

Christmas Eve

December 24, 2021



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AS WE GATHER

Worship is at the heart of Christmas as God's people join with the angelic host and celebrate that what was promised by God for centuries has been realized in the birth of the babe of Bethlehem. What the prophets had longed and hoped for has become a marvelous reality! The "Christmas story" is more than a story—it is real, true, living history! Today, we rejoice with those who saw Jesus' coming even before His birth and join with those who surround us here and now in bringing praise to Christ, the babe of Bethlehem, who, by His life, death, and resurrection, has opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers.

PRESERVICE MUSIC

"Nativity Medley" (arr. Purifoy) Piano
 Christmas Angels" (arr. Larson) Flutes & Piano
 "What Child is This?" (arr. Larson)
 "Christmas Joy" (arr. Raney)
 "Still, Still, Still" (arr. Davis)
 5 pm "Christmas Medley" (arr. Beck) JuBELLation Choir

379 O COME, ALL YE FAITHFUL

sts. 1, ref, 2–3

1 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: **Refrain**

Refrain O come, let us adore Him,
 O come, let us adore Him,
 O come, let us adore Him,
 Christ the Lord!

2 Highest, most holy,
 Light of Light eternal,
 Born of a virgin, a mortal He comes;
 Son of the Father
 Now in flesh appearing! **Refrain**

3 Sing, choirs of angels,
 Sing in exultation,
 Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
 Glory to God
 In the highest: **Refrain**

INVOCATION

P In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

P Let us confess our sins to God, our heavenly Father.

C Gracious God, our heavenly Father, we Your people confess our sins with contrite hearts. We are by nature sinful and separated from You. We live sin-filled lives, transgressing Your Law in thought, word, and deed. We repent of our sins and beseech Your great forgiveness. By the power

of the Holy Spirit within us, direct us so that we may amend our sinful lives and joyfully walk in ways of love and peace to Your glory.

P God be merciful to you and strengthen your faith. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

G Amen.

SALUTATION

P The Lord be with you.

G And also with you.

COLLECT OF THE DAY

P Let us pray. Lord Jesus, we rejoice at Your birth, which brings us reconciliation with God and fulfills the promises of God's good will towards His fallen creation. We welcome You, Jesus, as the Savior of the world and the Lord of our hearts, for You live and rule with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end.

G Amen.

CHRISTMAS LITANY

Psalm 118:27a; 2:7; 111:9; 132:11b

P Alleluia. A holy day has dawned upon us. Come, all you nations, and worship the Lord. Alleluia.

G **The LORD is God, and He has made His light to shine upon us.**

P The LORD said to Me, "You are My Son; today I have begotten You."

G **He sent redemption to His people; He has commanded His covenant forever.**

P One of the sons of your body I will set on your throne.

G **Christ the Lord, our Savior, everlasting God and Mary's Son, we praise You evermore.**

SOLO "O Holy Night" (Adam, arr. Lanier)

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Isaiah 9:2–7

P The Old Testament Reading is from Isaiah, the ninth chapter.

² The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined. ³You have multiplied the nation; you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as they are glad when they divide the spoil. ⁴For the yoke of his burden, and the staff for his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. ⁵For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult and every garment rolled in blood will be burned as fuel for the fire. ⁶For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

G **Thanks be to God.**

EPISTLE

Titus 2:11–14

P The Epistle is from Titus, the second chapter.

¹¹For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, ¹²training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, ¹³waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, ¹⁴who gave himself for us

to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

CHOIR 3 pm “Celtic Christmas Lullaby” (Raney)

JuBELLation CHOIR 5 pm “To Shepherds as They Watched by Night” (arr. Beck)

HOLY GOSPEL

Luke 2:1–20

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the second chapter.

C Glory to You, O Lord.

¹In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³And all went to be registered, each to his own town. ⁴And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, ⁵to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. ⁶And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

361 O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM

- 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.
- 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;
O come to us, abide with us,
Our Lord Immanuel!

⁸And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear. ¹⁰And the angel said to them, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy that will be for all the people. ¹¹For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹²And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths 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, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!”

368 ANGELS WE HAVE HEARD ON HIGH

- 1 Angels we have heard on high, Sweetly singing o’er the plains,
And the mountains in reply, Echoing their joyous strains. **Refrain**

Refrain Gloria in excelsis Deo. Gloria in excelsis Deo.

