

Christmas Eve
December 24, 2023
3:00 & 5:00 pm



<https://www.mercyhome.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/NEW-Featured-Image-Size-4.png>

PRESERVICE MUSIC

3 pm "Christmas Angels" (arr. Raney) Flute/Piano

"Christmas Joy" (arr. Raney) Flute/Piano

"Go Tell It on the Mountain" (arr. Raney) Flute/Piano

"Away in a Manger" Piano

"What Child is This?" (arr. Janzer) Flute & Organ

5 pm "Carol of the Bells", "To Shepherds as They Watched by Night" (arr. Beck) & "Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming" (arr. Page) 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**

Text: tr. Frederick Oakeley, 1802-80, alt.; John F. Wade, c. 1711-1786

INVOCATION

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

C Amen.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

P If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

C **But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**

(Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.)

P Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.

C **Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy**

on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.

P Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.

G Amen.

SALUTATION AND COLLECT OF THE DAY

P The Lord be with you.

G And also with you.

P Let us pray. O God, You make us glad with the yearly remembrance of the birth of Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ. Grant that as we joyfully receive Him as our Redeemer, we may with sure confidence behold Him when He comes to be our Judge; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

G Amen.

TRIO “O Holy Night” (Adam, arr. DeCesare)

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Isaiah 9:2-7

²The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone. 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.

361 O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM

sts. 1, 4

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!

EPISTLE

¹⁶ Rejoice always, ¹⁷ pray without ceasing, ¹⁸ give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. ¹⁹ Do not quench the Spirit. ²⁰ Do not despise prophecies, ²¹ but test everything; hold fast what is good. ²² Abstain from every form of evil. ²³ Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴ He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it. ²⁵ Brothers, pray for us. ²⁶ Greet all the brothers with a holy kiss. ²⁷ I put you under oath before the Lord to have this letter read to all the brothers. ²⁸ The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

ANTHEM 3 pm “Christmas Sanctus” (Dengler) Choir

HOLY GOSPEL

Matthew 1:18–25

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the first chapter.

C Glory to You, O Lord.

¹⁸Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. ²⁰But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” ²²All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: ²³“Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel” (which means, God with us). ²⁴When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, ²⁵but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ.

380 HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING

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!” **Refrain**

Refrain Hark! The herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn King!”

2 Christ, by highest heav’n 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_incarinate Deity!
Pleased as Man with man to dwell,
Jesus, our Immanuel! Refrain

3 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 man no more may die,
Born to raise the sons of earth,
Born to give them second birth. Refrain

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707–88, alt.

Text: Public domain

SERMON "Rejoice Evermore!"

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 Jesus 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)

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!

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LORD'S PRAYER

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.

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

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Welcome! We invite you to join us on Christmas Day at 10 a.m.
for worship and Holy Communion

We pray you have a **Merry Christmas & a blessed New Year!**