

O Holy Night

Prelude

Welcome

Opening Song: "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 through 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 seen of old,
when with the ever-circling years
shall come the time foretold
When the new heaven and earth shall own
The Prince of Peace their King,
and the whole world send back the song
which now the angels sing.

Advent Reading:

Throughout human history, God had given examples, pointing ahead to someone who would come to make right again what had gone wrong with humanity.

To Adam and Eve, He promised that One would come who would break the curse of sin that humanity had brought upon itself.

In people like Joseph, God's people saw an example of a humble person who rose from obscurity to save the people of his world.

In a prophet like Moses, they saw God speak to them - promising to deliver them from oppression.

In a king like David, they saw an image of what a righteous and godly leader could look like. And the later prophets spoke of a Savior who would come, bringing all these imperfect examples to their fulfillment.

Isaiah 9:2, 6-7

The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned.

⁶ For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷ Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this.

Reading: That Holy Night

Pastor: In that holy night

Women: A young woman, a virgin, gives birth to a Savior.

Pastor: In that holy night

Men: A husband becomes a father, accepting his part in God's plan to raise this child.

Pastor: In that holy night

All: A baby breathes the air, and God steps down from the divine into the normal, for us.

Song: "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?

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.

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

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!

Luke 2:1-7 – The birth of Jesus

In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world.² (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.)³ And everyone went to their own town to register.

⁴ So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David.⁵ He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child.

⁶ While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born,⁷ and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

1 John 1:4-5, 9-12 ⁴ In him was life, and the life was the light of men. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.... ⁹ The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. ¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. ¹¹ He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. ¹² But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God

Song: "O Holy Night" \

O Holy Night!
The stars are brightly shining,
It is the night of the dear Savior's birth;
Long lay the world in sin and error pining,
Till he appear'd and the soul felt its worth.
A thrill of hope the weary soul rejoices,
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn!

Fall on your knees,
O hear the angel voices!
O night divine,
O night when Christ was born!
O night, O holy night,
O night divine!

Led by the light of Faith serenely beaming,
With glowing hearts by His cradle we stand;
So led by light of a star sweetly gleaming,
Here come the wise men from Orient land.
The King of Kings lay thus in lowly manger,
In all our trials born to be our friend;

He knows our need to our weakness is no stranger,
Behold your King, before Him lowly bend!
Behold your King, before Him lowly bend!

Truly He taught us to love one another;
His law is love and His gospel is peace;
Chains shall He , for the slave is our brother,
And in His name all oppression shall cease.
Sweet hymns of joy in grateful chorus raise we,
Let all within us praise His holy name;

Christ is the Lord, O praise His name forever!
His power and glory evermore proclaim!
His power and glory evermore proclaim.

Christmas Eve Meditation – Pastor Randy

Prayer

Reading: We Accept the Gift of Christmas:

Men: On this holy night, we accept a gift.

Women: A personal act of faith; accepting our part in God's plan.

Pastor: On this holy night so long ago, our destiny was changed forever by our Savior Jesus Christ, who is God with us, now and forever.

Song: "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

Oh 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

Silent night, holy night

Wondrous star, lend thy light

with the angels let us sing

Alleluia to our King

Christ the Savior is born

Christ the Savior is born

Blessing

Postlude

(Please extinguish your candle and put it in the basket(s) as you leave)