

Christmas Eve

December 24, 2022
5:00 & 10:30 p.m.

Please note: The 5:00 p.m. worship service is live streamed and recorded.

AS WE GATHER

There are very few times of the year that are more joyful than Christmas Eve. The familiar carols, the sparkling lights of the tree, the warm glow of candles, and the precious story of the birth of Jesus all combine to fill us with special joy and peace. On this night we hear again the angel's words and listen to the surprising yet wonderful news that God has given us His own Son to be our Savior.

PRE-SERVICE MUSIC

WELCOME AND EXCHANGE OF PEACE

It is important to recognize that some people are especially susceptible to viruses that can be spread by contact and that some immune systems are very sensitive. Please understand that some may choose not to shake hands during the Exchange of Peace, but might simply greet you with a verbal greeting, a wave, or a smile.

✻ PREPARATION ✻

OPENING CAROL

379 O Come, All Ye Faithful

- 1** 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: (Refrain)

(continued on next page)

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

2 Highest, most holy,
Light of Light eternal,
Born of a virgin, a mortal He comes;
Son of the Father
Now in flesh appearing! (Refrain)

3 Sing, choirs of angels,
Sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God
In the highest: (Refrain)

4 Yea, Lord, we greet Thee,
Born this happy morning;
Jesus, to Thee be glory giv'n!
Word of the Father
Now in flesh appearing! (Refrain)

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INVOCATION AND PRAYER

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

Pastor: O Christ of Bethlehem, with excitement and gratitude we give You our hearts and welcome Your coming. We are here to listen to Your story, to rejoice in Your presence, and to receive Your gifts that You give to us here in worship. We thank and praise You for the glory of this most holy night. In Your name we pray.

People: Amen.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Pastor: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.
People: **The glory of the Lord has shone upon us, in the face of Jesus Christ.**

Pastor: In His name, let us make confession of our sins and for His sake, seek forgiveness.

(silence for personal reflection and confession)

Pastor: Heavenly Father,
People: **We do not deserve to be called Your children, for we have disobeyed You so very often. In our thinking, our speaking, and our doing – we have sinned against You. We humbly come before You and ask for Your forgiveness.**

Pastor: The grace of God has appeared, bringing forgiveness and salvation! Christ Jesus gave Himself for us to redeem us from the punishment of our sins. All who receive Him, who believe in His name, are given power to become children of God. Your sins are forgiven in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: **Glory to God in the highest!**

Pastor: And peace to God's people on earth.

People: **Amen!**

CAROL OF PRAISE

377 On Christmas Night All Christians Sing

1 On Christmas night all Christians sing
To hear the news the angels bring,
On Christmas night all Christians sing
To hear the news the angels bring,
News of great joy, news of great mirth,
News of our merciful King's birth.

(continued on next page)

- 2 Then why should men on earth be so sad,
Since our Redeemer made us glad,
Then why should men on earth be so sad,
Since our Redeemer made us glad,
When from our sin He set us free,
All for to gain our liberty?
- 3 When sin departs before His grace,
Then life and health come in its place,
When sin departs before His grace,
Then life and health come in its place;
Angels and men with joy may sing,
All for to see the newborn King.
- 4 All out of darkness we have light,
Which made the angels sing this night,
All out of darkness we have light,
Which made the angels sing this night:
“Glory to God and peace to men
Now and forevermore. Amen.”

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✘ THE CHRISTMAS STORY ✘

Pastor: Come and listen as the Christmas story is told!

People: It is a story of good news of great joy that is for all people!

Pastor: Think again of that wonderful night when angels sang to the shepherds:

People: “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom His favor rests.”

Pastor: Open your hearts to ponder the message of this most holy night.

People: Praise be to God for the birth of His Son!

ST. MATTHEW TELLS THE STORY

Matthew 1:18-25

¹⁸ This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Because Joseph her husband was a righteous man and 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, 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 be with child and will 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. ²⁵ But he had no union with her until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

HYMN

359 Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

1 Lo, how a rose e'er blooming
From tender stem hath sprung!
Of Jesse's lineage coming
As prophets long have sung,
It came, a flow'ret bright,
Amid the cold of winter,
When half-spent was the night.

2 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 us a Savior,
When half-spent was the night.

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ST. JOHN TELLS THE STORY

John 1:1-5, 14

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

² He was with God in the beginning.

³ Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. ⁴ In him was life, and that life was the light of men. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.

¹⁴ The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

HYMN

370 What Child Is This

1 **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!**

2 **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 the Word made flesh,
 The babe, the son of Mary!**

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ST. LUKE TELLS THE STORY

Luke 2:1-7

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 Quirinius was governor of Syria.) ³ And everyone went to his 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 room for them in the inn.

ANTHEM "Away in A Manger"

setting by John Leavitt

*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 cradle till 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.*

THE ANGELS TELL THE STORY

Luke 2:9-14

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 of great joy that will be for all the people. ¹¹ Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ 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, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests."

