

Christmas Eve **SERVICE**

DECEMBER 24, 2021

5:00 P.M.



UNITED CHURCH *of* CHAPEL HILL

A PLACE *of* BELONGING FOR ALL GOD'S CHILDREN

GATHERING MUSIC

Unto Us a Child Is Born (Czech Christmas)

Jan Trovan and Pavel Jerabek

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

Jennifer Barnes

O Little Town of Bethlehem ST. LOUIS

**How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts the glorious love of heaven.
No one discerns God's coming, but in this world of sin,
Where yearning souls long to be whole the dear Christ enters in.**

FAMILY READING

We have watched. We have waited.

**We have watched in hope.
We have waited for peace.
We have searched with joy.
We have been held in love.
Now the love of Christ draws near!**

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.
You have multiplied the nation,
you have increased its joy.

**For a child has been born for us,
a son given to us;
Authority rests on his shoulders;
and he is named
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.**

His authority shall grow continually,
and there shall be endless peace
For the throne of David and his kingdom.
He will establish and uphold it
with justice and righteousness
from this time onwards and forevermore.

Glory to God!

Glory to God! Glory to God in the highest!

PRAYER

Dear Jesus, may the light of your love always shine in our hearts. As Christmas draws closer, we marvel at your great love for us. Let your love transform every aspect of our lives and touch everyone we encounter. Our hearts are open to you. Amen.

HYMN *O Come All Ye Faithful* ADESTE FIDELES

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant
O come ye, O 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!

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

Holy God, as we prepare to celebrate the birth of Christ, make our hearts leap for joy at the sound of your word. Help us feel your Spirit among us as we listen to the story, that, as we read and sing, we may hear your voice speaking to us tonight.

CHOIR ANTHEM *Tomorrow Shall Be My Dancing Day* arr. Hal Hopson

CAROL *Jesus our Brother, Strong and Good* ORIENTIS PARTIBUS

Jesus, our brother, strong and good,
Was humbly born in a stable rude,
And the friendly beasts around him stood,
Jesus our brother, strong and good.

THE FIRST READING

Luke 2:1-7

Lyra Thayer

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. 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. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. 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 for them in the inn.

CAROL*Away in a Manger*

CRADLE SONG

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

THE SECOND READING

Luke 2:8-14

Eneko Murray

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. 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: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah,[a] the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host,[b] praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”

CAROL*Hark the Herald Angels Sing*

MENDELSSOHN

**Hark the herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King;
Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!”
Joyful all ye nations rise, join the triumph of the skies;
With the angelic host proclaim, “Christ is born in Bethlehem!”
Hark the herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King!”**

THE THIRD READING

Luke 2:15–20

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.” So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

CAROL

The First Nowell

THE FIRST NOWELL

**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.**

THE FOURTH READING

Matthew 2: 1-5, 7-11

Whitney Tanner

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men[a] from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, “Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.” When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah[c] was to be born. They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet...”... Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.” When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

CAROL

We Three Kings of Orient Are

KINGS OF ORIENT

**We Three Kings of Orient are, bearing gifts we traverse afar
Field and fountain, moor and mountain, following yonder star.
O star of wonder star of night, star with royal beauty bright,
Westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light.**

OFFERING

CHOIR ANTHEM

The Snow Lay on the Ground (VENITE ADOREMUS)

arr. Leo Sowerby

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

Rev. Cameron Barr

CAROL

Joy To the World

ANTIOCH

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 world, 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.

He rules the world with truth and grace,
And makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness,
And wonders of God's love,
And wonders of God's love,
And wonders, wonders, of God's love.

BENEDICTION

RESPONSE

Angels We Have Heard 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!

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