

READINGS FOR CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE
(Each reading is followed by the telling of the dream)

READING 1 (Hope in the Messiah) Pr. Jim

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)

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READING 2 (Coming of the Messiah) Barb

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)

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READING 3 (Christ the Eternal Word) Anita

John 1:1-5

- 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

READING 4 (The Birth in Bethlehem) Anne

Luke 2:1-7

- 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!

READING 5 (The Angels Sing) Deacon Brigitte

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

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READING 6 (The Shepherds Worship) Pr. Linda

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.

Sermon