HYMN

380 Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

1 **Hark! The herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn King;
Peace on earth and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled!"
Joyful, all ye nations, rise,
Join the triumph of the skies;
With the_angelic host proclaim,
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"**

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THE SHEPHERDS TELL THE STORY

Luke 2:15-18, 20

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."

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¹⁶ So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. ¹⁷ When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, ¹⁸ and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them.

²⁰ The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

HYMN

368 Angels We Have Heard on High

1 **Angels we have heard on high,
Sweetly singing o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply,
Echoing their joyous strains. Refrain**

ref **Gloria in excelsis Deo.
Gloria in excelsis Deo.**

2 **Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be
Which inspire your heav'nly song? Refrain**

3 **Come to Bethlehem and see
Him whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee
Christ the Lord, the newborn King. Refrain**

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SERMON

Please stand

NICENE CREED

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried. And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets. And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church, I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

OFFERING

5:00 p.m. "Bring A Torch, Jeanette Isabella"

10:30 p.m. "From Shepherding of Stars"

David von Kampen

*From shepherding of stars that gaze toward heavenly fields of light,
I come with tidings to amaze you watchers in the night.*

*Your Shepherd-King from starlit hall bends down to weary lands,
Lies mangled low in cattle stall. Go touch his infant hands.*

*This night your King brings from afar the virgin's lullaby,
The wise men's faith, a guiding star, and love from God most High.*

*He shepherds from the thistled place, the flocks by thickets torn;
His pierced hands heal all your race sore wounded by the thorn.*

*Embrace the Christ-child and with songs bind up the hearts of men.
To Shepherd Healer King let throngs sing glorias again.*

Please stand

CHRISTMAS PRAYER

Pastor: Lord Jesus, our Savior, as we stand in spirit at Your lowly manger,

People: **we are amazed and full of wonder as we think of that miracle which was revealed in a stable.**

Pastor: We pray that You would come to our homes this Christmastide,

People: **and bring the tidings of great joy to all people.**

Pastor: In Jesus, You have given us a gift whose worth is beyond all telling. Help us in the busyness of this holiday season to not overlook or pass Him by.

People: **Help us to pause before His manger and discover true peace, hope and joy through beholding Your Son as Christ our Lord.**

Pastor: Let Your promise of peace, hope and joy especially fill the hearts of the sick, the aged, the troubled, the dying. Assure them that their Savior cares for them and loves them.

People: **Let all people find joy in worshipping their new-born Savior and King! Give them strength to proclaim, "Glory to God in the highest!"**

Pastor: Lord God, we pray that You would fill the hearts of all of us with a burning zeal to spread the glorious news of the Christmas gospel.

People: **We are grateful for our Savior – for His love and for His rich forgiveness and gift of salvation and we find joy in praying in His name. Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

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.

✠ SACRAMENT ✠

In the Lord's Supper we receive Christ's body and blood in and with the bread and wine. The two great blessings of the Lord's Supper are the forgiveness of sins and strength to live an improved Christian life. In response to the Lord's command we are to examine ourselves privately prior to partaking of the Sacrament. There are three basic questions on which we should examine ourselves, all of which we should be able to answer in the affirmative if we are to partake of the Sacrament worthily: 1) Am I truly sorry for my sins? 2) Do I believe Jesus Christ is my Savior? 3) Do I promise with God's help to live a Christian life? If you agree with the above statement, we invite you to the Sacrament.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Pastor: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: Take, eat; this is my body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of me.

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: Drink of it, all of you; this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

PEACE OF THE LORD

Pastor: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

People: And also with you.

A "continuous communion table" will be the method of distribution this day. Communicants will come forward down the center aisle at the direction of the usher. You will receive the wafer from the pastor at the center and then proceed to the right or left (depending on which side of the church you are sitting) to receive the wine. You will then return to your pew. As is our custom, communion will be brought to people in the pews who have difficulty walking to the chancel. If you wish to take communion in the pew, please raise your hand when the communion assistant comes down the aisle. Also young children will receive a word of blessing.

DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

361 O Little Town of Bethlehem

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| <p>1 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.</p> | <p>2 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!</p> |
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3 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.

4 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 Immanuel!

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366 It Came Upon the Midnight Clear

1 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, goodwill to all,
From heav'n's all-gracious king."
The world in solemn stillness lay
To hear the angels sing.

2 Still through the cloven skies they come
With peaceful wings unfurled,
And still their heav'nly music floats
O'er all the weary world.
Above its sad and lowly plains
They bend on hov'ring wing,
And ever o'er its babel sounds
The blessèd angels sing.

