

Christmas Eve

Candlelight Communion

December 24, 2020 – 7:00 p.m.



GATHERING MUSIC

stand

HYMN – “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;
O sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God, in the highest;
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

CHRISTMAS GREETING

Good news of great joy, light and life, grace and peace, be with you all.

And also with you.

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

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

Those who dwelt in the land of deep darkness,

on them the light has shined.

We have beheld Christ's glory,

glory as of the only Son from the Father.

To us a child is born,

to us a Son is given.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. Good and loving God,

You made this night shine with the brightness of the true Light. Help us walk in the light of Jesus' presence, living in the forgiveness we have received because of his birth among us. We pray in the power of Jesus' name. Amen

be seated

READING – Luke 2: 1-7

The heart of the Christmas celebration is the story of the birth of Jesus, the Son of God, as told in Luke's Gospel. The story begins this way:

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

HYMN – “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 streets shineth the everlasting light;
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

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!

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.

READING – Luke 2: 8-14

Luke continues the story by telling how the humble birth was proclaimed to an equally humble audience of local shepherds in a marvelous way:

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see - I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”

HYMN – “Angels We Have Heard on High”

Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o’er the plains,
And the mountains in reply, echoing their joyous strains.
Glo - o - ria in excelsis Deo: Glo- o - ria in excelsis Deo.

Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be which inspire your heav’nly song?
Glo - o - ria in excelsis Deo: Glo- o - ria in excelsis Deo.

Come to Bethlehem and see him whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee Christ the Lord, the new-born king.
Glo - o - ria in excelsis Deo: Glo- o - ria in excelsis Deo.

READING – Luke 2: 15-20

Luke concludes the story by telling of the witness of the shepherds and their joyful response to the Good News.

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

HYMN – “Joy to the World”

Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive its 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.

Joy to the world! 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 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.

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.

MEDITATION

stand

HYMN – “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”

Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the new-born King:
Peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled.”
Joyful, all you 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 new-born King!”

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 we no more may die,
Born to raise each child of earth, born to give us second birth.
Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the new-born King!”

PRAYERS

Each petition ends: God of grace and glory . . . **Hear our prayer.**

THE PEACE

The Peace of the new-born King be with you all.

And also with you.

COMMUNION GREETING

Emmanuel 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 God thanks and praise.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

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

LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray:

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be 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

COMMUNION

CANDLELIGHTING

*Take the light from your neighbor's candle; **** please never tip a lighted candle.*****

When all candles are lit we sing.

HYMN – "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, Heav'nly 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 your holy face, with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord at your birth, Jesus, Lord at your birth.

BLESSING

Glory to God in the highest heaven,
And on earth, peace among those whom God favors.

May we be filled with the wonder of Mary, the obedience of Joseph, the joy of the angels, and the peace of the Christ Child. Almighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit bless us now and forever.
Amen!

SENDING

Go in Christmas Peace. Share the Good News!
Thanks be to God!

POSTLUDE