



DOWNTOWN

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



“O come ye to Bethlehem!”

Celebration of Worship
Christmas Eve
December 24, 2020,
[Click Here to Listen](#)

Prelude

O Holy Night

Adolphe Adam

Jessica Ann Best, mezzo soprano, Lee Wright, violin, Tim Lambert, piano

Welcome

The Rev. Deb Swift

Chime

Introit

Once in Royal David's City

IRBY

*“Once in royal David's city stood a lowly cattle shed,
Where a mother laid her baby in a manger for His bed.
Mary was that mother mild, Jesus Christ her little child.*

*He came down to earth from heaven who is God and Lord of all,
And His shelter was a stable, and His cradle was a stall.
With the poor, oppressed, and lowly, lived on earth our Savior holy.*

*Jesus is our childhood's pattern; day by day, like us He grew;
He was little, weak and helpless, tears and smiles like us He knew
And He feels for all our sadness, and He shares in all our gladness.*

*And our eyes at last shall see Him, through His own redeeming love,
For that Child so dear and gentle is our Lord in heaven above;
And He leads His children on to the place where He is gone.”*

Text: Cecil F. Alexander (1848, alt.)

Choir II, Laura Anderson, soloist

Call to Worship

Andrea Folan

One: We are dispersed,

Many: yet we are one.

One: We have been fragmented,

Many: yet we are not broken.

One: We are strong and we are taking care of each other

Many: because that's who we are.

One: And even in the middle of a pandemic,

Many: we hear the angels sing and we follow the Star.

Our faith is not diminished

O Come, All Ye Faithful

41

ADESTE FIDELES 6.6.10.5.6 with refrain

John Francis Wade (c. 1740–1743)
Trans. Frederick Oakeley, 1841

John Francis Wade (c. 1740–1743)
Harm. *The English Hymnal*, 1906

1. O come, all ye faith - ful, Joy - ful and tri - um - phant, O
2. Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, Born this hap - py morn - ing,
*3. Sing, choirs of an - gels, Sing in ex - ul - ta - tion!

come ye, O come ye to Beth - le - hem!
Je - sus, to Thee be all glo - ry given;
Sing, all ye cit - i - zens of heaven a - bove!

Come, and be - hold Him, Born the King of an - gels!
Word of the Fa - ther, Now in flesh ap - pear - ing!
Glo - ry to God, all Glo - ry in the high - est!

Refrain
O come, let us a - dore Him, O come, let us a -

dore Him, O come, let us a - dore Him, Christ, the Lord!

*Alternate harmonization and descant for stanza 3, 42

Sung by Choir I, with Herb Smith, trumpet

“The Child is Born Again” from Ann Weems’ *Kneeling in Bethlehem*.

One: Holy Light,

Many: Each year the Child is born again.

Each year some new heart

Finally hears

Finally sees

Finally knows love.

And in heaven There is great rejoicing!

One: There is a festival of stars!

There is celebration among the angels!

For in the finding of one lost sheep,

**Many: The heart of the Shepherd is glad, and Christmas
has happened once more.**

The Child is born anew and one more knee is bowed!

Amen.

Hymn

It Came Upon a Midnight Clear

CAROL

1. It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old,
From angels bending near the earth, to touch their harps of gold;
"Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heaven's all gracious King":
The world in solemn stillness lay, to hear the angels sing.

2. Still through the cloven skies they come, with peaceful wings unfurled,
And still their heavenly music floats o'er all the weary world;
Above its sad and lowly plains they bend on hovering wing,
And ever o'er its Babel sounds the blessed angels sing.

3 And ye, beneath life's crushing load, whose forms are bending low,
who toil along the climbing way with painful steps and slow,
look now! for glad and golden hours come swiftly on the wing.
O rest beside the weary road, and hear the angels sing!

4. For lo, the days are hastening on, by prophet bards foretold,
When with the ever circling years comes round the age of gold;
When peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling,
And the whole world send back the song which now the angels sing.

Sung by Choir I, with Herb Smith, trumpet, and Jason Cloen, organ

One: Every week of Advent we have lit one of these candles, one each for Hope, Love, Joy, and Peace. And tonight, we light the birthday candle for Christ who is at the center of it all.

Let us pray:

Many: Jesus; you are our hope, our peace, our joy, and our love. We trust in the Good News that you are the Light of the World. Help us to be your reconciling presence in the world, working for justice as we value each person with dignity. Empower us to hold the essence of Christmas within us throughout the year, we ask. Amen.

