

Christmas Eve Service

December 24, 2020

Prelude

"Silent Night"

arr. by E. Mercer
Suzanne Campbell and Karen Harville

Welcome

Pastor Ron Fisher

Hymn

"Away in the 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.

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 fit us for heaven to live with thee there.

The Lighting of the Christ Candle

Mike & Jack Smeltzer

Advent hope moves us; Advent love leads us; Advent joy stirs us; Advent peace stills us, that we might affirm our King Jesus. It is time we set flame to this Advent affirmation by lighting the Christ Candle.

We believe that Jesus is the Son of God. He was born of the Virgin Mary in Bethlehem of Judea. He was the long-awaited Messiah whose coming was prophesied. The same Jesus lives today in our hearts. He deserves our highest loyalty and total commitment. In Jesus Christ our hope is fulfilled; our love is consummated; our joy is complete; and our peace is sealed.

Rejoice, a Savior is born.

A Savior is born, indeed. Joy to the world!

The Christmas Prayer

Gracious God, with joy and thanksgiving, we gather as your people. We have come to hear again the timeless story of Christ's birth. In the excitement of this night, quiet our hearts that we may know the peace and fullness of this holy time. Shine, O Light, in the darkness of our world.

Sing, O angels, in the stillness of our hearts, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those God favors." This we pray in the name of the Child of Bethlehem, Amen!

First Lesson

The Prophecy of the Messiah

Isaiah 9: 2, 6-7

Second Lesson

The Coming of Jesus Is Announced to Mary and Joseph

Luke 1:26-38, Matthew 1:18-25

Third Lesson

The Preparations for the Birth of Jesus

Luke 2: 1-5

Jesus is Born

Luke 2: 6-7

Fourth Lesson

Jesus' Birth is Announced to the Shepherds

Luke 2: 9-14

The Shepherds Find the Baby Jesus

Luke 2: 15-18

Hymn

"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.

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 with us, our Lord Emmanuel!

Invitation To The Table

Pastor: The prophets foretold it: the desert burst into bloom.

Angelic messengers delivered news: a priest lost his speech; a young woman found her voice.

In this season of Advent, the scriptures revive old stories and bring new understandings.

In the face of critics and skeptics, our faith cries out, resilient, like a baby from a manger bed.

From that Bethlehem beginning, Jesus, baptized in the Jordan, spent his life serving others

that all might know the compassionate attention of a loving God.

Today, Jesus serves us yet again, as we gather at this Table he prepares for us.

Communion Prayer

Dear Jesus of Advent, you remain a sacred mystery to us.

You have brought Good News for all the people and we will not be afraid, for you are here.

We are hungry for your love which surpasses all our understanding; we are thirsty for your spirit that never runs dry. In this meal nourish our souls, feed our minds, quench our deepest longings and forgive our transgressions, that we may glorify you every day of our lives. Amen.

Blessing of the Bread and Cup

Sharing of the Meal

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Holy Creator, Bread of Life, Everlasting Salvation, A light shines in the night and the night will not overcome it. In this meal we have been replenished and strengthened, by the light of your love rekindled within.

We will be bold to carry this light into the world. Thank you for pardoning our sins, renewing our faith, by giving us eternal life through your Son, Jesus. Walk with us on our Advent journey. Lead us to Bethlehem, to a stable, to a manger, cradling the King of Kings. Amen.

Hymn

“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, 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.

Benediction

Ringling of the Christmas Bells

Postlude

“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.