

Christmas Eve
December 24, 2021
2:00 PM

DO NOT BE AFRAID I BRING YOU GOOD NEWS

On the cover:
Swanson, John
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GATHERING

(Silence during the Prelude is requested in preparation for worship.)

PRELUDE

Bohemian Carol/arr. Wilbur Held
Shepherds

DIVINUM MYSTERIUM/arr. Held
Of the Father's Love Begotten

FOREST GREEN/arr. Held
O Little Town of Bethlehem

English Carol/arr. Held
God Rest You Merry

German Carol/arr. Marcel Dupré
In dulci jubilo

English Carol/arr. Robert Buckley Farlee
Once in Royal David's City

Call to Worship

This is a time we
praise God and let
God know we are
glad to be together.

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Let us worship God!

(Those who are able may stand.)

Joy to the World, the Lord is come.

Let earth receive her king!

Let every heart prepare him room

And heaven and nature sing!

And heaven and nature sing!

And heaven and nature sing!

*PRAYER OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

**Holy child of Bethlehem, you are the hope of the world,
the song of the angels, the treasure of our hearts
and the glory of God among us.**

**Call us to worship you in places
where your love is born anew.**

**On this holy night draw us into the mystery of your love.
Send us out to serve you, sharing good news of great joy
and praising God through you in the unity of the Holy
Spirit. Amen.**

**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!**

**Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, Born this happy morning,
Jesus, to Thee be all glory given;
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!**

**Sing, choirs of angels, Sing in exultation!
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven 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!**

From its Roman Catholic origins, this 18th-century hymn has spread to worldwide use by many denominations in both Latin and vernacular versions. Once popular with a wide range of hymn texts, this tune is now firmly associated with this Christmas text from which it is named. TEXT and MUSIC: John Francis Wade, c. 1743.

CALL TO CONFESSION

Loving God, you sent your love to us in the birth of your son.
**Let us show our love by confessing our sins to God
and one another.**

Call to and Prayer of Confession

The minister invites us to say, "I'm sorry, God."

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

We will try to follow God and do the right thing. But when we don't, we ask God to forgive us. We try to help people in God's world. But when we don't do enough, we can tell God we are sorry. This is what "confession" means.

**God of grace,
You brought your light into the world
through Jesus Christ.
We know that we often forget that light
in the excitement of this time; forgive us Lord.
Remind us of your amazing love,
and help us to share that love
at home and in the world. Amen.**

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Assurance of Pardon

(The liturgist pours water, which reminds us of our baptism.)

God says, "I forgive you and I love you."

Behold, I bring good news of a great joy;
for to you is born in the city of David,
a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

Friends, believe the good news of the gospel,
in Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

THE WORD IN SCRIPTURE AND SONG

THE PROPHECY

SCRIPTURE

Hear the Word of God! **Our ears are open.**

Isaiah 9:2, 6-7 (*Old Testament, page 638 in your pew Bible*)

THE VERY FIRST CHRISTMAS

THE SETTING

*Hark! The Herald
Angels Sing*

***HYMN**

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

MENDELSSOHN

Brought together in the mid-19th century, the text and tune of this familiar carol began in quite different forms. The text had ten stanzas and began, "Hark, how all the welkin rings." The tune was created for a festival celebrating Gutenberg's introduction of moveable type. TEXT: Charles Wesley, 1739; MUSIC: Felix Mendelssohn, 1840.

**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!"
Hark! The herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn king!"**

**Hail the heaven-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!"**

The Birth of Jesus

We tell this story from Luke and Matthew so we remember that Jesus came as a child.

THE BIRTH OF JESUS

Luke 2:1-7 (*New Testament, page 58 in your pew Bible*)

THE ANGELS VISIT THE SHEPHERDS

Luke 2:8-14 (*New Testament, page 58 in your pew Bible*)

***HYMN**

Angels We Have Heard on High

GLORIA

God is with us
always. This story
reminds us of God's
BIG love.

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 heavenly 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 newborn King.
Gloria in excelsis Deo!
Gloria in excelsis Deo!

THE SHEPHERDS COME TO THE MANGER

Luke 2:15-20 (New Testament, page 58 in your pew Bible)

***HYMN**

IN DULCI JUBILO

Good Christian Friends, Rejoice

Good Christian friends, rejoice
with heart and soul and voice;
give ye heed to what we say:
Jesus Christ is born today;
ox and ass before him bow,
and he is in the manger now.
Christ is born today!
Christ is born today!

