



GOD BLESS US EVERYONE!

**Order of Worship
December 24, 2022
Christmas Eve
7 and 9 PM**

GATHERING AND PRAISE

Welcome

Prelude

Angels, We Have Heard on High

***Opening Prayer**

“We want you to know that you are family here... no matter whether you are a member or a first-time or one-time visitor this night. You are family and you are welcomed with hope, peace, joy, and love! Please stand as you are able as I offer the opening prayer.”

Holy Living God, Blessed Jesus, Guiding Spirit,
in our journey of past, present and future
we have opened ourselves to your transforming love.
On this night we remember the birth of Your Love For Us in Jesus Christ.
Open us to this miracle just begun,
open us to the voices no one hears
so that your reign of mercy, justice, and love
can be made known to all. Amen.

***Hymn**

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O Little Town of Bethlehem
Verses 1-3

UMH 230

Passing the Peace of Christ

Liturgist

Lighting the Christ Candle

Damon and Lara Moore
Aaron, Tiffany, Bristol, and Quinn Hetherington

We have heard the call to keep watch. But what are we keeping watch over? Maybe we're looking for something that will define us, something that will remake us, transform us. Some relationship, some hope, some love that will make us new. Maybe we're looking for the gift we remember this night.

Congregational Sung Response

O Little Town of Bethlehem

UMH 230

Verse 4

**O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin and enter in, be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell.
O come to us, abide in us, our Lord Emmanuel.**

What we go out to see in the chaos of our world is not necessarily the Christ child or the light that glows within. No, I think what we watch over is the world that he came to save: the masses of humanity who think they can find salvation in the stuff of this life, like we know we do sometimes, when we forget. A world that has room for a Savior, even when we've forgotten it. And part of what we're keeping watch for is to see whether we can make room—room for hope, room for peace, room for joy, room for love. Keep watch.

Someone begins lighting the Advent wreath candles.

We light these candles and complete this circle as we rejoice in the light that shines in the darkness and declare with joy and with hope –

Congregation: Joy to the world, the Lord has come! Hallelujah. Amen.

A Story for the Children

Pastor Maggie

Ministry of Music

Still, Still, Still

Choir

PROCLAMATION AND RESPONSE

Prayer for Understanding

All Praying

Almighty God, as we prepare with joy to celebrate the gift of the Christ child, embrace the earth with your glory and be for us a living hope; in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Christmas Story

Luke 2:1-20 (NIV)

Liturgist

2 In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. 2 This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. 3 All went to their own towns to be registered. 4 Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was

descended from the house and family of David. 5 He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. 6 While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. 7 And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no place in the guest room.[a]

The Shepherds and the Angels

8 Now in that same region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. 9 Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. 10 But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for see, I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: 11 to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah,[b] the Lord. 12 This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." 13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host,[c] praising God and saying,

14 "Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

15 When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." 16 So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the child lying in the manger. 17 When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child, 18 and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them, 19 and Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. 20 The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, just as it had been told them.

The Word Became Flesh

John 1:1-5, 14-18

Liturgist

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being 4 in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. 5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it.

14 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. 15 (John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.' ") 16 From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. 17 The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. 18 No one has ever seen God. It is the only Son, himself God, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

This is the Word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.

Sermon

The Redemption of Scrooge: Keeping Christmas Well

Pastor Debra

***Hymn**

Love Came Down at Christmas

UMH 242

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Offertory Invitation

Liturgist

Come now and kneel before the Christ child. Bring all that you are and all that you have. Offer your gifts in wonder and surprise and awe. Offer your gifts in joy and delight.

Worship with Our Tithes and Offerings

Offertory

Rocking

**Doxology*

*Praise God who blesses everyone!
Praise Jesus Christ, who is to come!
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Praise Spirit, making Three-in-One!
All praise the miracle begun!
Alleluia! Alleluia!*

**Prayer of Dedication*

Liturgist

There are so many things to be thankful for tonight, God. Receive these expressions of our gratitude for your love incarnate in the babe of Bethlehem. May these gifts become God-with-us for all the world. May they breathe magic back into a world that needs a sense of wonder and joy.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING FOR CHRISTMAS EVE

Invitation to the Lord's Table

The Sacrament of Communion

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing,

always and everywhere to give thanks to you,

Almighty God, creator of heaven and earth.