- 2 Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be Which inspire your heav'nly song? Refrain
- 3 Come to Bethlehem and see Him whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee Christ the Lord, the newborn King. Refrain

¹⁵When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." ¹⁶And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. ¹⁷And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. ¹⁸And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. ²⁰And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

G Praise to You, O Christ.

364 AWAY IN A MANGER

- 1 Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
The little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head.
The stars in the sky looked down where He lay,
The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.
- 2 The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,
But little Lord Jesus, no crying He makes.
I love Thee, Lord Jesus! Look down from the sky,
And stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.
- 3 Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask Thee to stay
Close by me forever and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in Thy tender care,
And take us to heaven to live with Thee there.

SERMON "The Living Nativity" Isaiah 9:2-7

CREED Sung to the tune of "God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen"

We all believe in one true God, the Father of great might,
Who formed all things on earth below and in the heavens' height.
In love He promised fallen man a rescue from sin's night.
Now praise we our God, the Three-In-One, Three-In-One,
Now praise we our God, the Three-In One!

We trust in Jess Christ, His Son, the babe of Bethlehem!
He died to free us from all sin and rose to life again.
He rules at God the Fathers' side, the Lord of earth and heav'n.
Now praise we our God, the Three-In-One, Three-In-One,
Now praise we our God, the Three-In One!

We now confess the Holy Ghost, Who fills with saving grace,
Shows faith within the hearts of men that we may see God's face.
He keeps us safe within His care till heav'n that blessed place.
Now praise we our God, the Three-In-One, Three-In-One,
Now praise we our God, the Three-In One!

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

After each petition, please respond with the following:

P Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

At the end of the prayer:

C Amen.

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

(The pastor takes the light from the Christ candle and gives it to the acolyte and ushers. They pass the light on to the congregation. Lights are dimmed.)

Pastor: Jesus Christ is the Light of the world,

People: **the light no darkness can overcome.** *John 1:5*

Pastor: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. *Isaiah 9:2*

People: **The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not overcome it.** *John 1:5*

Pastor: Those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined. *Isaiah 9:2b*

People: **We have seen His glory, glory of the only Son from the Father.** *John 1:14b*

Pastor: For to us a child is born, to us a Son is given. *Isaiah 9:6*

People: **In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.** *John 1:4*

CHOIR 3 pm “This Peaceful Night” (Price & Besig)

JuBELLation CHOIR 5 pm “Away in a Manger” (arr. Beck)

363 SILENT NIGHT, HOLY NIGHT

sts. 1–3, verse 1 in German

1 *Stille Nacht, Heilige Nacht! Alles schläft, einsam wacht Nur das traute, hochheilige Paar.
Holder Knabe im lockigen Haar, Schlaf in himmlischer Ruh, Schlaf in himmlischer Ruh.*

1 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.

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

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

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537 BEAUTIFUL SAVIOR

4 Beautiful Savior, Lord of the nations, Son of God and Son of Man!
Glory and honor, Praise, adoration Now and forevermore be Thine!

LORD'S PRAYER

CHRISTMAS LITANY

John 1:14a; Luke 19:38a; Isaiah 9:6a; Luke 2:14

P The Word became flesh and dwelt among us.

C Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord!

P For to us a child is born, to us a son is given.

C Alleluia. Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom He is pleased.
Alleluia!

PRAYER

- P** Let us pray. O God, our heavenly Father, give us grace to keep this festival of the birth of our Lord, Jesus Christ, with pure faith and holy love, that while we join our voices with the voices of those who sang, “Glory to God in the highest,” we also join our voices with those of the shepherds and all others who spread abroad the Gospel of Your peace and good will toward all people; through Jesus Christ, the babe of Bethlehem and our loving Savior.
- C** Amen.

BENEDICTION

- P** The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.
- C** Amen.

387 JOY TO THE WORLD

- 1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her King;
Let ev’ry heart prepare Him room
And heav’n and nature sing,
And heav’n and nature sing,
And heav’n, and heav’n and nature sing.
- 2 Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!
Let men their songs employ,
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.
- 3 No more let sins and sorrows 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.
- 4 He rules the world with truth and grace
And makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness
And wonders of His love,
And wonders of His love,
And wonders, wonders of His love.

POSTLUDE “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing” (arr. Denton)

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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