

# A Candlelight Service



# Christmas Eve Candlelight Service



## The Light Shines in the Darkness

Christmas has captivated the world and remains a day of mystery. How can God, who made all things and holds them in the palm of His hand, come as a baby in Mary's womb? As much as we desire to explain Christmas, we come simply to confess its truth, to tell its story, and to trust in its promise, by the aid of the Holy Spirit. All the world stands in need of Him whom the Father has sent, whose birth we now celebrate. But how will they know of Christ and of the dawn of the day of redemption unless we who know Him confess Him before the world? So we come to remember and rejoice but also to respond anew with the courage to speak and live the light of Christ today and every day until He comes again!

♪ ♪ - **"Oh, 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!**

Highest, most Holy, Light of Light eternal  
Born of a virgin, a mortal He comes;  
Son of the Father, now in flesh appearing!

Sing choirs of angels, sing in exultation,  
O sing all ye citizens of heav'n above!  
Glory to God, all glory in the highest!

## INVOCATION

## CHRISTMAS EVE PRAYER

♪ ♪ - "Away in a Manger"

Away in a manger, No crib for a bed,  
The little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head.  
The stars in the bright sky looked down where He lay,  
The little Lord Jesus, Asleep on the hay.

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 side until morning is nigh.

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.

## A CONFESSION

Pastor: In peace let us pray to our heavenly Father,  
confident of His forgiveness for Jesus' sake.

*Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination*

Pastor: Almighty Father,

**People: we confess that we are sinners by nature and by thought, word, and deed. We cannot and do not merit any forgiveness. But with repentant hearts, we turn to You for mercy, seeking Your grace. In Your loving kindness, forgive, restore, and lead us so that we may be renewed and may live to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.**

♪ ♪ - "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 wondering love.  
O, morning stars together - proclaim the holy birth;  
And praises sing to God the King  
And peace to men on earth.

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

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.

**OLD TESTAMENT READING** Isaiah 9:2-7 *(The light of Christ is promised to a world darkened by sin.)*

<sup>2</sup>The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined.

<sup>3</sup>You 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. <sup>4</sup>For 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. <sup>5</sup>For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult and every garment rolled in blood will be burned as fuel for the fire. <sup>6</sup>For 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. <sup>7</sup>Of 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.

**NEW TESTAMENT READING** Titus 3:4-7 *(being justified by his grace we might become heirs.)*

<sup>4</sup>But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, <sup>5</sup>he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, <sup>6</sup>whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, <sup>7</sup>so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

## CHRISTMAS GOSPEL Luke 2:1-20 *(The Birth of Jesus Christ)*

<sup>1</sup>In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. <sup>2</sup>This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. <sup>3</sup>And all went to be registered, each to his own town. <sup>4</sup>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, <sup>5</sup>to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. <sup>6</sup>And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. <sup>7</sup>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. And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>8</sup>And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear. <sup>9</sup>And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy that will be for all the people. <sup>10</sup>For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. <sup>11</sup>And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." <sup>12</sup>And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, <sup>13</sup>"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!" <sup>14</sup>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." <sup>15</sup>And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. <sup>16</sup>And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. <sup>17</sup>And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. <sup>18</sup>But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. <sup>19</sup>And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

### ♪ ♪ - "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.

Still thro' the cloven skies they come,  
With peaceful wings unfurled;  
And still their heavenly music floats,  
o'er all the weary world.  
Above its sad and lowly plains,  
they bend on hovering wing;  
And ever o'er its Babel sounds  
the blessed angels sing.

And ye, beneath life's crushing load,  
Whose forms are bending low;  
Who toil along the climbing way  
with painful steps and slow.  
Look now! for glad and golden hours,  
come swiftly on the wing;  
O rest beside the weary road,  
and hear the angels sing.

For lo, the days are hastening on,  
by prophet bards foretold;  
When with the ever circling years,  
Comes round the age of gold.  
When peace shall over all the earth,  
Its ancient splendours fling;  
And the whole world give back the song  
Which now the angels sing.

### ♪ ♪ - "The First Noel"

The first Noel - the angel 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

They looked up - and saw a star  
Shining in the east beyond them far  
And to the earth - it gave great light  
And so it continued both day and night

And by the light - of that same star  
Three wise men came from country far  
To seek for a king - was their intent  
And to follow the star wherever it went

This star drew nigh - to the northwest  
O'er Bethlehem it took its rest  
And there it did - both stop and stay  
Right over the place where Jesus lay

Then entered in - those wise men three  
Full rev'rently upon their knee  
And offered there - in His presence  
Their gold and myrrh and frankincense

Then let us all - with one accord  
Sing praises to our heavenly Lord  
That hath made heav'n - and earth of naught  
And with His blood mankind hath bought

**CHRISTMAS EVE MESSAGE:** "The Promise made Flesh" *Luke 2:1-21*  
Pastor Ed Govaski

## **WE OFFER OUR GIFTS**

**RECORD OF FELLOWSHIP** *(Please complete the Record of fellowship  
located at the ends of the pews)*

## **CHRISTMAS PRAYERS**

### **THE GOSPEL OF THE INCARNATION - John 1:1-14**

<sup>1</sup>In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup>He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup>All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. <sup>4</sup>In him was life, and the life was the light of men. <sup>5</sup>The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. <sup>6</sup>There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. <sup>7</sup>He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. <sup>8</sup>He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light. <sup>9</sup>The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. <sup>10</sup>He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. <sup>11</sup>He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. <sup>12</sup>But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, <sup>13</sup>who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. <sup>14</sup>And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

## **THE LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES**



## ♪ ♪ - "Silent Night"

Stille Nacht, Heilige Nacht! Alles Schlaeft, einsam Wacht  
Nur das Traute hoch heilige Paar,  
Holder Knabe in lockigen Haar,  
Schlaf in himmlischer ruh, Schlaf in himmlischer ruh

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 Saviour is born; Christ the Saviour 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.

## THE CHRISTMAS BLESSING

### ♪ ♪ - "Joy to the World"

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.

Joy to the earth the Saviour 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

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.