You created light out of darkness and brought forth life on the earth.

You formed us in your image and breathed into us the breath of life.

When we turned away, and our love failed, your love remained steadfast.

You delivered us from captivity, made covenant to be our sovereign God,
and spoke to us through your prophets.

In the fullness of time

you gave your only Son Jesus Christ to be our Savior,
and at his birth the angels sang

glory to you in the highest and peace to your people on earth.

And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ.

As Mary and Joseph went from Galilee to Bethlehem
and there found no room,

so Jesus went from Galilee to Jerusalem and was despised and rejected.

As in the poverty of a stable Jesus was born,

so by the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection

you gave birth to your Church,

delivered us from slavery to sin and death,

and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit.

As your Word became flesh, born of woman, on that night long ago,

so, on the night in which he gave himself up for us, he took bread,

gave thanks to you, broke the bread, gave it to his disciples, and said:

"Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you.

Do this in remembrance of me."

When the supper was over he took the cup,

gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said:

"Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant,

poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.

Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ,

we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving

as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ's offering for us,

as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here,

and on these gifts of bread and wine.

Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ,
that we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood.
By your Spirit make us one with Christ,
one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world,
until Christ comes in final victory, and we feast at his heavenly banquet.
Through your Son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy Church,
all honor and glory is yours, almighty Father (God), now and for ever.
Amen.

Sharing of the Bread and Cup

Prayer of Thanksgiving (All Praying)

Liturgist

We give you thanks, O God, that you have come to us through Jesus Christ, both in the midst of time and history in the city of Bethlehem, and in the timeless presence of Christ's Spirit as we receive the gifts of bread and wine. Send us out into the world rejoicing, ready to share your love with the people we meet; through the grace of Jesus Christ. Amen

Ministry of Music

O, Holy Night

Meghan Walker

GOING FORTH WITH JOY

***Sharing of the Light**

In the beginning and in the midst of darkness, God spoke.

Let there be light.

In the beginning was the Word. And the Word came and dwelt among us.

And the Word was the light of all people.

Let there be light.

We light our candles, knowing that the One who is the source and promise of all light is the One whose birth we celebrate.

Let there be light.

So we light our candles in gratitude for the love and light that shines through the babe born in Bethlehem and became the Redeemer of all.

Let there be light.

May we be so emboldened as to share the love of God with a world longing for light and hope, purpose, and love. May our actions and generosity shine in a world under the shadow of despair.

Let there be light.

We join the chorus of those whose carols have echoed through the years- "O come to us, abide in us, our Lord, Emmanuel."

Let there be light.

Please tip your candle to the lighted candle. Children may break their glow sticks at this time.

***CHRISTMAS HYMN**

Silent Night, Holy Night

UMH 239

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Please extinguish candles after the singing of the hymn.

As you leave, please place the candle in the basket located by the sanctuary doors.

***BENEDICTION**

As we go from our worship this night: May the joy of the angels sing in our voices; May the hope of the shepherds enliven our minds; May the strong faith of Mary strengthen our spirits; And may the love of the Baby shine in our hearts. God bless us everyone!

***POSTLUDE**

Joy to the World

O Little Town of Bethlehem

*O little town of Bethlehem,
how still we see thee lie;
above thy deep and dreamless sleep
the silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
the everlasting light;
the hopes and fears of all the years
are met in thee tonight.*

*2. For Christ is born of Mary,
and gathered all above,
while mortals sleep, the angels keep
their watch of wondering love.
O morning stars together,
proclaim the holy birth,
and praises sing to God the King,
and peace to all on earth!*

*3. How silently, how silently,
the wondrous gift is given;
so God imparts to human hearts
the blessings of his heaven.
No ear may hear his coming,
but in this world of sin,
where meek souls will receive him, still
the dear Christ enters in.*

Love Came Down at Christmas

*Love came down at Christmas, Love all lovely, Love divine;
Love was born at Christmas; star and angels gave the sign.*

*Worship we the Godhead, Love incarnate, Love divine;
worship we our Jesus, but wherewith for sacred sign?*

*Love shall be our token; love be yours and love be mine;
love to God and all men, love for plea and gift and sign.*

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.*

*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!*