



Christmas Eve

C A N D L E L I G H T
S E R V I C E

CHRISTMAS EVE
COMMUNION SERVICE
10:00 PM

PRELUDE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES

RESPONSIVE READING

L The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.

C **The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.**

L Those who dwelt in the land of deep darkness, on them has light shined.

C **We have beheld Christ's glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father.**

L For to us a child is born, to us a Son is given.

C **In Him was life, and the life was the light of all.**

HYMN

“Oh, Come All Ye Faithful”

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant!

O come ye, O come ye, to Bethlehem

Come and behold Him Born the King of Angels

O come, let us adore Him O come, let us adore Him

O 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

O come, let us adore Him O come, let us adore Him

O come, let us adore Him Christ the Lord!

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation Sing,

all ye citizens of heaven above!

Glory to God All glory in the highest

O come, let us adore Him O come, let us adore Him

O come, let us adore Him Christ the Lord!

Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, born this happy morning Jesus,
to Thee be glory given

Word of the Father Now in flesh appearing

O come, let us adore Him O come, let us adore Him

O come, let us adore Him Christ the Lord!

FIRST LESSON: ISAIAH 52:7-10

⁷How delightful on the mountains
Are the feet of one who brings good news,
Who announces peace
And brings good news of happiness,
Who announces salvation,
And says to Zion, "Your God reigns!"
⁸Listen! Your watchmen raise *their* voices,
They shout joyfully together;
For they will see with their own eyes
When the LORD restores Zion.
⁹Be cheerful, shout joyfully together,
You ruins of Jerusalem;
For the LORD has comforted His people,
He has redeemed Jerusalem.
¹⁰The LORD has bared His holy arm
In the sight of all the nations,
So that all the ends of the earth may see
The salvation of our God.

PRAYER OF FULFILLMENT

Dear Lord, we thank you for keeping your promise to send us a savior. **Amen**

HYMN OF PRAISE

"O Little Town of Bethlehem" (verse 1)

**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**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Almighty God, grant that the new birth of your only-begotten Son in the flesh may set free all who are held in servitude under the yoke of sin; 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 OF PRAISE

"O Little Town of Bethlehem" (verse 4)

**O holy Child of Bethlehem Descend to us, we pray
Cast out our sin and enter in Be born in us today
We hear the Christmas angels The great glad tidings tell
Oh, come to us, abide with us Our Lord Immanuel!**

SECOND LESSON: HEBREWS 1:1-6 (7-12)

God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, ² in these last days has spoken to us in *His* Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom He also made the world. ³ And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, ⁴ having become so much better than the angels, to the extent that He has inherited a more excellent name than they.

⁵ For to which of the angels did He ever say,

“YOU ARE MY SON,
TODAY I HAVE FATHERED YOU”?

And again,

“I WILL BE A FATHER TO HIM
AND HE WILL BE A SON TO ME”?

⁶ And when He again brings the firstborn into the world, He says,

“AND LET ALL THE ANGELS OF GOD WORSHIP HIM.”

⁷ And regarding the angels He says,

“HE MAKES HIS ANGELS WINDS,
AND HIS MINISTERS A FLAME OF FIRE.”

⁸ But regarding the Son *He says*,

“YOUR THRONE, GOD, IS FOREVER AND EVER,
AND THE SCEPTER OF RIGHTEOUSNESS IS THE SCEPTER OF HIS KINGDOM.

⁹ YOU HAVE LOVED RIGHTEOUSNESS AND HATED LAWLESSNESS;
THEREFORE GOD, YOUR GOD, HAS ANOINTED YOU
WITH THE OIL OF JOY ABOVE YOUR COMPANIONS.”

¹⁰ And,

“YOU, LORD, IN THE BEGINNING LAID THE FOUNDATION OF THE EARTH,
AND THE HEAVENS ARE THE WORKS OF YOUR HANDS;

¹¹ THEY WILL PERISH, BUT YOU REMAIN;
AND THEY ALL WILL WEAR OUT LIKE A GARMENT,
¹² AND LIKE A ROBE YOU WILL ROLL THEM UP;
LIKE A GARMENT THEY WILL ALSO BE CHANGED.

