



Bethany Presbyterian Church

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Bethany Presbyterian Church, Johnstown, PA
Christmas Eve 2021 Candlelight Service

Announcements Concerning the Service:

**Hymns and Carols during the telling of the story will not be announced.*

**Please remain seated for the entirety of the service.*

**The Communion- All believers are welcome to celebrate Holy Communion. Please hold the element until all are served, at the Pastor's lead, all will partake together.*

CALL TO WORSHIP

L: Rejoice, for God is with us — Emmanuel.

P: In the darkness of our world shines God's holy light.

L: Now there is reason to hope, to love, to laugh, to live.

P: God is truly with us. We are not alone. Thanks be to God!

O 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.

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.

Lighting of the Advent Candles:

L: The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

P: And also with you.

L: Jesus Christ, the son of Mary, the son of God is born this night.

P: God's word has been made flesh among us.

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

P: Those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness - on them a light has shined.

L: You, O Lord, have multiplied the nation. You have increased its joy. For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder.

P: His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

L: He is also called Emmanuel, for in him God is with us.

(As the Candles are lit all sing to the tune of Away in a Manger)

We honor Messiah with Christ candle's flame
our Christmas Eve candles glad tidings proclaim.
O Come all you faithful, rejoice in this night,
as God comes among us, the Christian's true light.

OPENING PRAYER

L: Gracious God, With joy and thanksgiving we gather as your people.

P: We have come to hear again the timeless story of Christ's birth.

L: In the excitement of this night, quiet our hearts that we may know the peace and fullness of this holy time.

P: Shine, O Light, in the darkness of our world.

L: Sing, O angels, in the stillness of our hearts,

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those God favors."

ALL: This we pray in the name of the Child of Bethlehem. Amen.

The Prophecy of the Messiah

Isaiah 9:2, 6-7, John 1:1-2, 4-5

The Lighting of the Christ Candle

Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace, Wonderful Counselor, Almighty God, Emmanuel, Emmanuel, God with us, Emmanuel.

The Coming of Jesus Is Announced to Mary and Joseph

Luke 1:26-38, Matthew 1:18-25

The Preparations for the Birth of Jesus

Luke 2:1-5

O Little Town of Bethlehem

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 street shineth the everlasting light.
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

Jesus is Born

Luke 2:6-7

What Child Is This?

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?

***Refrain:** This, this is Christ the King, Whom shepherds guard and angels sing: Haste, haste to bring Him laud, The Babe, the Son of Mary.*

Why lies He in such mean estate Where ox and ass are feeding? Good Christian, fear; for sinners here. The silent Word is pleading. **Refrain**

So bring Him incense, gold and myrrh, Come, peasant, king, to own Him;
The King of kings salvation brings, Let loving hearts enthrone Him. **Refrain**

Jesus' Birth is Announced to the Shepherds

Luke 2:9-14

It Came Upon the Midnight Clear

It came upon the midnight clear that glorious song of old
From angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold
Peace on the earth, good will to men, from heaven's all gracious King.
The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing.

The Shepherds Find the Baby Jesus

Luke 2:15-18

The First Noel

The first noel the angels 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.
Noel, noel, noel, noel. Born is the King of Israel

The Wise Men Bring Their Gifts to Jesus

Matthew 2:1-11

The First Noel

And by the light of that same star, three wise men came from county far.
To seek for a king was their intent, and to follow the star wherever it went.
Noel, noel, noel, noel. Born is the King of Israel.
Then entered in the wise men three, full reverently upon the knee.
And offered there in His presence their gold and myrrh and frankincense.
Noel, noel, noel, noel.
Born is the King of Israel.

We Offer Our Gifts to God

Offertory

Offertory Response (What Child Is This?)

So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh, come, peasant, king, to own Him.
The King of Kings salvation brings. Let loving hearts enthrone Him.
This, this is Christ the King whom shepherds guard and angels sing.
Haste, haste to bring him laud the Babe, the Son of Mary.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

ALL: Merciful God, we confess that often we find darkness more comfortable than light.

