

CHRISTMAS EVE

Northampton Presbyterian Church

Family Candlelight Service

December 24, 2021

7:00 PM

PRELUDE

WELCOME

RESPONSIVE CALL TO WORSHIP

ONE: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him. In him was life, and the life was the light of all people.

ALL: The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

ONE: The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

ALL: And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

Laura, Kyle & Rowan Wilson

READER 1: Rejoice, people of God! The light has come into the world. God of new life, now we light the candle of your nativity!

READER 2: With the company of heaven and with sounds of great joy, you come to us. This is the time of light and great joy. God has been born among us!

READER 1: Isaiah proclaimed a time when those who walked in the shadows would see a great light. A light would shine and a child would be born to us. This great light lives among us. By it we behold God's glory, full of grace and truth

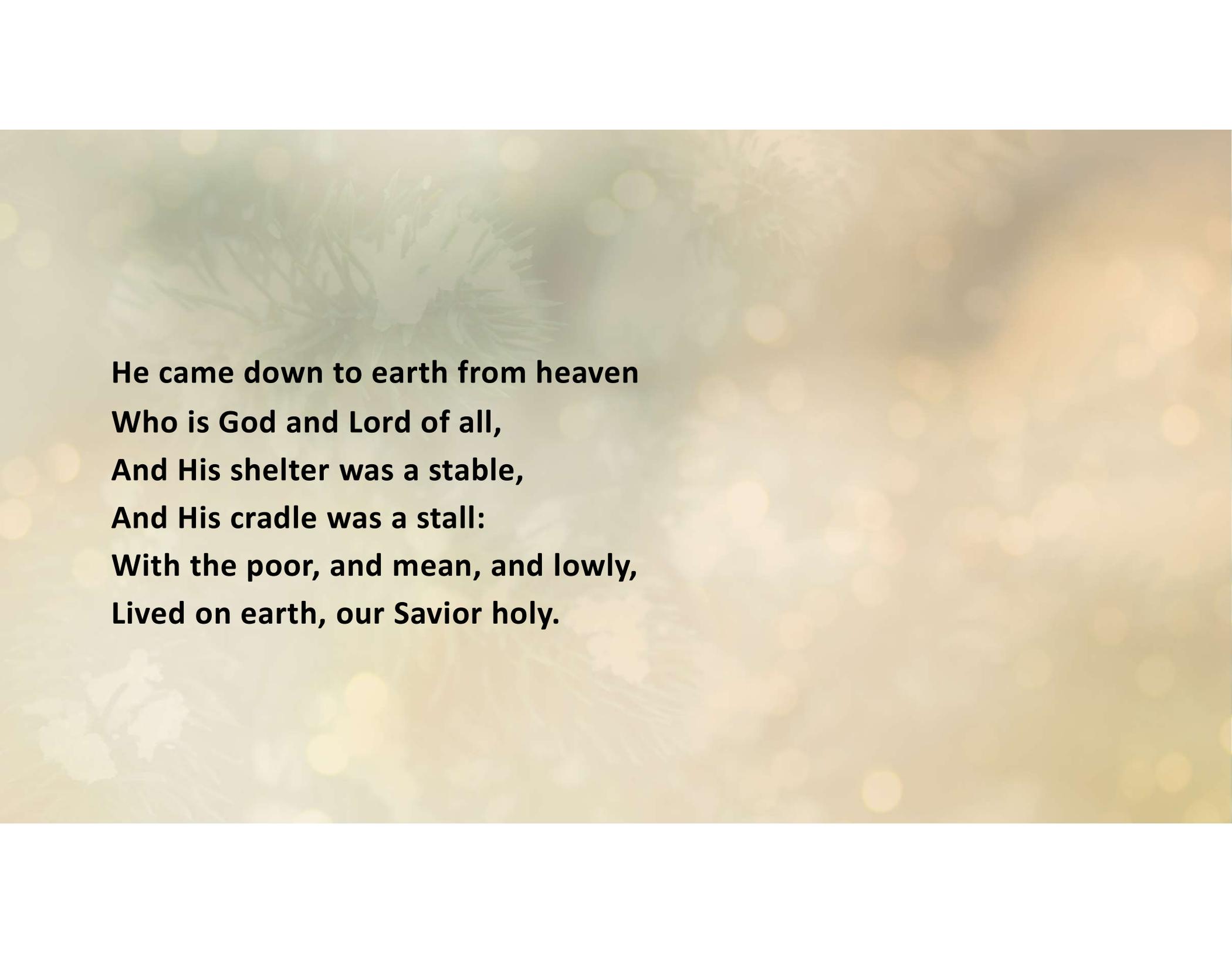
Let Us Pray...