Good Christian friends, rejoice
with heart and soul and voice;
now ye hear of endless bliss:
Jesus Christ was born for this!
He has opened heaven's door,
and we are blest forevermore.
Christ was born for this!
Christ was born for this!

Carols using two
languages, like this
one dating from at
least the 14th-
century, belong to a
special group called
"macaronic," the
original languages
here being German
and Latin. Though the
present version is
only in English, it is
sung to the traditional
German folk melody.
TEXT: Medieval Latin;
MUSIC: German folk
melody, 14th century.

**Good Christian friends, rejoice
with heart and soul and voice;
now ye need not fear the grave:
Jesus Christ was born to save!
Calls you one and calls you all
to gain the everlasting hall.
Christ was born to save!
Christ was born to save!**

THE KINGS PRESENT THEIR GIFTS TO JESUS

Matthew 2:1-2, 9b-11

(New Testament, page 2 in your pew Bible)

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God!**

*We Three Kings of
Orient Are*

Although Christians had begun by the 2nd century to speak of these visitors from eastern countries (Matthew 2:1-12) as "kings," perhaps because of passages like Psalm 72:10 and Isaiah 60:3, it is more accurate to think of them as magi or astrologers, the scholars of their day.
TEXT and MUSIC:
John Henry Hopkins, Jr., 1857.

***HYMN**

KINGS OF ORIENT

We Three Kings of Orient Are

**We three kings of Orient are;
bearing gifts we traverse afar,
field and fountain, moor and mountain,
following yonder star.**

***O star of wonder, star of night,
star with royal beauty bright,
westward leading, still proceeding,
guide us to thy perfect light!***

**Born a King on Bethlehem's plain,
gold I bring to crown him again,
King forever, ceasing never over us all to reign.
*O star of wonder . . .***

THANKSGIVING

OFFERING

*(The children are invited to come forward as directed by the ushers,
and put their gifts of food or money with the gifts from the wise men.)*

Offering

Our offering today
goes to Second
Harvest Food Bank.

Offertory

VOM HIMMEL HOCH/arr. Held
From Heaven Above to Earth I Come

IN DULCI JUBILO/arr. Held
Good Christian Friends, Rejoice

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

*THE LORD'S PRAYER

(Prayed in unison, see page 35 of the hymnal for text)

PROCESSION OF LIGHT

Silent Night, Holy Night

STILLE NACHT

**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.**

**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.**

SENDING

*HYMN

Joy to the World!

ANTIOCH

**Joy to the world! the Lord is come:
Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare Him room,
And heaven and nature sing,
And heaven and nature sing,
And heaven and heaven and nature sing.**

Procession of Light

Let your light shine in the world with a smile, a hug, a kind word.

Silent Night, Holy Night

The tradition that this carol's tune was created for guitar accompaniment at its first singing on Christmas Eve 1818 seems reliable, though a recent find shows that the text was about two years old. But there is no question that this is now a favorite Christmas carol worldwide. TEXT: Joseph Mohr, 1816; MUSIC: Franz Xaver Gruber, 1818.

Joy to the World

While Isaac Watts did not write this text strictly for Christmas use, he did purposely cast his paraphrase of Psalm 98:4-9 in Christian terms, titling it "The Messiah's coming and kingdom." So "the Lord" here is Jesus Christ, rather than the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. TEXT: Isaac Watts, 1719; MUSIC: George Frederick Handel, 1742.

**He rules the world with truth and grace,
And makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness,
And wonders of His love,
And wonders of His love,
And wonders, wonders of His love.**

The *Benediction* is a blessing to remind us that God loves us and that we are to go out into the world and share with our friends and family about God.

***BENEDICTION**

POSTLUDE Joy to the World ANTIOCH/arr.Wilbur Held

**(Those who are able may stand.)*

SERVICE NOTES

WORSHIP LEADERS: Sophie Maness, Executive Director of Family Ministries; the fifth and sixth graders leading through Word and action in our worship service today are Lizzie Griffin, Carter Billings, Stuart Perry, Andrew Wyckoff, Louisa Cummins, Molly Warner, Madelyn Michael, McLean Baker, Dylan Thomas. They will show us the way to the Christ child.

USHERS: Robert Thompson, Charles Lee, Avery Michael.

MUSICIANS: John W. Semingson, Director of Music Ministries and Organist.

THE CHRISTMAS EVE OFFERING this afternoon will be cans of food for Second Harvest Food Bank, which we invite children to bring to the manger during the Offertory. Monetary gifts may be brought as well, and placed in the basket by the manger or in the offering plate. These monies, too, will be given to Second Harvest.

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