

Prelude

WELCOME and GREETING

Welcome to this most magical night when angels and shepherds mingle and the birth of a baby changes the world.

We come to celebrate with joy and wonder.

Celebrate the light that shines all around us.

We will sing and praise our most wondrous God.

Let us kneel before the Christ child, who makes God's promises come true.

O Come let us adore him!

HYMN

O Come All Ye Faithful

283 (vs. 1,3,4)

ADVENT WREATH LITURGY - CHRIST CANDLE

Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; let the sea roar and all that fills it; let the land give praise, and everything in it. Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for the Lord is coming! *(The advent wreath and Christ Candle are lit)*

The Christ Candle shines, giving us hope, peace, joy, and love to carry into the world.

Christ comes to make all things new! We prepared him room, and we are opening to Christ, the light of the world.

HYMN (Kindle Advent Candles Vs. 5)

See Insert

GREETING

Christ is born! Alleluia! May the love of God, the peace of Christ, and the joy of the Holy Spirit be with you.

And also with you

HYMN: Joy to the World

267 (vs 1,2,4)

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray Creator God, By your greatness you became small, by your power you became powerless, by your limitlessness you became limited. Through the birth of your son, we can live in your light that shines on a world transformed by the limitless power of your love. **Amen**

THE CHRISTMAS GOSPEL

READING 1 (Hope in the Messiah)

Isaiah 9:2-5

- 2 The people who walk in darkness
will see a great light.
For those who live in a land of deep darkness,
a light will shine.
- 3 You will enlarge the nation of Israel,
and its people will rejoice.
They will rejoice before you
as people rejoice at the harvest
and like warriors dividing the plunder.
- 4 For you will break the yoke of their slavery
and lift the heavy burden from their shoulders.
You will break the oppressor's rod,
just as you did when you destroyed the army of Midian.
- 5 The boots of the warrior
and the uniforms bloodstained by war
will all be burned.
They will be fuel for the fire.

The worlds were yet unborn.
The stars did not yet shine.
When the Dream began.
God's Dream of Love,
God's vision of hope,
Was and is and will be.

When the dream began,
Light entered in,
And Salvation was born
Alleluia!

HYMN: It Came Upon the Midnight Clear (1,4)

282

READING 2 (Coming of the Messiah)

Isaiah 9:6-7

- 6 For a child is born to us,
a son is given to us.
The government will rest on his shoulders.
And he will be called:
Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
- 7 His government and its peace
will never end.
He will rule with fairness and justice from the throne of his ancestor
David for all eternity.
The passionate commitment of the Lord of Heaven's Armies
will make this happen!

The dream of expectancy
This design of tenderness
Is God's vision for us
The dream is of love.
The design is of salvation
And we have seen it
For before all worlds
And proceeding from all time
Is God's dream for us
Alleluia

HYMN: O Little Town of Bethlehem (vs 1, 4)

279

- 1 In the beginning the Word already existed.
The Word was with God,
and the Word was God.
- 2 He existed in the beginning with God.
- 3 God created everything through him,
and nothing was created except through him.
- 4 The Word gave life to everything that was created,
and his life brought light to everyone.
- 5 The light shines in the darkness,
and the darkness can never extinguish it.

God's dream is a Word,
The Word which brings joy
Is and was and will be
This Word brought Light,
A Splendour beyond imagining
Which is God with us.
This Word is ours,
Our source of Life
Which God gives to us all

HYMN: Once in Royal David's City (1,2,3)

269

- 1 At that time the Roman emperor, Augustus, decreed that a census should be taken throughout the Roman Empire.
- 2 (This was the first census taken when Quirinius was governor of Syria.)
- 3 All returned to their own ancestral towns to register for this census.

- 4 And because Joseph was a descendant of King David, he had to go to Bethlehem in Judea, David's ancient home. He traveled there from the village of Nazareth in Galilee.
- 5 He took with him Mary, to whom he was engaged, who was now expecting a child.
- 6 And while they were there, the time came for her baby to be born.
- 7 She gave birth to her firstborn son. She wrapped him snugly in strips of cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no lodging available for them.