ALL: God, our Life and Light, thank you for coming this night to us. You have touched all heaven and earth with your splendor. In every corner of the world, shine your peace. In every corner of our hearts, shine your grace. Amen.

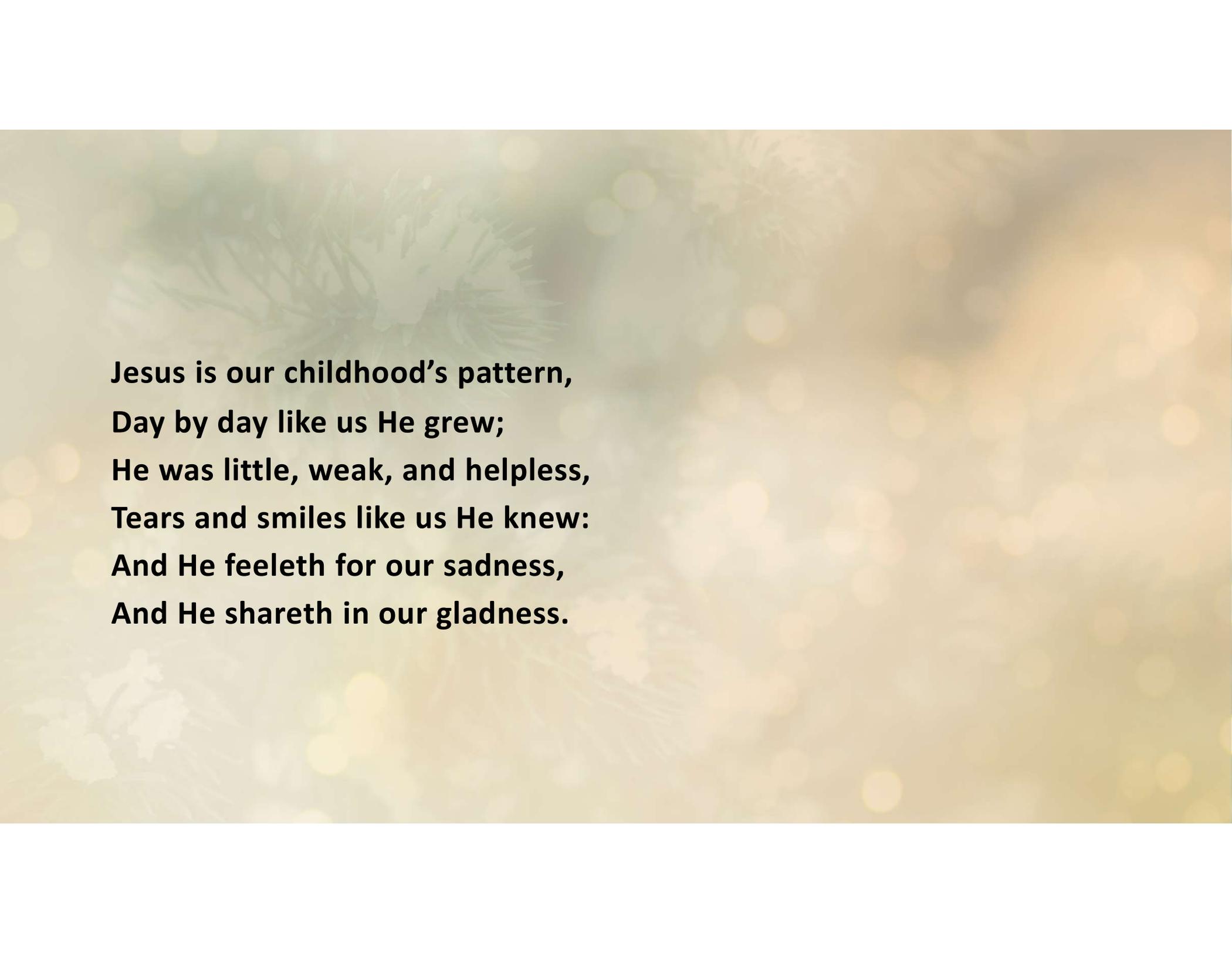
HYMN *(vs. 1 Solo, vss. 2-4 All Sing)*

Once in Royal David's City

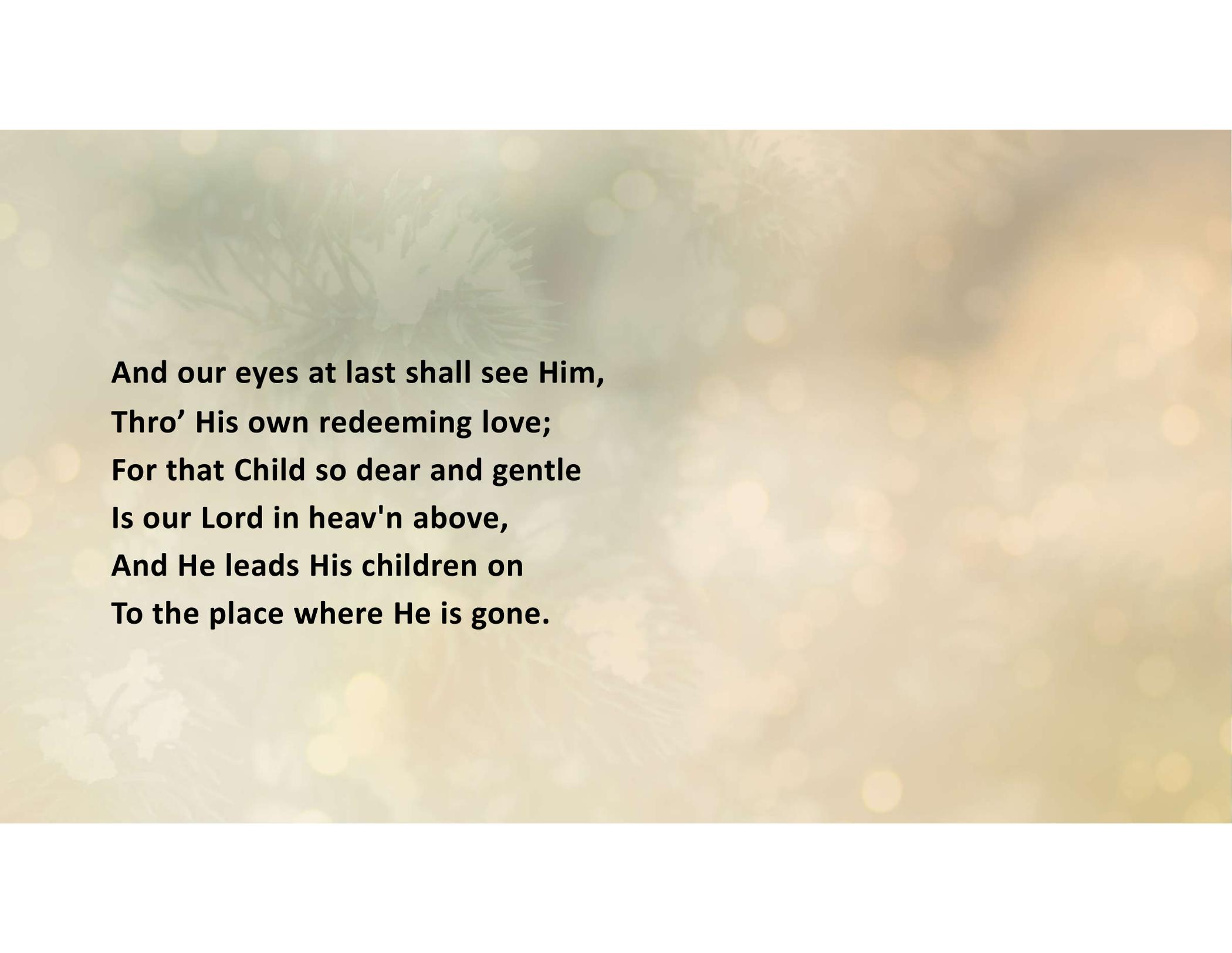
IRBY



**He came down to earth from heaven
Who is God and Lord of all,
And His shelter was a stable,
And His cradle was a stall:
With the poor, and mean, and lowly,
Lived on earth, our Savior holy.**



**Jesus is our childhood's pattern,
Day by day like us He grew;
He was little, weak, and helpless,
Tears and smiles like us He knew:
And He feeleth for our sadness,
And He shareth in our gladness.**



