

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE

RSD

Lessons and Carols

December 24, 2020

Bells Rosemary Dawson

Welcome Rosemary Dawson

Good Evening Everyone. Thank you gathering here this evening and may I be the first to wish you all a Hopeful, Blessed Christmas in the very strange year.

Prelude Ukranian Bell Carol Lynne Walker

Advent Candle One Candle: An advent liturgy for 2020
by Rev. Karen Ware Jackson
Permission is granted for home and congregational use.

Light one candle for Christ.
Because the world is broken and the wait is long
but Christ is with us through it all.
In humble manger in a back water town - a baby.
On a convict's cross - a king.
In every heart and every home
where hope, peace, joy, and love endure-Christ with us.
"Glory to God in the Highest heaven," she whispers,
"and peace to all on earth."
So we light one candle, because it only takes one:
Christ with us.

Hymn "One Candle is Lit" vs 5

Come, listen, the sounds of God-with-us ring clear,
and signs of a cross in the distance appear.
The Word once made flesh, yet the Word ever near.
One candle is lit for the Christ-birthday here.

Call to Worship Rosemary Dawson

Leader: Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice.

The grace of God has come to save us.

**People: Hallelujah. We sing to God,
who has made his salvation known.**

Leader: The winds lift up the songs of angels.
The fire of stars proclaim the Savior's presence.

**People: Hallelujah. We sing to God,
who has made his salvation known.**

Leader: Let all people sing for joy and give thanks.

Tell the world what God had done for us.

**People: Hallelujah. We sing to God,
who has made his salvation known.**

Hymn

O Come All Ye Faithful vs 1, 3

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 heav'n 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!

Gathering Prayer

Rosemary Dawson

Faithful God, in the darkness of this night, as we gather together in hope, help us to fully welcome the one who came as light to our world. As we lift our voices in songs, may our ears be open to hear choirs in heaven and messages of peace on earth. As we watch candles lit amid the shadows of the night may our eyes look up to behold the light of a star and follow its guidance to a rough-hewn stable. As we recount the tale and celebrate the story may our hearts be awakened and may our minds ponder the wonder of God with us. Amen.

Special Music

Bring a Torch Jeanette Isabella

Lynne Walker and Chris Harris

Lessons and Carols

Isaiah 9:2-7

Heather Tower

The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness-
on them light has shined.
You have multiplied the nation,
you have increased its joy;
they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest,
as people exult when dividing plunder.
For the yoke of their burden,
and the bar across their shoulders,
the rod of their oppressor,
you have broken as on the day of Midian.
For all the boots of the tramping warriors

he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,
and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.
Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist,
and faithfulness the belt around his loins.
The wolf shall live with the lamb,
the leopard shall lie down with the kid,
the calf and the lion and the fatling together,
and a little child shall lead them.
The cow and the bear shall graze,
their young shall lie down together;
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.
The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp,
and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den.
They will not hurt or destroy
on all my holy mountain;
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD
as the waters cover the sea.

Hymn: Hail to the Lord's Anointed vs 1, 2

Hail to the Lord's Anointed,
great David's greater Son!
Hail in the time appointed,
his reign on earth begun!
He comes to break oppression,
to set the captive free;
to take away transgression,
and rule in equity.

He comes with succor speedy
to those who suffer wrong;
to help the poor and needy,
and bid the weak be strong;
to give them songs for sighing,
their darkness turn to light,
whose souls, condemned and dying,
are precious in his sight.

Micah 5:2-5a

Linda Hescock

But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah,
who are one of the little clans of Judah,
from you shall come forth for me
one who is to rule in Israel,
whose origin is from of old,
from ancient days.
Therefore he shall give them up until the time
when she who is in labor has brought forth;
then the rest of his kindred shall return

to the people of Israel.
And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the LORD,
in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God.
And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great
to the ends of the earth;
and he shall be the one of peace.