When the Dream begins,

Light enters in,

And Salvation is born

God's Dream of Love,

God's Vision of Hope

Creates new life.

Worlds are spinning,

And stars are shining

At God's dawning!

God's dream of love

God's vision of hope

Christ the Saviour is Born!

Alleluia! Amen!

HYMN: 'Twas in the Moon of Wintertime

284

READING 5

Luke 2:8-14

- 8 That night there were shepherds staying in the fields nearby, guarding their flocks of sheep.
- 9 Suddenly, an angel of the Lord appeared among them, and the radiance of the Lord's glory surrounded them. They were terrified,

10 but the angel reassured them. “Don’t be afraid!” he said. “I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all people.

11 The Saviour—yes, the Messiah, the Lord—has been born today in Bethlehem, the city of David!

12 And you will recognize him by this sign: You will find a baby wrapped snugly in strips of cloth, lying in a manger.”

13 Suddenly, the angel was joined by a vast host of others—the armies of heaven—praising God and saying,

14 “Glory to God in highest heaven, and peace on earth to those with whom God is pleased.”

The dream continues

Christ enters in

And salvation is born

God’s dream of love

God’s vision of hope

Seeks all people

The worlds spin on

The stars shine in glory

It is the generation of the Dream!

Alleluia! Alleluia! Christ the Saviour is born!

Blessed are we who can see the wonder and mystery of Emmanuel,
God’s dream for us!

Alleluia! Alleluia!

HYMN: Angels From the Realms of Glory

275

READING 6 (The Shepherds Worship)

Luke 2:15-20

15 When the angels had returned to heaven, the shepherds said to each other, “Let’s go to Bethlehem! Let’s see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.”

16 They hurried to the village and found Mary and Joseph. And there was the baby, lying in the manger.

17 After seeing him, the shepherds told everyone what had happened and what the angel had said to them about this child.

18 All who heard the shepherds' story were astonished,

19 but Mary kept all these things in her heart and thought about them often.

20 The shepherds went back to their flocks, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen. It was just as the angel had told them.

HYMN: Go Tell It On the Mountain

290

Sermon

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

(Holy Jesus, we pray**Be born in us tonight**)

We pray in the name of Jesus, our light, our life, and our hope, who taught us to pray:

The Lord's Prayer (Tune: **270** Hark the Herald Angels Sing)

**God our Father, God of fame
hallowed be your holy name;
Everywhere your kingdom come,
far away from here at home;
May we to your will comply
As the angels do on high;
Grant that we, our sins forgiv'n
Follow in the way of heav'n
Grant that we, our sins forgiv'n
Follow in the way of heav'n.**

**May we, even at our worst,
Show forgiveness shown us first.
Guard us from the tempting devil,
and deliver us from evil.
Yours the kingdom so sing we,
Pow'r and glory ever be.
Unto you while ages run.
Yea, Amen! So be it done!
Unto you while ages run.
Yea, Amen! So be it done!**

PEACE and OFFERING *(May be left on the plate at the back)*

The light and hope of Christ lives in each of us. The Peace of the Christmas Child be with.

And also with you

Let us greet each other as a sign of God's peace, love forgiveness and grace. *(Please share a gesture of peace with those around you)*

OFFERING PRAYER

Blessed Lord, you have given us your greatest gift— your very Word come to earth, to live with us and through us; you have filled us with your grace and truth— your holy child sent to free us from our bonds. How can we repay such divine generosity?

Receive our thanks and praise. As you have given to us, so now we share your gifts and your grace with a world in need. May our offering help bring your light and love to those who still wander in darkness. Amen.

BLESSING

Go now in wonder. Go to bring light to those in darkness, joy to those who can find no joy, magic to a world steeped in realism. Go with the songs of angels in your ears, and the love of God in your hearts. Go and spread the word— the babe of Bethlehem is born for all. Rise up and go in peace wherever the Holy Spirit leads you, for the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all.

Thanks be to God. May the light of Christ lead us forevermore.

SENDING HYMN Silent Night

Please remain seated for the Postlude