

You are invited to participate in communion
by picking up an individual bread and cup as you enter.
Candles are also available in the narthex.

PRELUDE *"Schlafe, mein Liebster" from the Christmas Oratorio* - J.S. Bach
The Holy Boy - John Ireland
Prelude on "Greensleeves" - Richard Purvis
(David Patrick, Organ)

Infant Holy, Infant Lowly – arr. Gordon Schuster
(Connor Landers, French Horn)

WELCOME Margaret LaMotte Torrence

OPENING LITANY

We gather –
people of faith
and no faith,
people of hope
and no hope,
people of peace
and no peace.

We gather with the longing
to be made whole again,
if just for this time,
here and now.

We gather with a prayer,
however vague and tenuous,
that in spite of the absence
of virgins and angels,
wise men
and shepherds,
we might still witness
the birth of all love.

We gather
as ready as we'll ever be
for this story to unfold.

* *Those who are able are invited to stand.*

HYMN 140 *Once in Royal David's City* Irby

Once in royal David's city
Stood a lowly cattle shed,
Where a mother laid her baby
In a manger for his bed:
Mary was that mother mild;
Jesus Christ, her little child.

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 meek 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 feels for all our sadness,
And he shares in all our gladness.

And our eyes at last shall see him,
Through his own redeeming love;
For that child so dear and gentle
Is our Lord in heaven above;
And he leads his children on
To the place where he is gone.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION Margaret LaMotte Torrence

Holy One,
We have dared to come,
not because we are ready to greet you,
but because our need is so great
and your hour approaches.
Strip away our defenses
and bathe us in your mercy
until we yield our lives in joy.

(silent prayer)

ASSURANCE OF WELCOME

SONG OF JOY (vv. 1 & 2) *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.

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.

FIRST READING AND LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT AND CHRIST CANDLES Isaiah 9:2, 6-7
David and Denise,
and Connor and Hazel Landers

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.

(The Advent candles and Christ candle are lit.)

For a child has been born for us,
a son given to us;
authority rests upon his shoulders;

Anthem: *On Christmas Night All Christians Sing*
(The Choir) English Carol / arr. Barbara Kinyon

SECOND READING Luke 1:26-38

Trio: *Gesu Bambino* – Pietro Yon
(Carrie Mills, Matt Jarvis, Jordan Cook)

THIRD READING: THE BIRTH Luke 2:1-7

Anthem: *Balloo, Lammy (Lullaby, Little Lamb)*
(The Choir) Traditional Irish, arr. Phillips

FOURTH READING: THE REJOICING Luke 2:8-20

Hymn 113: *Angels We Have Head on High* Gloria

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!

REFLECTION Margaret LaMotte Torrence

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE *What Child is This* Greensleeves

What Child is this who, laid to rest
On Mary's lap, is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems 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;
The Virgin sings her lullaby.
Joy, joy for Christ is born,
The Babe the Son of Mary!

THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER Margaret LaMotte Torrence

THE INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE

GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.
Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to the Lord.
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give God thanks and praise.

. . . We join our voices in praise:

Gloria in excelsis Deo!
Gloria in excelsis Deo!

. . . Remembering now

his living,
his dying,
his rising in resistance,
we give thanks for this moment of truth
as we offer ourselves to you.

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

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.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE

PRAYER OF RESPONSE

THE PROCLAMATION OF THE LIGHT John 1:1-5

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.

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!

THE SPREADING OF THE LIGHT

There is no musical postlude on this night,
signifying the unfinished work of bearing light into all the world.
The chimes will sound as we leave the sanctuary.

The Call to Worship is adapted from a prayer by Cheryl Lawrie.