**And our eyes at last shall see Him,
Thro' His own redeeming love;
For that Child so dear and gentle
Is our Lord in heav'n above,
And He leads His children on
To the place where He is gone.**

UNISON INVOCATION

Prayer for Christmas by Robert Louis Stevenson

Loving God, help us remember the birth of Jesus, that we may share in the song of the angels, the gladness of the shepherds, and worship of the wise men. Close the door of hate and open the door of love all over the world. Let kindness come with every gift and good desires with every greeting. Deliver us from evil by the blessing which Christ brings, and teach us to be merry with clear hearts. May the Christmas morning make us happy to be thy children, and Christmas evening bring us to our beds with grateful thoughts, forgiving and forgiven, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

MUSICAL OFFERING *(Praise Band)*

O Come, All You Unfaithful

SOVEREIGN GRACE

SCRIPTURE READING

Isaiah 9:2-7

SOLO *(Aimee O'Neill)*

Before the Marvel of This Night

MARVEL

A SPONTANEOUS NATIVITY

Luke 2:1-20



CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

Who Would Believe Them?

Rev. Judith A Dwyer

HYMN

How Great Our Joy

JUNGST

**While by the sheep we watched at night,
Glad tidings brought an angel bright.**

How great our joy!

Great our joy!

Joy, joy, joy!

Joy, joy, joy!

Praise we the Lord in heav'n on high!

Praise we the Lord in heav'n on high!

**There shall be born, so he did say,
In Bethlehem a Child today.**

How great our joy!

Great our joy!

Joy, joy, joy!

Joy, joy, joy!

Praise we the Lord in heav'n on high!

Praise we the Lord in heav'n on high!

**There shall the Child lie in a stall,
This Child who shall redeem us all.**

How great our joy!

Great our joy!

Joy, joy, joy!

Joy, joy, joy!

Praise we the Lord in heav'n on high!

Praise we the Lord in heav'n on high!

**This gift of God we'll cherish well,
That ever joy our hearts shall fill.**

How great our joy!

Great our joy!

Joy, joy, joy!

Joy, joy, joy!

Praise we the Lord in heav'n on high!

Praise we the Lord in heav'n on high!

RESPONSIVE PRAYER FOR CHRISTMAS EVE

Adapted from a prayer written by Margaret D. McGee

ONE: In joy and thanksgiving at Christ's birth, let us sing to the Lord a new song.

ALL: On earth peace, good will among all.

ONE: We pray for all faithful people, and the unfaithful too; For all welcome messengers of good news. Let us sing to the Lord a new song.

ALL: On earth peace, good will among all.

ONE: For nations and their rulers, for corporations and their executives, for anyone with power over the lives of others, let us sing to the Lord a new song.

ALL: On earth peace, good will among all.

ONE: For those who defend the helpless and who strive for justice; for those who work to find a way to peace; for all the world, and all who live in it: let us sing to the Lord a new song.

ALL: On earth peace, good will among all.

ONE: For anyone suffering, sick, alone, afraid, or in any kind of trouble. We pray especially for ... [name aloud those you want to remember this evening]. Let us sing to the Lord a new song.

ALL: On earth peace, good will among all.

ONE: For those who this year have been lost to us, and also for their families, we pray; and especially for ... [name aloud those you want to remember this evening]. Let us sing to the Lord a new song.

ALL: On earth peace, good will among all.

ONE: We offer thanksgiving for Mary's firstborn Son—good news of great joy. Let us sing to the Lord a new song.

ALL: On earth peace, good will among all.

ONE: With the shepherds in the fields, let us go now to Bethlehem, there to find Christ in our hearts, and in the world.

ALL: Amen.

CHRISTMAS OFFERING

From "God is in the Manger" by Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Here, O God, we lay down our offerings We celebrate your Advent. And "Who among us will celebrate Christmas correctly? Whoever finally lays down all power, all honor, all reputation, all vanity, all arrogance, all individualism beside the manger; whoever remains lowly and lets God alone be high; whoever looks at the child in the manger and sees the glory of God precisely in his lowliness." Take and use what we lay down for the healing of the world. In your deep shalom we pray. Amen.

SPREADING THE LIGHT

HYMN

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.**

RESPONSIVE BENEDICTION

I Will Light Candles This Christmas by Howard Thurman

ONE: I will light candles this Christmas.

