

## Christmas Eve Service

December 24, 2020

**“Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe...”** (Heb. 12:28)

**Prelude:** Bells: It Came Upon the Midnight Clear

### LIGHTING OF THE 1ST CANDLE

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

CONG..... Amen.

**Opening Hymn** 387 ss. 1-4 Joy to the World

**[Lighting of the Advent and Christ candles.]**

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.

**Responsive Reading:** ISAIAH 42:1-7

Pastor: "Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him and he will bring justice to the nations.

CONG..... He will not shout or cry out, or raise his voice in the streets.

Pastor: A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out. In faithfulness he will bring forth justice;

CONG..... he will not falter or be discouraged till he establishes justice on earth. In his law the islands will put their hope."

Pastor: This is what God the Lord says— he who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread out the earth and all that comes out of it, who gives breath to its people, and life to those who walk on it:

CONG..... "I, the Lord, have called you in righteousness; I will take hold of your hand. I will keep you and will make you to be a covenant for the people and a light for the Gentiles,

Pastor: to open eyes that are blind, to free captives from prison and to release from the dungeon those who sit in darkness.

**LIGHTING OF THE 2ND CANDLE**

**Hymn:** 361 ss. 1-4 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.

2 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.

3 How silently, how silently  
the wondrous gift is giv'n!  
So God imparts to human hearts  
the blessings of His heav'n.  
No ear may hear His coming,  
but in this world of sin,  
where meek souls will receive Him still  
the dear Christ enters in.

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!

**The First Reading:** ST. LUKE 2:1-7

Pastor: In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. And all went to be registered, each to his own town. And 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, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. And 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.

**LIGHTING OF THE 3RD CANDLE**

**The Hymn Response** 364 ss. 1-3 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.

## **The Second Reading: ST. LUKE 2:8-12**

Pastor: And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.

### **LIGHTING OF THE 4TH CANDLE**

#### **Hymn Response** 393 ss. 1-2 Infant Holy, Infant Lowly

1. Infant Holy, Infant lowly, For His bed a cattle stall;  
Oxen lowing, Little knowing Christ the child is Lord of all.  
Swiftly winging, Angels singing, Bells are ringing, Tidings bringing:  
Christ the child is Lord of all! Christ the child is Lord of all!

2. Flocks were sleeping, Shepherds keeping Vigil till the morning new  
Saw the glory, Heard the story, Tidings of a Gospel true.  
Thus rejoicing, Free from sorrow, Praises voicing, Greet the morrow:  
Christ the child was born for you! Christ the child was born for you!

## **The Third Reading: ST. LUKE 2:13-15**

Pastor: And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!" When 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."

### **LIGHTING OF THE 5TH CANDLE**

#### **Hymn Response: 368 ss. 1-3**

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:

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 new-born King. [Refrain]

## **The Fourth Reading: ST. LUKE 2:16-20**

Pastor: And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it has been told them.

### **LIGHTING OF THE 6TH CANDLE**

## **Hymn Response 358 ss. 1-5**

From Heaven Above to Earth I Come

1. "From heav'n above to earth I come  
To bear good news to ev'ry home;  
Glad tidings of great joy I bring,  
Whereof I now will say and sing:
2. "To you this night is born a child  
Of Mary, chosen virgin mild;  
This little child, of lowly birth,  
Shall be the joy of all the earth.
3. "This is the Christ, our God Most High,  
Who hears your sad and bitter cry;  
He will Himself your Savior be  
From all your sins to set you free.
4. "He will on you the gifts bestow  
Prepared by God for all below,  
That in His kingdom, bright and fair,  
You may with us His glory share.

5. "These are the signs that you shall mark:  
The swaddling clothes and manger dark;  
There you will find the infant laid  
By whom the heav'ns and earth were made."

## **The Sermon**

### **The Hymn Response 380 ss. 1-3**

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 hosts proclaim,  
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

Refrain:

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

2 Christ, by highest heaven adored,  
Christ, the everlasting Lord,  
late in time behold him come,  
offspring of the Virgin's womb:  
veiled in flesh the Godhead see;  
hail the incarnate 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]

## The Prayers

### The Fifth Reading: | JOHN 1:1-9

Pastor: That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we looked upon and have touched with our hands, concerning the word of life—the life was made manifest, and we have seen it, and testify to it and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was made manifest to us— that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. And we are writing these things so that our joy may be complete. This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

### LIGHTING OF THE 7TH CANDLE

## The Hymn 384 ss. 1-5 Of the Father's Love Begotten

1. Of the Father's love begotten Ere the world began to be,  
He is Alpha and Omega, He the source, the ending He,  
Of the things that are, that have been, And that future years  
shall see Evermore and evermore.

2. Oh, that birth forever blessed, When the virgin, full of  
grace,  
By the Holy Ghost conceiving, Bore the Savior of our race,  
And the babe, the world's Redeemer, First revealed His  
sacred face Evermore and evermore.

3. This is He whom seers in old time Chanted of with one  
accord,  
Whom the voices of the prophets Promised in their faithful  
word.  
Now He shines, the long expected; Let creation praise its Lord  
Evermore and evermore.

4. O ye heights of heav'n, adore Him; Angel hosts, His  
praises sing.  
Pow'rs, dominions, bow before Him And extol our God and  
King.  
Let no tongue on earth be silent, Ev'ry voice in concert ring  
Evermore and evermore.

5. Christ, to Thee, with God the Father, And, O Holy Ghost,  
to Thee  
Hymn and chant and high thanksgiving And unending praises  
be,  
Honor, glory, and dominion, And eternal victory Evermore and  
evermore.

## The Benediction

Pastor: 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.

CONG..... Amen.

**Closing Hymn** 363 ss. 1-3 Silent Night, Holy Night

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! 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!
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.

Liturgist: Pastor Bill Abbott

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