

WORSHIP for TUESDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2024
4:00 p.m.

Pacific Presbyterian Church and First Presbyterian Church of Union, Missouri

CHRISTMAS EVE

GATHERING

PRELUDE

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Behold, the night of nights.

All: The air trembles with excitement.

One: the Lord is in our midst.

All: Let us worship God in eager anticipation.

***OPENING HYMN** “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” GtG 88 (*Verses 1, 6, & 7*)

**1. O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear.**

**Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel.**

**6. O come, thou Dayspring, come and cheer
our spirits by thine advent here;
disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
and death's dark shadows put to flight.**

**Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel.**

**7. O come, Desire of nations, bind
all peoples in one heart and mind;
bid envy, strife, and discord cease;
fill the whole world with heaven's peace.**

**Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel.**

(next page...)

Words: Latin prose, 7cent.; trans. Composite. *Public Domain*
Tune: VENI EMMANUEL, Plainsong; adapt. Thomas Helmore, 1852; arr. John Weaver, 1988
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THE WORD

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH: The Christ Candle

One: We sing of hope and joy and peace and love.

All: **We sing expectantly at Christmas.**

One: But what is the reason for our singing?

All: **The reason for our singing is the news of the birth in Bethlehem.**

One: A birth like any other birth, yet like no other birth. For this is he of whom it was written,

"For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given;
and the government will be upon his shoulder,
and his name will be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."

(Isaiah 9:6)

All: **And so we light the Christ candle to remind us of the coming of the light of the world in the child born in Bethlehem.**

Sing: "What Child Is This GtG 145 (*Verse 1*)

**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!**

Words: William Chatterton Dix, 1871
Music: GREENSLEEVES, English ballad, 16th cent.; arr.
Christmas Carols New and Old, 1871
Public Domain

SCRIPTURE READINGS Matthew 1:18-25
Luke 2:1-5

REFLECTION *"Joseph: The Face of Trust"* by Gloria Eckman

***HYMN** "Joseph Dearest, Joseph Mine" StF 2099 (*Verses 1-2*)

1. **Joseph dearest, Joseph mine,
help me cradle the child divine;
God reward thee and all that's thine
in paradise,
so prays the mother Mary.**

Refrain:

**He came among us at Christmastime,
at Christmas time, in Bethlehem;
let us bring him from far and wide
Love's diadem:
Jesus, Jesus,
lo, he comes, and loves, and saves, and frees us!**

2. **Gladly, dear one, lady mine,
help I cradle this child of thine;
God's own light on us both shall shine
in paradise,
as prays the mother Mary.**

(Refrain)

Words: Trad. German

Music: JOSEPH LIEBER, JOSEPH MEIN, Trad. German

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SCRIPTURE READINGS Luke 1:26-38

Luke 2:15-19

REFLECTION *"Mary: The Face of Expectation"* by Deborah Block

***HYMN** "Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming" GtG 129 (*Verses 1-2*)

1. **Lo, how a rose e'er blooming
from tender stem hath sprung,
of Jesse's lineage coming,
by faithful prophets sung.
It came, a floweret bright,
amid the cold of winter,
when half spent was the night.**

(continued...)

**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 for us a Savior,
when half spent was the night.**

Words: German carol; stanzas 1, 2 trans. Theodore Baker, 1894, alt.
Music: ES IST EIN' ROS', *Alte Catholische Geistliche Kirchengesang*,
1599; arr. Michael Praetorius, 1609
Public Domain

SCRIPTURE READINGS Matthew 1:20-21
Luke 1:26-28,30
Luke 2:10-11

REFLECTION *"Angels: The Faces of Joy"* by Charlotte Johnstone

***HYMN** "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" GtG 119

- 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 th'angelic host proclaim,
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
Hark! The herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn king!"**

- 2. Christ, by highest heaven adored,
Christ, the everlasting Lord,
late in time behold him come,
offspring of the virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the God-head see;
hail th'incarnate deity,
pleased in flesh with us to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel.
Hark! The herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn king!"**

(continued...)