ALL: Candles of joy despite all the sadness,

ONE: Candles of hope where despair keeps watch,

ALL: Candles of courage for fears ever present,

ONE: Candles of peace for tempest-tossed days,

ALL: Candles of grace to ease heavy burdens,

ONE: Candles of love to inspire all my living,

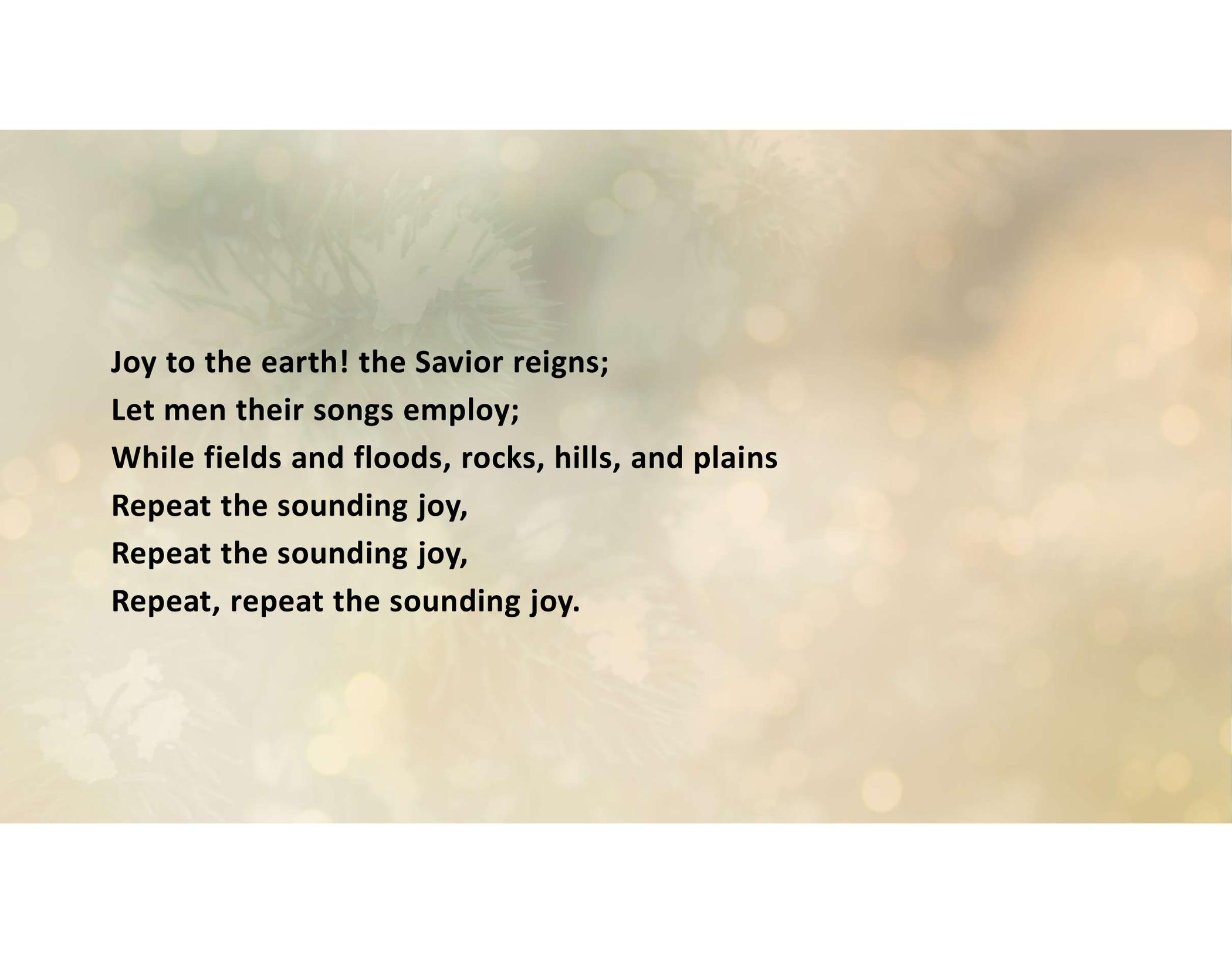
ALL: Candles that will burn all year long.