- 3 All you, beneath your heavy load,
 By care and guilt bent low,
Who toil along a dreary way
With painful steps and slow:
 Look up, for golden is the hour,
 Come swiftly on the wing,
The Prince was born to bring you peace;
Of Him the angels sing.
- 4 For lo, the days have come to pass
 By prophets seen of old,
 When down into the circling years
 Came Christ as was foretold.
 His word of peace shall to the earth
 God's ancient promise bring,
 And all who take this gift will hear
 The song the angels sing.

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386 Now Sing We, Now Rejoice

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| <p>1 Now sing we, now rejoice,
 Now raise to heav'n our voice;
 He from whom joy streameth
 Poor in a manger lies;
 Not so brightly beameth
 The sun in yonder skies.
 Thou my Savior art!
 Thou my Savior art!</p> | <p>2 Come from on high to me;
 I cannot rise to Thee.
 Cheer my wearied spirit,
 O pure and holy Child;
 Through Thy grace and merit,
 Blest Jesus, Lord most mild,
 Draw me unto Thee!
 Draw me unto Thee!</p> |
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3 Now through His Son doth shine
The Father's grace divine.
Death was reigning o'er us
Through sin and vanity
Till He opened for us
A bright eternity.
May we praise Him there!
May we praise Him there!

4 Oh, where shall joy be found?
Where but on heav'nly ground?
Where the angels singing
With all His saints unite,
Sweetest praises bringing
In heav'nly joy and light.
Oh, that we were there!
Oh, that we were there!

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375 Come, Your Hearts and Voices Raising

- 1 Come, your hearts and voices raising,
Christ the Lord with gladness praising;
Loudly sing His love amazing,
Worthy folk of Christendom.
- 2 Christ, from heav'n to us descending
And in love our race befriending;
In our need His help extending,
Saved us from the wily foe.
- 3 Jacob's star in all its splendor
Beams with comfort sweet and tender,
Forcing Satan to surrender,
Breaking all the pow'rs of hell.
- 4 From the bondage that oppressed us,
From sin's fetters that possessed us,
From the grief that sore distressed us,
We, the captives, now are free.

5 Oh, the joy beyond expressing
When by faith we grasp this blessing,
And to You we come confessing
That Your love has set us free.

6 Gracious Child, we pray, O hear us,
From Your lowly manger cheer us,
Gently lead us and be near us
Till we join Your choir above.

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PRAYER

Pastor: May this wonderful gift of Your sacrament, O Lord, strengthen our faith in Your saving grace, that we might live in Christ's peace, that we might confidently speak of Your love to the world, in the name of Him who saved us through the sacrifice of His body and blood, Jesus Christ.

People: Amen.

CANDLE LIGHTING

The pastor will give light from his candle to the ushers. They will in turn give light to the worshiper nearest the aisle, who will pass it on to the others in that pew. Please keep the lit candle upright to avoid dripping wax.

5:00 p.m. "Infant Holy, Infant Lowly"

*Before the marvel of this night, adoring, fold your wings and bow,
Then tear the sky apart with light, and with your news the world endow.
Proclaim the birth of Christ and peace, that fear and death and sorrow cease:
Sing peace, sing peace, sing gift of peace, sing peace, sing gift of peace!*

*Awake the sleeping world with song, this is the day the Lord has made.
Assemble here, celestial throng, in royal splendor come arrayed.
Give earth a glimpse of heav'nly bliss, a teasing taste of what they miss:
Sing bliss, sing bliss, sing endless bliss, sing bliss, sing endless bliss!*

*The love that we have always known, our constant joy and endless light,
Now to the loveless world be shown, now break upon its deathly night.
Into one song compress the love that rules our universe above:
Sing love, sing love, sing God is love, sing love, sing God is love!*

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

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

Pastor: Those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined.

People: We have seen His glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father.

Pastor: For to us a child is born, to us a son is given.

People: In Him was life, and that life was the light of men.

Pastor: O God, You make this most holy night to shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that as we have known the mysteries of that Light on earth, we may also come to the fullness of His joys in heaven; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

Pastor: The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.
People: Amen.

CLOSING CAROL

363 Silent Night, Holy Night

- 1 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.
- 2 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!
- 3 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.

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POST-SERVICE MUSIC

Variations on "Silent Night"

Serving at Chapel

Preacher & Liturgist:	Theodore Laesch
Choirs:	5:00 p.m. Children's Bell Choir 10:30 p.m. Choral Singers
Organist & Director:	Ryan Meyer
Accompanist:	Anne Meyer
Handbell Director:	Jen Schmidt
Instrumentalists:	Lynda Christian, oboe Craig Schlichtmann, clarinet Meagan Purcell, violin Drake Nagle, violin Nate Laesch, trumpet

Worship Schedule

Christmas Day Worship – Sunday, December 25, 10:00 a.m.
New Year's Eve Worship - Saturday, December 31, 5:00 p.m.

Regular Weekend Worship Services:
Saturday, 5:00 p.m. – Sunday, 8:30 & 11:00 a.m.