

CHRISTMAS EVE

Northampton Presbyterian Church

*Fourth Sunday in Advent
Christmas Eve Candlelight Service*

December 24, 2023

4:00 PM

PRELUDE *(Corinne Kauermann, Kevin Kauermann & Mike Pugh)*

The Wexford Carol

WELCOME

OPENING SOLO

Break Forth, O Beauteous Heavenly Light

ERMUNTRE DICH

THE BIDDING PRAYER



HYMN

O Come, All Ye Faithful

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!

ADESTE FIDELIS

A decorative graphic in the top right corner consisting of several white stars of varying sizes hanging from thin white vertical lines against a light beige background.

**True God from true God, Light from light eternal,
Born of a virgin, a mortal he comes;
Very God, 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 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!



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!



LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH: THE CANDLE OF LOVE AND THE CHRIST CANDLE

(Jes Stehr & Andy Chen)

SINGERS: *Creator of the stars of night,
Your people's everlasting light,
O Christ, Redeemer of us all,
We pray you hear us when we call.*

(HYMN #84: Creator of the Stars of Night)

READER 1: In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth, and set lights in the sky — sun and moon and stars. By these stars, our ancestors charted their journeys. By these stars, they knew God was with them. In the beginning, too, was the Word. And the Word, too, has come down from heaven to earth. By the Word made flesh, Christ our Savior, we know that God is with us.

READER 2: Tonight we light five candles to bring the fire of the stars down from heaven to earth, to nestle among the greens.

We name this candle Hope. (Light the first candle.)

We name this candle Peace. (Light the second candle.)

We name this candle Joy. (Light the third candle.)

We name this candle Love. (Light the fourth candle.)

We name this candle Christ. (Light the center candle.)

ALL: Our lives are a journey, and we do not always know the way. But we chart our path by the star of Christ. Even when faith burns low and its promises seem too good to be true, we set our face steadily towards the light.

READER 1: Listen to ancient words come true anew this night: “The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined. For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace,” (Isaiah 9:2, 6).

READER 2: Lord Jesus, as we search for signs of Christ's presence this week, help us to become the signs of Christ's presence for which others are searching. As these candles are but a glimpse of the light of the heavens, help us to be a glimpse of heaven on earth. Help us to shine like stars in the world. Amen.

FIRST READING

Isaiah 9:2-7

HYMN

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

**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.**



ANTIOCH

**O come, thou Wisdom from on high,
Who orderest all things mightily:
To us the path of knowledge show;
And teach us in her ways to go.**

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



**O come, thou Root of Jesse,
Free thine own from Satan's tyranny;
From depths of hell thy people save
And give them victory o'er the grave.**

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



**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.**



SECOND READING

Micah 5:2 –5a



HYMN

Love Has Come

**Love has come: a light in the darkness!
Love shines forth in the Bethlehem skies.
See, all heaven has come to proclaim it;
Hear how their song of joy arises:
Love! Love! Born unto you, a Savior!
Love! Love! Glory to God on high.**

BRING A TORCH

A decorative graphic in the top right corner consisting of several white stars of varying sizes hanging from thin white vertical lines, resembling a string of stars or a mobile.

**Love is born! Come, share in the wonder.
Love is God now asleep in the hay.
See the glow in the eyes of his mother;
What is the name her heart is saying?
Love! Love! Love is the name she whispers.
Love! Love! Jesus, Emmanuel.**



Love has come and never will leave us!
Love is life everlasting and free.
Love is Jesus within and among us.
Love is the peace our hearts are seeking.
Love! Love! Love is the gift of Christmas.
Love! Love! Praise to You, God on high!



CHRISTMAS IN ONE ACT

The Most Important Person at the Nativity

THIRD READING

Luke 1:26 –35, 38



HYMN *(Corinne Kauermann, violin):*

My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout

STAR OF THE COUNTY DOWN

**My soul cries out with a joyful shout
That the God of my heart is great,
And my spirit sings of the wondrous things
That you bring to the ones who wait.
You fixed your sight on your servant's plight,
And my weakness you did not spurn,
So from east to west shall my name be blest.
Could the world be about to turn?**



My heart shall sing of the day you bring.

Let the fires of your justice burn.

Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near

And the world is about to turn.



**Though I am small, my God, my all, you
Work great things in me,
And your mercy will last from the depths of the past
To the end of the age to be.
Your very name puts the proud to shame,
And to those who would for you yearn,
You will show your might, put the strong to flight,
For the world is about to turn.**



My heart shall sing of the day you bring.

Let the fires of your justice burn.

Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near

And the world is about to turn.



**From the halls of power to the fortress tower,
Not a stone will be left on stone.
Let the king beware for your justice tears
Every tyrant from his throne.
The hungry poor shall weep no more,
For the food they can never earn;
There are tables spread; every mouth be fed,
For the world is about to turn.**



My heart shall sing of the day you bring.

Let the fires of your justice burn.

Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near

And the world is about to turn.



**Though the nations rage from age to age,
We remember who holds us fast:
God's mercy must deliver us
From the conqueror's crushing grasp.
This saving word that our forebears heard
Is the promise which holds us bound,
Till the spear and rod can be crushed by God,
Who is turning the world around.**



My heart shall sing of the day you bring.

Let the fires of your justice burn.

Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near

And the world is about to turn.



FOURTH READING

Luke 2:1-14

CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

Proof?

Rev. Judith A. Dwyer



HYMN

The First Nowell

**The first Nowell the angel did say
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay,
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep,
On a cold winter's night that was so deep.**

**Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
Born is the King of Israel.**

THE FIRST NOWELL

A decorative graphic in the top right corner consisting of several white stars of varying sizes hanging from thin white vertical lines against a light beige background.

**They looked up and saw a star
Shining in the east beyond them far;
And to the earth it gave great light,
And so it continued both day and night.**

**Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
Born is the King of Israel.**



**This star drew nigh to the northwest;
O'er Bethlehem it took its rest,
And there it did both stop and stay,
Right over the place where Jesus lay.**

**Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
Born is the King of Israel.**



**Then let us all with one accord
Sing praises to our heavenly Lord,
That hath made heaven and earth of nought,
And with his blood our life hath bought.**

**Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
Born is the King of Israel.**



PRAYER FOR CHRISTMAS EVE

THE 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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

CALL FOR THE OFFERING

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OFFERTORY ANTHEM

Mary, Did You Know?

SPREADING THE LIGHT



Lowry and Greene

HYMN

Silent Night, Holy Night!

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.

STILLE NACHT

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**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.**



RESPONSIVE AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

The World Still Knows

ONE: The night is still dark and a procession of Herods still terrorizes the earth, killing the children to stay in power.

MANY: The world still knows its Herods, but it also still knows those who pack their dreams safely in their hearts and set off toward Bethlehem, faithful against all odds, undeterred by fatigue or rejection, to kneel to a child.

ONE: And the world still knows those persons wise enough to follow a star, those who do not consider themselves too intelligent, too powerful, too wealthy to kneel to a child.

MANY: And the world still knows those hearts so humble that they're ready to hear the word of a song and to leave what they have, to go to kneel to a child.

ONE: The night is still dark, but by the light of a star, even today we can still see to kneel to a child. Amen.

HYMN

Joy to the World

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.

ANTIOCH



**Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!
Let all their songs employ,
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.**



**No more let sins and sorrows grow,
Nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make his blessings flow
Far as the curse is found,
Far as the curse is found,
Far as, far as the curse is found.**



**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**



RESPONSIVE BENEDICTION

ONE: This Christmas I wish for you light to crumple up the darkness.

MANY: This Christmas I wish for you love to pull us closer to one another.

ONE: This Christmas I wish for you peace, the same the angels sang.

MANY: This Christmas I wish for you starlight to follow on your way home.

ONE: This Christmas I wish for you promise, to keep hope alive for you.

MANY: This Christmas I wish for you God, newly born and in the flesh.

ONE: This Christmas I wish for you Jesus Christ, born this night, light of the world!

POSTLUDE

A Christmas Prayer

arr. Getzke

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WORSHIP NOTES:

The **Bidding Prayer** was written by Eric Milner-White, the Dean of the chapel of King's College, Cambridge, in 1918 and adapted from a "Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols" composed in 1880 E. W. Benson, then Anglican Bishop of Truro, England.

The **Advent Candle Liturgy** is by Carol Holbrook Prickett and posted for free use by The Presbyterian Outlook. Rev. Carol Holbrook Prickett joyfully serves the people of Crescent Springs Presbyterian Church in Northern Kentucky and creates fresh resources for worship at deepwellworship.com.

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The **Prayer for Christmas Eve** is attributed to Robert Louis Stevenson

The **Affirmation** is by Ann Weems from her volume, *Kneeling in Bethlehem* (p. 42). Presbyterian Publishing Corporation. Kindle Edition.

The **Benediction** is by Roddy Hamilton, and posted on Listening to the Stones.
<http://newkilpatrickblog.typepad.com/nk-blogging/mucky-paws>

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