



Online Worship Resource

BOLD TYPE IS SPOKEN BY THE CONGREGATION

Prelude: **Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming** Johannes Brahms
*Lo, how a rose e're blooming from tender stem hath sprung,
Of Jesse's lineage coming, by faithful prophets sung.
It came, a flower bright, amid the cold of winter, when half spent was the night.
This flower, whose fragrance tender with sweetness fills the air,
dispels with glorious splendor the darkness everywhere.
Enfleshed, yet very God, from sin and death he saves us and
lightens every load.
Jane Kerr, Organist*

Welcome and Announcements

Candle Lighting Liturgy Steve & Whitney Roberts

Please join us in the responsive Candle lighting liturgy:

The Advent season speaks to us about God's love for all creation.

Creation is filled with the overflowing love and joy of God.

And among all created things is the one God made to reflect God's own image.

Prophets and teachers, parents and princes - all have been imprinted with God's love.

And God looked into their hearts and saw that they needed the ultimate expression of divine love.

So God sent the Messiah.

In this season we hear again the message of God's love for us and for all creation.

Advent celebrates love! We commit ourselves to love as God has loved us, and to share that love with all.

Opening Hymn: "Go, Tell It on the Mountain"

Refrain: Go, tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere,
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 lowly manger the humble Christ was born,
And God sent us salvation that blessed Christmas morn. (Refrain)

Passing the Peace

May the peace of Christ be with you.
And also with you.

Pastoral Prayer

Children's Time

Prayer for Illumination

(Liturgist)

Let us prepare our hearts to hear God's Word by praying together the Prayer for Illumination:

O God of our people and Lord of every nation, let your Word ring out from the mountains and your Spirit shine forth in the earth, that we may hear the miracle of your message and respond in faith and obedience to do your will. For the sake of the Word made flesh, we pray. Amen.

Scripture Reading: Hebrews 1:1-4

¹ Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, ² but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds. ³ He is the reflection of God's glory and the exact imprint of God's very being, and he sustains all things by his powerful word. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, ⁴ having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

John 1:1-14

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 overcome it.

⁶ There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷ He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸ He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ⁹ The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. ¹¹ He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. ¹² But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³ who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

¹⁴And 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.

This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

The Miracle of the Message

Rev. Michelle Fincher

Hymn after Sermon: "What Child Is This"

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!

So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh; come one and all, 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!

Call to offering

(Liturgist)

At this time of year, the abundance of some and the needs of so many stand in stark contrast. As we offer our tithes and gifts, may our generosity make Christ's heart glad that we are tending the needs of our neighbors. Please join me in our Prayer of Dedication. . .

Prayer of Dedication

Loving and Speaking God, we thank you that Christ is being revealed in every time and place until he comes again to establish your kingdom and reign in glory. As we respond to the miracle of your message, strengthen our faith, increase our generosity, and renew our joy as we wait for the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Sharing the Lord's Supper

Call to Confession

Trusting in the mercy of God to forgive and restore all those who truly repent, let us draw near to God and confess our sins. Let us pray. . .

Prayer of Confession

Faithful and loving Parent, we know that you are always present to guide us, yet we often make plans without listening for your voice and discover that our own agendas can drown out our ability to hear you speaking to us. We repent of these faults and turn to you in love. Forgive our failures and pardon our sins, that we may be messengers of your love and bearers of your good news.

Silent Confession

Assurance of Pardon

Sisters and brothers, in Christ Jesus, God has blessed all creation and called you to walk in God's light and love.

With joy and gratitude we receive the miracle of God's mercy and forgiveness. Glory to God in the highest! Amen.

INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE

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....

Sung Response Refrain: "O Come, All Ye Faithful"

O come, let us adore him; O come, let us adore him;

O come, let us adore him, Christ, the Lord!

Prayer after Communion

Closing Hymn: "Good Christian Friends, Rejoice"

Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice;
Give ye heed to what we say: Jesus Christ is born today;
Ox and ass before him bow, and he is in the manger now.
Christ is born today! Christ is born today!

Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice;
Now ye need not fear the grave: Jesus Christ was born to save!
Calls you one and calls you all to gain the everlasting hall.
Christ was born to save! Christ was born to save!

Benediction

Postlude: **The First Nowell** English Carol

The first Nowell the angel 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.

Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, born is the King of Israel.

Then let us all with one accord sing praises to our heavenly Lord,
that hath made heaven and earth of nought, and with his blood our life hath bought.

Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, born is the King of Israel.

Today's Worship Participants:

Rev. Michelle Fincher, Jane Kerr, organist, Judy Viccellio, guitar,
David Maley, piano, Steve & Whitney Roberts, liturgists,
and Whitney Roberts, technology team