BUT YOU ARE THE SAME,
AND YOUR YEARS WILL NOT COME TO AN END.”

THE HOLY GOSPEL: LUKE 2:1-7

Now in those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus, that a census be taken of all the inhabited earth. ²This was the first census taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³And all *the people* were on their way to register for the census, each to his own city. ⁴Now Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David, ⁵in order to register along with Mary, who was betrothed to him, and was pregnant. ⁶While they were there, the time came for her to give birth. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son; and she wrapped Him in cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

PRAYER OF JOY

Dear Lord, we thank you for sending joy into our hearts.

Help us always to be happy about the coming of Jesus. Amen

“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing” (verse 1)

**Hark! the herald angels sing, Glory to the newborn King,
peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled.**

**Joyful, all ye nations, rise, join the triumph of the skies;
with the angelic host proclaim, 'Christ is born in Bethlehem'**

Hark! the herald angels sing, Glory to the newborn King.

THE HOLY GOSPEL: LUKE 2:8-14

⁸In the same region there were *some* shepherds staying out in the fields and keeping watch over their flock at night. ⁹And an angel of the Lord *suddenly* stood near them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them; and they were terribly frightened. ¹⁰And *so* the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people; ¹¹for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹²And this *will be* a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.” ¹³And suddenly there appeared with the angel a multitude of the heavenly army *of angels* praising God and saying,

¹⁴“Glory to God in the highest,

And on earth peace among people with whom He is pleased.”

PRAYER OF PEACE

O Heavenly Father, help us always to have faith to believe. Give us all a strong faith that we may always have peace with you. Amen

“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing” (verse 2)

**Christ, by highest heaven adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord,
late in time behold him come, offspring of a virgin's womb.**

**Veiled in flesh the Godhead see; hail, the incarnate deity,
pleased as Man with to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel!**

Hark! the herald angels sing, Glory to the newborn King.

THE HOLY GOSPEL: LUKE 2:15-20

¹⁵ When the angels had departed from them into heaven, the shepherds *began* saying to one another, “Let’s go straight to Bethlehem, then, and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.” ¹⁶ And they came in a hurry and found their way to Mary and Joseph, and the baby as He lay in the manger. ¹⁷ When they had seen *Him*, they made known the statement which had been told them about this Child. ¹⁸ And all who heard it were amazed about the things which were told them by the shepherds. ¹⁹ But Mary treasured all these things, pondering them in her heart. ²⁰ And the shepherds went back, glorifying and praising God for all that they had heard and seen, just as had been told them.

PRAYER OF WORSHIP

O Almighty Lord, we are sorry for the many times we have not worshipped you as the shepherds did in haste. Help us always to love, trust, and worship you above all things. **Amen**

THE HOLY GOSPEL: LUKE 3:1-7

3 Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was tetrarch of Galilee and his brother Philip was tetrarch of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias was tetrarch of Abilene, ² in the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John, the son of Zechariah, in the wilderness. ³ And he came into all the region around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins; ⁴ as it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet:

“THE VOICE OF ONE CALLING OUT IN THE WILDERNESS,
‘PREPARE THE WAY OF THE LORD,
MAKE HIS PATHS STRAIGHT!
⁵ EVERY RAVINE WILL BE FILLED,
AND EVERY MOUNTAIN AND HILL WILL BE LOWERED;
THE CROOKED WILL BECOME STRAIGHT,
AND THE ROUGH ROADS SMOOTH;
⁶ AND ALL FLESH WILL SEE THE SALVATION OF GOD!’”

⁷ So he was saying to the crowds who were going out to be baptized by him, “You offspring of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?”

“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing” (verse 3)

Hail, the heaven-born Prince of peace! Hail the Son of righteousness!

Light and life to all he brings, risen with healing in his wings.

**Mild he lays his glory by, born that man no more may die,
born to raise the sons of earth, born to give them second birth.**

Hark! the herald angels sing, Glory to the newborn King.

“Angels We Have Heard on High”

Angels we have heard on high, Sweetly singing over the plains,
And the mountains in reply, Echo back their joyous strains.
Gloria! In excelsis Deo! Gloria! In excelsis Deo!

Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
What gladsome tidings be Which inspire your heavenly song?
Gloria! In excelsis Deo! Gloria! In excelsis Deo!

