

Christmas Eve
CANDLELIGHT SERVICE



ORDER FOR WORSHIP OF THE LIVING GOD

Christmas Eve

December 24, 2024

* Please stand as you are able

Congregational responses are in **bold**

GATHERING OF GOD'S PEOPLE

WORDS OF WELCOME

Sharon Thomas

Welcome everyone to our Christmas Eve service, a night filled with joy, hope, and love as we gather to celebrate the birth of our Savior. May this time of worship bring us closer to God and to one another. If you're visiting with us, we're especially glad you're here. Let us quiet our hearts as we prepare to receive the message of Christ's birth.

PRELUDE

"It Came Upon the Midnight Clear"

arr. by Dan Forrest Jr.

Keyboardist: Cindy Dwyer

CALL TO WORSHIP

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

P: Those who lived in a land of deep darkness — on them light has shined.

L: For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given.

**P: And his name shall be called "Wonderful Counselor", "Mighty God",
"Everlasting Father", "Prince of Peace".**

* HYMN

"O Come, All Ye Faithful"

#133 vs. 1, 3, 4

PRAYER

(unison)

Eternal God, this holy night is brilliant with the radiance of your One True Light. May that light illumine our hearts and shine in our words and deeds.

May the hope, the peace, the joy, and the love represented by the Messiah's birth in Bethlehem, fill our lives and become part of all we think and say and do.
May we share the divine life of your Son, Jesus Christ, even as he humbled himself to share our humanity. Amen.

FIRST LESSON: His Birth Is Foretold Isaiah 9:6-7
Pew Bible p. 593

SPECIAL MUSIC: "In the Bleak Midwinter" arr. Donald Moore
BPC Choir | Flutist: Susan Gargano | Keyboardist: Cindy Dwyer

LIGHTING OF THE PROPHET'S CANDLE

Litany of Hope

The Alino Family

L: O God, we light the first candle on the advent wreath.

P: The First Advent Candle is lit.

L: This evening, we call out to God as we pray together:

All: Mighty God, Creator of the world, break through all that keeps us from you. We ask for your mercy and reform us in your image.

* HYMN: "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 appeared and the soul felt its worth.
A thrill of hope- the weary world 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!

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, Oh, praise His name forever!
Noel, Noel, O night, O night divine
Noel, Noel, O night, O night divine
Noel, Noel, O night, O night divine

SECOND LESSON:

Jesus Is Born

Luke 2:1-7

Ray Nalewicki
Pew Bible p. 889

SPECIAL MUSIC:

“Breath of Heaven” (Mary's Song)
BPC Choir | Keyboardist: Cindy Dwyer

arr. Lloyd Larson

LIGHTING OF THE BETHLEHEM CANDLE

Litany of Peace
The Brino Family

L: O God, we light the second candle of the Advent wreath.

P: The Second Advent Candle is lit.

L: This season, we seek such a God, as we pray together:

*All: Saving God, look upon your world and heal your land and your people.
Prepare us to be changed. This Advent, teach us to be tender and just, as
you are. Amen.*

* HYMN

“O Little Town of Bethlehem”

#121 vs. 1 & 4

THIRD LESSON:

Shepherds Hear the Good News!

Luke 2:8-14

Ray Nalewicki
Pew Bible p. 889

SPECIAL MUSIC:

"Run, Shepherds!"

arr. Victor C. Johnson

BPC Choir | Keyboardist: Cindy Dwyer

LIGHTING OF THE ANGELS CANDLE

Litany of Joy

The Gibis Family

L: We light the third candle of Advent.

P: The Third Advent Candle is lit.

L: This evening, we ask for God's mercy and a joyful new beginning as we pray together:

All: Merciful God, we give thanks that you send messengers like John, to call us to greater faith. We ask that in these days, we prepare for you in prayer and acts of holy compassion. Forgive us and lead us to your light. Amen.

* HYMN:

"Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"

#119 vs 1 & 3

PRAYER OF THE PEOPLE

L: Let us pray. Gracious and loving God, on this sacred night, we are reminded of your immense love, a love so great that you sent your Son to be with us. As we gather in joy and awe at the birth of Christ, we ask for your peace to fill our hearts and our world. Help us to be instruments of your love and light in a world that longs for hope and healing.

We lift up our prayers for those who are in need tonight: the lonely, the grieving, the sick, and the suffering. May your presence be a comfort, and may your light be a guide in the darkness.

Lord, as we continue to celebrate the miracle of Christmas, fill our hearts with gratitude and wonder. We ask this in the name of your Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Now, in the quiet of this holy night, we bring before you our own personal prayers and reflections.

[Moment for silent prayer]

L: Lord, in your mercy,

P: Hear our prayers. Amen.

* HYMN

“Away in a Manger”

#115 vs. 1 & 3

THE CHRISTMAS OFFERING

Sharon Thomas

L: On this holy night, we remember the greatest gift ever given—God’s gift of Jesus Christ, who came into the world to bring hope, peace, joy, and love.

