

WORSHIP SERVICE
December 24, 2023 6:30 pm
Candlelight Christmas Eve - *The Unexpected Gift*

Prelude

Welcome

* God's Greeting

* Opening song: "O Come, All Ye Faithful" *Lift Up Your Hearts #76*

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!

God of God, Light of Light eternal,

lo he abhors not the virgin's womb;

Son of the Father, begotten, not created;

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!

Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, born this happy morning;

Jesus, to Thee be all glory giv'n!

Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing!

O come, let us adore Him; O come, let us adore Him;

O come, let us adore Him, Christ, the Lord!

* Opening prayer

Scripture Reading: Luke 2:1–7

The Birth of Jesus

¹ 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[a] 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.

Reading

Song of Response: "What Child Is This" *Lift Up Your Hearts* #95

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.

Nails, spear shall pierce him through,
The cross be borne for me, for
you

Hail Hail for Word made flesh
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.

Raise, Raise the song on high,
The virgin sings her lullaby

Joy, joy for Christ is born
The babe, the son of Mary

Scripture Reading: Micah 5:1-4

A Promised Ruler From Bethlehem

¹ Marshal your troops now, city of troops, for a siege is laid against us. They will strike Israel's ruler on the cheek with a rod. ² "But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over

Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times.”³

Therefore Israel will be abandoned until the time when she who is in labor bears a son, and the rest of his brothers return to join the Israelites.⁴ He will stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God. And they will live securely, for then his greatness will reach to the ends of the earth.

Reading

Song of Response: “O Little Town of Bethlehem”

Lift Up Your Hearts # 88

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 all on earth.
How silently, how silently the wondrous gift is given!
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.

Scripture Reading: Matthew 1:18-24

Joseph Accepts Jesus as His Son

¹⁸ This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹

Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly. ²⁰ But after he had considered 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 home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus,[c] because he will save his people from their sins.” ²² All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: ²³ “The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel” (which means “God with us”).²⁴ When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife.

Reading

* Song of Response: “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 break, 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.

Scripture Reading: Luke 2:8–20

⁸ And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping
watch over their flocks at night. ⁹ An angel of the Lord appeared to
them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were
terrified. ¹⁰ But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you
good news that will cause great joy for all the people. ¹¹ Today in the
town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the
Lord. ¹² This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in
cloths and lying in a manger.” ¹³ Suddenly a great company of the
heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and
saying, ¹⁴ “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to
those on whom his favor rests.” ¹⁵ When the angels had left them and
gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let’s go to
Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has
told us about.”

Meditation

Prayer

Song of Response: “Angels We Have Heard on High”

Lift Up Your Hearts # 82

Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o'er the plains,
and the mountains in reply echoing their joyous strains:

Gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be which inspire your heav'nly song?
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 new-born King.
Gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Reading

* Lighting of candles

* Song of Response: "Silent Night" *Lift Up Your Hearts # 85*

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 stand if you are able.

Message: Rev. Randy Raak

Musicians: Elijah Goosen, Elijah Hufford, Laura Hufford