Come to Bethlehem and see Him whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee Christ the Lord, the newborn king.
Gloria! In excelsis Deo! Gloria! In excelsis Deo!

THE NICENE CREED

We believe in one God,
the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the Only Son of God,
Eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,

Of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven;

By the power of the Holy Spirit

He became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,
and was made man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate,
he suffered death and was buried,
On the third day He rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures.

He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory
to judge the living and the dead
and his kingdom will have no end.

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son He is worshiped and glorified,
He has spoken through the prophets.**

**We believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins
We look for the resurrection of the dead
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

The peace of the Lord be with you always,
And also with you

SHARING THE PEACE

Gifts, Tithes, and Offerings

Let the vineyards be fruitful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of blessing. Gather a harvest from the seeds that were sown, that we may be fed with the bread of life. Gather the hopes and the dreams of all; unite them with the prayers we offer now. Grace our table with your presence, and give us a foretaste of the feast to come.

P Merciful Father,

C we offer with joy and thanksgiving what you have first given us ourselves, our time, and our possessions, signs of your gracious love. Receive them for the sake of him who offered himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

The Lord be with you
And also with you.

Lift up your hearts
We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give him thanks and praise.

It is indeed right and salutary.....we praise you name and join their unending hymn:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of pow'r and might:
Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna, Hosanna.
Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord
Hosanna in the highest.**

Blessed are you, Lord of heaven and earth.
In mercy for our fallen world you gave your only Son,
That all those who believe in him should not perish,
But have eternal life.

We give thanks to you for the salvation
You have prepared for us through Jesus Christ.
Send now your Holy Spirit into our hearts,
That we may receive our Lord
With a living faith as he comes to us
In his holy supper.

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

In the night in which he was betrayed
Our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
Broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying;
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
And gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
Shed for you and for all people
For the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.
Father remember us always and teach us to pray;

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed by 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 trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us;
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
And the power, and the glory,
Forever, and ever. Amen**

Come for the Lord's Table is ready.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us. Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us. Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

May the body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.
Amen

**Thank the Lord and sing his praise; tell everyone what he has done
Let all who seek the Lord rejoice and proudly bear his name.
He recalls his promises and leads his people forth in joy with
Shouts of thanksgiving. Alleluia, Alleluia.**

Let us pray;

We give you thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us through the healing power of this gift of life; and we pray that in your mercy you would strengthen us, through this gift, in faith toward you and in fervent love toward one another; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

Lighting of the candles for Silent Night

Lord, tonight we surround ourselves with the soft glow of candles to celebrate Your birth into the world. It seems right, lord, that we celebrate in this way, not that candles are for birthdays, but because You came as a Light into the world.

We look at the candles and know that light comes only as the candles are spent.

We remember that You came, not to save Your life, but to spend it for others.

The candles remind us that if we are to be light, we must be willing to spend our lives in service and love.

“Silent Night, Holy Night!”

**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; Heavenly hosts sing Al-le-lu-ia!
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 Thy birth Jesus, Lord at Thy birth**

BENEDICTION

May the Lord bless you and keep you.
May the Lord make his face shine on you
and be gracious to you.
May the Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.

Go in peace serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

CLOSING HYMN

“JOY TO THE WORLD”

**Joy to the world! The Lord is come
Let earth receive its King!
Let every heart prepare Him room
And heaven and nature sing
And heaven and nature sing
And heaven, and heaven 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
Repeat the sounding joy
Repeat, 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,
Far as the curse is found,
Far as Far as the curse is found**

**He rules the world with truth and grace
And makes the nations prove
And glories of His righteousness
And wonders of His love
And wonders of His love
And wonders of His love
And wonders, wonders of His love**

St. John wishes everyone a very

**MERRY
CHRISTMAS**

Christmas Eve

December 24, 2021

Nativity of Our Lord (Year C)

On this holy night we hear the familiar story of Jesus' birth in a stable filled with animals. Into a dark and lonely world the Christ-child came — not into a sterile maternity ward, but into the messiness of human life, to look at each of us face to face so that we might know the power of his forgiveness and mercy in our lives. God revealed the nativity news to some shepherds who then came to worship him.