HYMN

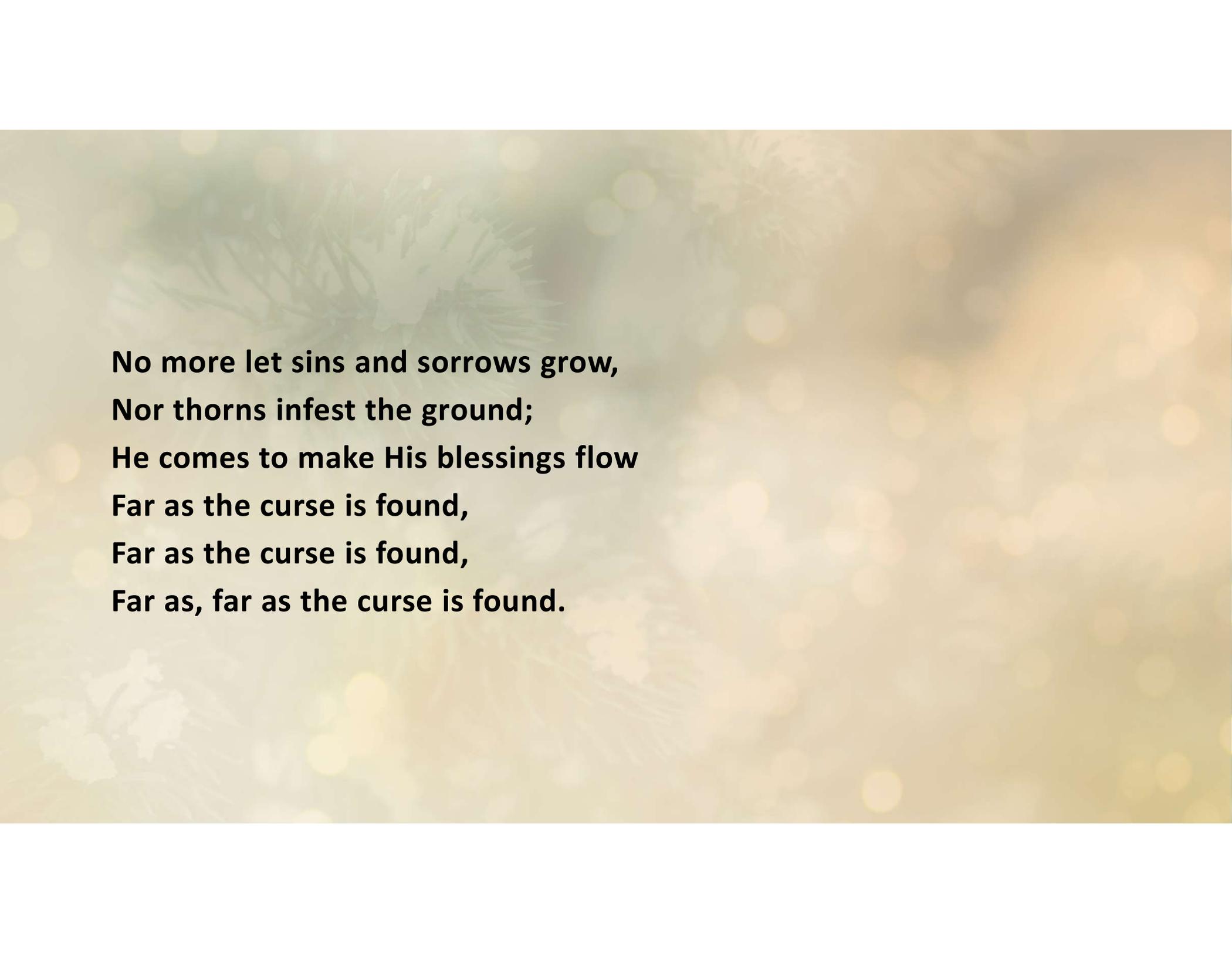
Joy to the World!

ANTIOCH

**Joy to the world! the Lord is come;
Let earth receive her King;
Let ev'ry heart prepare Him room,
And heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.**



**Joy to the earth! the Savior reigns;
Let men 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.**

POSTLUDE

WORSHIP NOTES:

The **Responsive Prayer for Christmas Eve** was written by Margaret D. McGee for the Christmas Eve service at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Port Townsend, Washington. Posted on In the Courtyard. www.inthecourtyard.com

The **Responsive Benediction for Christmas Eve** is a prayer written by Howard Thurman (1899-1981), author, theologian, philosopher, educator, and civil rights leader. In 1944, he helped found the Church for the Fellowship of All Peoples, one of the first racially integrated churches. He played an active role in many social justice movements. As a theologian and advocate of radical nonviolence, he was a mentor to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and others in the Civil Rights Movements.

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