As we celebrate his birth, we have the opportunity to respond with our own gifts. Let us give with grateful hearts, sharing from the abundance we have received, so that others may experience God’s love through the ministries of this church and beyond.

Let us now receive the Christmas offering.

OFFERTORY:

“Still, Still, Still”

arr. Chip Davis

Flutist: Susan Gargano | Keyboardist: Cindy Dwyer

FOURTH LESSON:

The Shepherds Find the Baby

Luke 2:15-20

Sharon Thomas

Pew Bible p. 889

SPECIAL MUSIC:

"African Noel"

arr. Victor C. Johnson

BPC Choir | Keyboardist: Cindy Dwyer

LIGHTING OF THE SHEPHERDS CANDLE

Litany of Love

The Towlen Family

L: O God, we light the fourth candle of Advent.

P: The Fourth Advent Candle is lit.

L: We hear your angel Gabriel and witness the faith of Mary. Fill us with your grace and light as we pray together:

All: We recall the times we have struggled but said yes. We know times when God has filled us and our world with blessings.

* HYMN

"Angels We Have Heard on High"

#113

THE LIGHT HAS COME: John 1:1-5 and 1 John 1:5

Christy Tompkins

Pew Bible p. 922 /

1065

L: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

P: He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.

L: In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind.

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

L: This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all.

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

Litany of Light

The Thomas Family

L: Now, as we light the Christ candle, the center of our Advent wreath. This candle represents Jesus Christ, the Light of the World, who has come to dwell among us.

P: The Christ Candle is lit.

L: On this holy night, we rejoice that Christ's light has come into the world, shining in the darkness, and bringing hope, peace, joy, and love to all people.

ALL: We give thanks for the light of Christ, shining in our lives and in our world. May this light guide us, transform us, and lead us in the way of love.

SHARING THE LIGHT THAT HAS COME

Christy Tompkins

L: As we share in the lighting of our candles, let us reflect upon the gift of the Light that has come to us and to all people through the birth of Christ. May this light remind us of the call to bring hope, peace, joy, and love to a world in need.

[Silent Reflection as We Share Christ's Light]

SPECIAL MUSIC:

"All Is Well"

by Michael W. Smith

Vocalists: Sharon Thomas & Edmond Murphy

L: May we carry this light into the world, sharing it with everyone we meet.

* HYMN:

"Silent Night"

#122

BENEDICTION

Christy Tompkins

L: May the peace of the Christ child fill your hearts, the love of God sustain

you, and the joy of the Holy Spirit guide you this Christmas season and always. Go in peace and share the light of Christ with all you meet.

P: Amen.

RECESSIONAL HYMN:

"Joy to the World!"

#134 vs. 1 & 4

**DECORATIONS FOR OUR SERVICES ARE GIVEN
BY THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS AND FRIENDS
OF OUR CONGREGATION...**

The Aldrich Family

in memory of our loved ones

Paulette & Bob Auriemma and Family

in memory of our beautiful mothers,

Irene Auriemma, Anita Marinelli, and Eileen Vallarelli

Mary & Bill Burdge and Nancy and John

in memory of Lewis & Ruth Cook

The Ellis Family

in loving memory of our loved ones

Lori Evans

*in memory of my parents, Rev. Walter & Martha Evans,
my sister-in-law, Barbara Evans
and my Aunts, Millie & Dot*

The Fortier Family

*in memory of
Oreste Costa, Margaret Costa and Bob Fortier*

Susan Gargano

in memory of Alice & Fred Schwankert

Natalie J. Hajek

in memory and honor of Agnes & Rudolph Hajek

Carol & Rich Irwin

*in memory of our mothers,
Marion Irwin and Violet Korte*

JoAnne Habenicht

in memory of Lois & George Erickson and Gert & Tom Habenicht

Joan Horan

*in memory of Gary Horan
and Arthur & Muriel Best
You are always in our hearts*

Joe & Debbie Johnson

*in memory of our parents
and to the Glory of God*

Beverly Jones

*in memory of my husband Bob, and the Jones family
and my parents, Walter & Marian Reichert, and the Reichert family*

Jimmy Kathenes

in memory of Larry Kathenes

The Kathenes Family

*in memory of Hank & Gloria Kathenes
and Florence Mallinson*

The Law Family

*in memory of our beloved parents,
Patricia Bertrand and Jewell & Dorothy Law*

Cheryl McCue

in memory of my husband, James McCue

Ginger Oppenheimer

*in memory of Harry Oppenheimer, Cathy Oppenheimer
and
in honor of Janet Moore*

The Paschedag and Schweis Families

in loving memory of Henry Paschedag

Jean Reilly

in loving memory of Doug, Tim & Erin Reilly and loved ones

Fred & Wendy Schweis

in loving memory of Mandy Sue

Jane Steinhauser

in memory of our loved ones

Bob & Sue Towlen

in memory of our parents,

Bob & Gerry White and Ellsworth & Daisy Towlen