3. Hail the heav'n-born Prince of Peace!

**Hail the sun of righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
risen with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by,
born that we no more may die,
born to raise us from the earth,
born to give us second birth.
Hark! The herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn king!"**

Words: Charles Wesley, 1739, alt.

Music: MENDELSSOHN, Felix Mendelssohn, 1840; arr.

William Hayman Cummings, 1855

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SCRIPTURE READING Luke 2:8-20

REFLECTION *"Shepherds: The Faces of Praise"* by Jeanne Clear

***HYMN** "While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks" GtG 118 (*Verses 1, 2, & 6*)

**1. While shepherds watched their flocks by night,
all seated on the ground,
the angel of the Lord came down,
and glory shone around,
and glory shone around.**

**2. "Fear not," said he, for mighty dread
had seized their troubled mind:
"Glad tidings of great joy I bring
to you and humankind,
to you and humankind.**

**6. "All glory be to God on high,
and to the earth be peace;
good will to all from highest heaven
begin and never cease,
begin and never cease!"**

Words: Nahum Tate, 1700, alt.

Music: CHRISTMAS, George Frederick Handel, 1728; arr.

Lowell Mason, 1821

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SCRIPTURE READING Luke 2:6-7

REFLECTION "*Christmas Eve*" by David W. Johnson

***HYMN** "Gentle Mary Laid Her Child" GtG 146

1. **Gentle Mary laid her child
lowly in a manger;
there he lay, the undefiled,
to the world a stranger.
Such a babe in such a place,
can he be the Savior?
Ask the saved of all the race
who have found his favor.**

2. **Angels sang about his birth;
wise men sought and found him;
heaven's star shone brightly forth,
glory all around him.
Shepherds saw the wondrous sight,
heard the angels singing;
all the plains were lit that night;
all the hills were ringing.**

3. **Gentle Mary laid her child
lowly in a manger;
he is still the undefiled,
but no more a stranger.
Son of God, of humble birth,
beautiful the story;
praise his name in all the earth;
hail the King of glory!**

Words: Joseph Simpson Cook, 1919; rev. 1930
Music: TEMPUS ADEST FLORIDUM, *Piae Cantiones*, 1582;
arr. Ernest C. MacMillan, 1930
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THE EUCHARIST

SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

Invitation to the Lord's Table

Prayer of Thanksgiving

One: The Lord be with you.
All: **And also with you.**
One: Lift up your hearts.
All: **We lift them to the Lord.**
One: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
All: **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

(The prayer continues...)

The Lord's Prayer (Contemporary)

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and forever. Amen.**

Breaking of the Bread

Communion of the People

(You are invited to go ahead and partake of each of the elements as you are served, remembering how Christ comes to you.)

Prayer

SENDING

***CLOSING HYMN** “Silent Night, Holy Night” GtG 122
(with candlelighting)

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,
heavenly 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.

4. **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.

Words: Joseph Mohr, 1816; stanzas 1-3, English trans. John Freeman Young,
1863; stanza 4, English trans. Jane Montgomery Campbell, 1863, alt.
Music: STILLE NACHT, Franz Xaver Gruber, 1818
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***CHARGE AND BLESSING**

One: ...And let the gathered people of God say...
All: ...Amen.

***RESPONSE** from “What Child Is This” GtG 145

**This, this is Christ the King,
whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
haste, haste to bring him laud,
the babe, the son of Mary!**

POSTLUDE

Tonight’s reflections on Joseph, Mary, Angels, and Shepherds are from "Faces Around the Manger" - expressions of the meaning of Advent by members of Immanuel Presbyterian Church, Milwaukee, Wisconsin; the 1997 Presbyterians Today Advent calendar. Used by permission.

The reflection “Christmas Eve” is by Rev. David W. Johnson, found in the December 21, 1987 issue of Monday Morning (Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)). Used by permission.

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