Hymn

O Little Town of Bethlehem vs 1, 4

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.

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 Emmanuel.

Luke 1:26-35, 38

Linda Hescock

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was very perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus."

"He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."

Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?"

The angel said to her,

"The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God."

"And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren.

For nothing will be impossible with God.” Then Mary said, “Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.”

Hymn: Lo How a Rose E'er Blooming vs 1, 2

Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming
From tender stem hath sprung!
Of Jesse's lineage coming
As men of old have sung.
It came, a flower bright,
Amid the cold of winter
When half-gone was the night.

Isaiah 'twas foretold it,
The Rose I have in mind:
With Mary we behold it,
The virgin mother kind.
To show God's love aright
She bore to men a Savior
When half-gone was the night.

Matthew 1:18-21

Lucinda Kidder

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.”

Hymn Of the Father's Love Begotten vs 1, 2

Of the Father's love begotten
ere the worlds 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!

O 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!

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: Once in Royal David's City vs 1, 2

Once in royal David's city
stood a lowly cattle shed,
where a mother laid her baby
in a manger for his bed:
Mary was that mother mild,
Jesus Christ, her little child.

He came down to earth from heaven
who is God and Lord of all,
and his shelter was a stable,
and his cradle was a stall:
with the poor, and mean, and lowly,
lived on earth our Savior holy.

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!”

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: Angels We Have Heard on High vs 1, 3

Angels we have heard on high,
singing sweetly through the night,
and the mountains in reply
echoing their brave delight.

Gloria in excelsis Deo,
gloria in excelsis Deo.

Come to Bethlehem and see
him whose birth the angels sing.
Come, adore on bended knee
Christ the Lord, the newborn King.

Gloria in excelsis Deo,
gloria in excelsis Deo.

Matthew 2:1-6, 9-11

Patter Field

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, “Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.” When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea;

for so it has been written by the prophet:

“And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.”

When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

Hymn: We Three Kings of Orient Are vs 1, 5

We three kings of Orient are;
bearing gifts we traverse afar,
field and fountain, moor and mountain,
following yonder star.

O star of wonder, star of light,
star with royal beauty bright,
westward leading, still proceeding,
guide us to thy perfect light.

Glorious now behold him arise;
King and God and sacrifice:
Alleluia, Alleluia,
sounds through the earth and skies.

O star of wonder, star of light,
star with royal beauty bright,

westward leading, still proceeding,
guide us to thy perfect light.

Pastoral Prayer

Rosemary Dawson

O Holy God, one this night our hearts are filled with wonder.
We have heard the great story of the birth of Jesus, our Savior,
and we know the world has forever been changed.
We long to live in the promise of this night.
We yearn for your new birth in our hearts.
We desire to be filled with your love.
We seek the gift of your peace and hope.
We aspire to live according to your grace.
We open our hearts to you this night,
that the power of Christ may be made real among us.
Lead us all to share the love we have known in Christ
with all who are hungry for righteousness
all who long for peace and all who need your aid.
Grant that throughout our lives
our words and deeds may truly proclaim
“Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace and goodwill to all.”

We ask your blessing on us in the name of the one who taught us to pray...

Lord's Prayer

John 1:1-5

Rosemary Dawson

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

Candle Lighting

Rosemary Dawson

This evening we hear again the story of Jesus Christ, the Son of God,
coming into the world to be the light of men.
Here our hearts have been touched by hope and grace and love.
Our spirits respond with faith and joy.
We now invite you to embody the story by letting his light shine through you,
to illuminate the world and proclaim to all that God is indeed with us.
(Light a Candle)

Hymn:

Silent Night, Holy 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 thy holy face,
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

Benediction

Rosemary Dawson

Go into the world

and may the love of God bring you joy,
may the grace of Jesus Christ bring you hope,
and may the presence of the Spirit bring you peace,

Go now to love and serve the Lord. Amen.

Postlude

Joy to the World

Lynne Walker