Carol

Behind the Clouds

Abbie Betinis

Text by Abbie Burt Betinis after Bates G. Burt

Sung by choir II, Juli Elliot, soloist

*“Behind the clouds that darken human life,
Forever shines the Light of God;
And whensoever those clouds may go,
Dispelling the shadows in which we so
blindly grope,
Then is it, indeed,
Hope.*

*With ears attuned to heaven's prophecies,
Our hearts await a Prince of Peace,
And whensoever that Prince appear,
And we in darkness, and we in fear
find release,
Then is it, indeed,
Peace.*

*Awake! Awake! Lift up your hearts downcast,
For sorrow shall transform at last,
And whensoever that Rose unfurl'd,
Invites Hosannas for all the world
to employ,
Then is it, indeed,
Joy.*

*O come, O come, come closer still tonight,
The pains of life remain, but Light...!
And whensoever that Light breaks through,
And we, in radiance, reflect a new
world above,
Then is it, indeed,
Love.”*

Retelling the Story

Hymn

○ Little Town of Bethlehem

ST. LOUIS

1. 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.

2. For Christ is born of Mary, and gathered all above,
while mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wond’ring love.
O morning stars, together proclaim the holy birth!
And praises sing—let “Glory!” ring with peace to all on earth!

3. How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is giv’n!
So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of the heav’ns.
No ear may hear his coming, but in this world of sin,
where meek souls will receive him still the dear Christ enters in.

4. 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.

Sung by Choir I, with Herb Smith, trumpet, and Lee Wright, organ

Scripture Reading

Luke 2:1-7
from the King James Version

Andrea Folan

One: And now we will continue by reading together,

Many: And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

Hymn

Away in a Manger

CRADLE SONG/MUELLER

1. Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
The little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head.
The stars in the bright sky looked down where He lay,
The little Lord Jesus, asleep on the hay.

2. The cattle are lowing, the poor Baby wakes,
But little Lord Jesus, no crying He makes;
I love Thee, Lord Jesus, look down from the sky,
And stay by my side until morning is nigh.

3. 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.

Sung by Choir II, with Lee Wright, organ

Scripture Reading

Luke 2:8-14
from the King James Version

Rev. Swift

Hymn

Angels We Have Heard on High

GLORIA

1 Angels we have heard on high sweetly singing o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply echoing their joyous strains.

Refrain: Gloria, in excelsis Deo; Gloria, in excelsis Deo.

2 Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be which inspire your heavenly song? (Ref.)

3 Come to Bethlehem and see Him whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee Christ the Lord, the newborn King. (Ref.)

Sung by Choir I, with Herb Smith, trumpet

What Shall We Offer?

Carol

In the Bleak Midwinter

Harold Darke

*"In the bleak mid-winter frosty wind made moan,
earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone;
snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow,
in the bleak mid-winter long ago.*

*Our God, heaven cannot hold him nor earth sustain;
heaven and earth shall flee away when he comes to reign:
in the bleak mid-winter a stable-place sufficed
the Lord God Almighty, Jesus Christ.*

*Enough for him whom cherubim worship night and day,
a breast-ful of milk and a manger-ful of hay;
enough for him whom angels fall down before,
the ox and ass and camel which adore.*

*What can I give him, poor as I am?
if I were a shepherd I would bring a lamb,
if I were a wise man I would do my part;
yet what I can I give him, give my heart."*

Text: Christina Rossetti

Sung by Choir I, Marrlee Burgess and Ben Magruder, soloists
with Herb Smith, trumpet, and Jason Cloen, organ

Christmas Prayers and the Prayer of Jesus

Rev. Swift

Our Creator, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy Spirit come! Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the Spirit, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Silent Night, Holy Night! 122

1 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! All is calm, all is bright
 2 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Shep - herds quake at the sight;
 3 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Son of God, love's pure light
 4 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Won - drous star, lend thy light;

'round you vir - gin moth - er and child! Ho - ly In - fant, so ten - der and
 glo - ries stream from heav - en a - far, heav - en - ly hosts sing "Al - le - lu -
 ra - diant beams from thy ho - ly face, with the dawn of re - deem - ing
 with the an - gels let us sing Al - le - lu - ia to our

mild, sleep in heav - en - ly peace, sleep in heav - en - ly peace.
 ia: Christ the Sav - ior is born; Christ the Sav - ior is born!"
 grace, Je - sus, Lord, at thy birth, Je - sus, Lord, at thy birth.
 King: Christ the Sav - ior is born; Christ the Sav - ior is born.

Sung by Choir II, with Lee Wright, violin, and Robert Kerner, organ



A Special Thanks to . . .

Participants: Rev. Deb Swift, Emily and Andrea Folan, Lee Wright

Choir I: Marrlee Burgess, Joan Sussman, Kathryn Borden, Emmalouise St. Amand,
Ben Magruder, David Henkel, Jason Cloen, Rob Brown, and Alan Jones.

Choir II: Laura Anderson, Juli Elliot, Brenda Tremblay, Carol Kerner,
Ben Magruder, Mark Darling, Rob Kerner, Alan Jones

Lee Wright, conductor and organist

Sound Engineers: Donald Fairman, David McDowell, and Ben Magruder (Music)
Website integration: Mark Anderson

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