We confess that we find your good news frightening and unsettling, especially when we consider its demands as well as its promises. We confess that Christmas has become more to us than the birthday of the Christ, partly because we do not want a Christ-Child in our lives or in our world. Forgive us, break us, bend us, remake us. Give us the courage to lay ourselves open to the wonder and healing of your coming. Be born again into our world, be born again into our hearts and lives.

Hear now our silent and personal confessions as we prepare ourselves for your nativity.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

L: The true light that enlightens all has come into the world.

P: That light shines on in the darkness, and the darkness has never been able to put it out.

L: This is the good news: God has heard our confession. God has forgiven our sin. Friends, Believe the Good News

ALL: In Jesus Christ we are forgiven.

CHRISTMAS EVE MEDITATION

-Pastor Denise

CELEBRATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

(All who believe are welcome to join in the celebration of The Lord's Supper)

GREAT THANKSGIVING

THE LORD'S PRAYER

BREAKING THE BREAD

THE COMMUNION

(Please hold the elements until all have been served.)

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

DEPARTING PRAYER: The Canticle of Simeon

L Having traveled to Bethlehem together and having beheld the child, born a king, let us pray using the word's of Simeon, a righteous and devote man who looked forward to the consolation of Israel and who beheld his coming:

P Lord, let your servants now depart in peace, according to your word; for our eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of your people Israel.

CELEBRATING THE LIGHT Silent 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 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 thy holy face, with the dawn of redeeming grace, Jesus, Lord, at thy birth. Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

BENEDICTION

Joy to the World

Joy to the world! The Lord is come. Let earth receive her king.
Let every heart prepare Him room and heaven and nature sing,
And heaven and nature sing, and heaven, and heaven and nature sing.
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.

**Credit to Rev. Kathie S Wilkinson/Mt. Sylvan UMC as the source for portions of this service.

ORGANISTS: John Griffin and Elaine Bilger

COMMISSIONED PASTOR: Denise Ann Todero

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
Friday December 24, 2021

- **The Flowers and Bulletins** this evening are given by John Griffin in memory of his wife Cindy.
- **If You Ordered Poinsettias** you can pick them up following tonight's service or after Sunday's service.
- **2022 Offering Envelopes** are available on the back table of the sanctuary. Be sure to pick yours up tonight or Sunday.
- **Flower and Bulletin Sponsorships** for 2022 are now being accepted. If you are interested, please sign up on the back bulletin board.
- **Be Sure To Like** our official Facebook page (Bethany Presbyterian Church- Johnstown, PA) to keep up to date with all the latest news and information from the church. We also post photos and memories of days gone by, so be sure to check it out.
- **Sign Ups** for 2022 Lay Leaders are now being accepted. Take a month for yourself or share a month with someone. If you are interested in helping out, please sign up on the back bulletin board. Contact Pastor Denise for more information.

We Wish You A Merry Christmas
and a Safe and Happy New Year

Christmas Poinsettias

In Memory of Loved Ones by Maryann Minahan

In Memory of Loved Ones by Linda Orlidge

In Memory of Loved Ones by David Hayduk

In Memory of Loved Ones by Jessie Rager

In Loving Memory of Our Mother Leona Clemenson by Gail High, Gary Clemenson & Renee Crutcher

In Memory of Louis & Mary Barclay by Pastor Denise & Pete

In Memory of Dick & Alma Todero by Pastor Denise & Pete

In Memory of Harry & Shirley Weaver by Pastor Denise & Pete

In Memory of Harold and Helen Brewer by Brenda Molnar

In Memory of Charles and "Betty" Molnar by Brenda Molnar

In Memory of Rick Gill by Brenda Molnar

In Memory of The Barefoot Family by Carl & Linda (Barefoot) Thomas and Irene (Barefoot) Bischof

In Memory of Milford "Jake" Johnson by Bobbie Johnson, Sandy Huchel, and Laura Huchel

In Memory of Ralph Clemenson by Betty Clemenson & Family

In Memory of Cindy Griffin by John Griffin

In Memory of Barbara Miller by John Griffin

In Honor of Grammy Denise by Logan & Landon

In Honor of Mark Todero by Pastor Denise & Pete

In Honor of Our Children and Grandchildren by Pastor Denise & Pete