

A Family Christmas Carol Service

December 25, 2022

9:30 A.M.

INTRODUCTION & OPENING PRAYER

P: Heavenly Father, thank You for gathering us today as families within Your worldwide Family of Faith. In this simple service of narration and song, help us to draw near to the One who humbly lies in the manger, that the mystery of His First Coming which we celebrate this morning, might prepare us for His Second Coming in Glory when we shall no longer walk on the dusty sin-trodden roads of this earth, but on Your perfect heavenly streets paved with gold. Thank You, O God, for sending Your Son, our Prince of Peace, and we ask You for that supernatural peace to reign in our hearts. Thank You for the simple but life-changing message of Your love for us and for the lasting joy that love gives. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

"O Come All Ye Faithful"

**Oh, come, All ye faithful, joyful and triumphant
Oh come Ye, Oh 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!**

**Highest, most holy, Light of light eternal,
Born of a virgin, a mortal he comes;
Son of the Father Now in flesh appearing!
Oh, come, let us adore Him, Oh, come, let us adore Him
Oh, 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... In the highest:
Oh, come, let us adore Him, Oh, come, let us adore Him
Oh, come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!**

**Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, Born this happy morning;
Jesus, to Thee.. be .. glo....ry giv'n!
Word of the Father, Now in flesh appearing!
Oh, come, let us adore Him, Oh, come, let us adore Him,
Oh, come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!**

Narrator: And it came to pass that a proclamation was issued by Caesar Augustus that a census should be taken. And everyone went to his own town to register.

So Joseph went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem, the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. (*Light the Joseph candle.*)

He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. (*Light the Mary candle.*)

"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.

For Christ is born of Mary, And gathered all above
While mortals sleep,
The angels keep Their watch of wond'ring love.
O morning stars, together Proclaim the holy birth,
And praises sing to God the king, And peace to all the earth!

How silently, how silently The wondrous gift is giv'n!
So God imparts To human hearts The blessings of His heav'n.
No ear may hear His coming; But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive Him, still The dear Christ enters in.

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;
Oh, come to us, Abide with us, Our Lord Immanuel

Narrator: While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to a son, whom they named Jesus.
(*Light the Christ candle.*)

She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

"Away in a Manger"

Away in a manger no crib for a bed
The little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.
The stars in the sky looked down where He lay,
The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing, the Baby awakes,
But little Lord Jesus, no crying He makes.
I love Thee, Lord Jesus! Look down from the sky,
And stay by my cradle 'till morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask Thee to stay
Close by me forever, And love me I pray.
Bless all the dear children in Thy tender care,
And take us to heaven, to live with Thee there.

Narrator: And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. (*Light the shepherd candles.*)

"The First Noel"

The first Noel the angels 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
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel Born is the King of Israel.

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
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel Born is the King of Israel.

Narrator: Suddenly, an angel of the Lord appeared to them (*light the tallest angel candle as narrator continues*), and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

And suddenly a great company of heavenly host appeared with the angel (*light all of the angel candles as narrator continues*), praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favour rests."

"Angels We Have Heard on High"

Angels we have heard on high,
Sweetly singing o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply,
Echoing their joyous strains.
Glo----- ria, in excelsis Deo
Glo----- ria, in excelsis Deo.

Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be
Which inspire your heav'nly song?
Glo----- ria, in excelsis Deo.
Glo----- ria, 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.
Glo----- ria, in excelsis Deo
Glo----- ria, in excelsis Deo.

Narrator: The shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about." So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child.

"Go Tell It on the Mountain"

Refrain: Go tell it on the mountain,
 Over the hills and ev'rywhere;
 Go tell it on the mountain
 That Jesus Christ is born!

While shepherds kept their watching
O'er silent flocks by night;
Behold, throughout the heavens,
There shone a holy light. (Refrain)

The shepherds feared and trembled,
When lo, above the earth
Rang out the angel chorus
That hailed our Savior's birth. (Refrain)

Down in a lonely manger
The humble Christ was born;
And God sent us salvation
That blessed Christmas morn. (Refrain)

Narrator: After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, saying, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We have come to worship him."

(Light the wise men candles.)

The star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. On coming to the house, they saw Jesus with his mother, Mary, and they bowed down and worshipped Him. Then they opened their treasures and presented Him with gifts of gold, incense and myrrh.

"What Child is This?"

What child is this, who, laid to rest, On Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthem 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!

Why lies he in such mean estate Where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear; for sinners here The silent Word is pleading.
Nails, spear shall pierce him through, The cross be borne for me, for you'
Hail, hail the Word made flesh, the babe, the son of Mary!

So bring him incense, gold and myrrh; Come, peasant, king to own him.
The king of kings salvation brings; Let loving hearts enthrone him.
Raise, raise the song on high, he virgin sings her lullaby;
Joy, joy, for Christ is born, The babe, the son of Mary!

Narrator: Then, having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, the wise men returned to their country by another route. *(Extinguish the wise men candles.)*

And the shepherds returned to their work, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen. *(Extinguish the shepherd candles.)*

And the angels returned to heaven. *(Extinguish the angel candles.)*

And many years later, Mary and Joseph, being flesh and bone, came to the end of their lives on earth. *(Extinguish the Mary and Joseph candles.)*

But the Light that began in Bethlehem was life. And this life, Jesus Christ, was the Light of all humanity. The light still shines in the darkness, and the darkness has never put it out. And it all began on a silent, holy night . . . long ago . . .

"Silent 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.

Silent night, holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight;
Glories stream from heaven afar,
Heav'nly hosts sing, Alleluia!
Christ, the Savior is born!
Christ the Savior is born!

Silent night, holy night!
Son of God, loves pure light
Radiant beams from thy holy face
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

PRAYER

P: By the word of our Lord the heavens were made

C: By the spirit of our Lord was life begun

P: By the wisdom of our Lord his laws were laid

C: By the love of our Lord was born his Son

P: By the grace of our Lord mankind was saved

C: By the power of our Lord the victory was won

**L: Rejoicing in the presence of God here among us,
let us pray in the words our Savior gave us.**

C: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name...

“Joy to the World”

**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.**

**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.**

Blessing of the Lord

P; May you be filled with the wonder of Mary, the obedience of Joseph, the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds, the determination of the wisemen, and the peace of the Christ child.

C: Almighty God, Father, ✠ Son and Holy Spirit bless us now and forever. Amen.

P: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God!