refrain***

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH *Children are invited to come forward*

PM: Let us pray together.

C: Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that here on earth we may walk in the light of Jesus' presence and in the last day wake to the brightness of his glory; through your only Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

HYMN: *This Little Light of Mine* (ELW 677)

**This little light of mine, I'm goin'-a let it shine;
this little light of mine, I'm goin'-a let it shine;
this little light of mine, I'm goin'-a let it shine,
let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.**

**Ev'rywhere I go, I'm goin'-a let it shine;
ev'rywhere I go, I'm goin'-a let it shine;
ev'rywhere I go, I'm goin'-a let it shine,
let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.**

**Jesus gave it to me, I'm goin'-a let it shine;
Jesus gave it to me, I'm goin'-a let it shine;
Jesus gave it to me, I'm goin'-a let it shine,
let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.**

FIRST READING Isaiah 9:2-7

² The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness — on them light has shined. ³You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. ⁴For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. ⁵For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. ⁶For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

HYMN: *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing* (ELW 270)

**Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king;
Peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled."
Joyful, all you nations, rise; join the triumph of the skies;
With angelic hosts proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"**

Refrain

**Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king!"
Hail the heav'n-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of righteousness!**

**Light and life to all he brings, ris'n with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by, born that we no more may die,
Born to raise each child of earth, born to give us second birth. *Refrain***

SECOND READING Titus 2:11-14

¹¹For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, ¹²training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, ¹³while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. ¹⁴He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

HYMN: *O Little Town of Bethlehem* (ELW 279)

**O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by;
yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light.
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.**

**For Christ is born of Mary, and, gathered all above
while mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wond'ring love.
O morning stars, together proclaim the holy birth,
and praises sing to God the king, and peace to all the earth!**

THIRD READING Luke 2:1-7

¹In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. ⁵He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

HYMN: *Away in a Manger* (ELW 277)

**Away in a manger, no crib for his bed,
The little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head;
The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,
The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.**

**The cattle are lowing; the poor baby wakes,
But little Lord Jesus no crying he makes.
I love you, Lord Jesus; look down from the sky
And stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.**

FOURTH READING Luke 2:8-20

⁸In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see — I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." ¹³And

suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, ¹⁴"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"¹⁵When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." ¹⁶So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

HYMN: *The First Noel* (ELW 300)

**The first Noel the angel did say
was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
in fields where they lay, keeping their sheep,
on a cold winter's night that was so deep.**

Refrain

**Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel!
Born is the King of Israel.**

SERMON

Pastor Sara Wirth

*** HYMN: *What Child Is This* (ELW 296)**

**What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet while shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the king, whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
Haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary!**

**So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh; come, peasant, king, to own him.
The King of kings salvation brings; let loving hearts enthrone him.
Raise, raise the song on high, the virgin sings her lullaby;
Joy, joy, for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mary!**

THE PRAYERS

AM: Wonderful Counselor, increase our joy as the church gathers on this holy night to sing of our dear Savior's birth. May the story of salvation live in the hearts of all who sing of its wonders. God of grace,

C: Hear our prayer.

AM: Mighty God, you have broken the yoke of sin's burden through the birth of your Son. Comfort those whose burdens distract them from the deeper peace of this holy night and grant them a restful mind. God of peace,

C: Hear our prayer.

AM: Everlasting Father, uphold all who are in sorrow or need of your divine goodness and mercy (*especially*). We remember with thanksgiving all who have died and who now rest in your peaceful light. God of love,

C: Hear our prayer.

AM: Gracious God, bathe us always in the light of your Word made flesh, Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

OFFERING 7:00 "Ave Maria" (Franz Schubert), performed by Mark and Michelle Moyer

10:00 "Amen! Tell it on the Mountain" (arr. Mary McDonald), performed by the Advent Choir

*** WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

*** LORD'S PRAYER**

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.**

COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION

All are welcome at the Lord's table. Please come forward to the altar rail as directed by the ushers. Gluten-free wafers are available upon request. Wine is on the outer tray rings, juice in the center.

COMMUNION HYMNS *(Please see the red hymnal)*

10:00 "Ave Maria" (Franz Schubert), performed by Mark and Michelle Moyer

ELW 292 *Love Has Come*

ELW 282 *It Came Upon the Midnight Clear*

ELW 275 *Angels, from the Realms of Glory*

ELW 272 *Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming*

*** THE GOSPEL OF THE INCARNATION John 1:1-14**

The minister lights a large candle from an altar candle, which symbolizes Christ, the Light of the world of whom John's gospel speaks. The ushers light their candles from the minister's candle, then light the candle of each worshiper nearest the aisle. The lighted candle is never tilted, but is always held upright when giving light to another.

*** HYMN OF LIGHT: *Silent Night, Holy Night!* (ELW 281)**

**Silent night, holy night! All is calm, all is bright
Round yon virgin mother and child. Holy Infant, so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.**

**Silent night, holy night! Shepherds quake at the sight;
Glories stream from heaven afar, heav'nly hosts sing, Alleluia!
Christ, the Savior, is born! Christ, the Savior, is born!**

**Silent night, holy night! Son of God, love's pure light
Radiant beams from your holy face, with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at your birth, Jesus, Lord, at your birth.**

*** BLESSING**

PM: May the Lord God, who has called you out of darkness to be servants of light, grant you the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds, and the peace of the Christ Child. In the name of Almighty God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

The candles are extinguished.

*** DEPARTURE HYMN: *Joy to the World* (ELW 267)**

**Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive its King;
Let ev'ry heart prepare him room
and heav'n and nature sing.**

**Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns! Let all their songs employ,
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
repeat the sounding joy.**

**No more let sin and sorrow grow nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make his blessings flow
far as the curse is found.**

**He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the nations prove
The glories of his righteousness
and wonders of his love.**

*** DISMISSAL**

AM: Christ the Savior is born! Go in peace. Proclaim this good news.

C: Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE: 7:00 *“Christmas Fantasy” for violin and organ (Sigurd M. Ogaard), performed by Ruth and Lisa Cook*