

FAMILY CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE

Saturday, December 24, 2023 - 7:00pm

The Nativity of the Lord



“To us a child is born, a Son given...” Isaiah 9:6

PRELUDE: “Angels From the Realms of Glory” Mary McDonald

GREETING AND GATHERING WORDS – Luke 1:1-4

PRAYER OF EXPECTANT WAITING in poetry (responsive)

“First Coming” by Madeleine L’Engle, American writer and poet - born 1918.

LEADER: He did not wait till the world was ready, till people and nations were at peace. He came when the Heavens were unsteady, and prisoners cried out for release. He did not wait for the perfect time. He came when the need was deep and great. He dined with sinners in all their grime, turned water into wine. He did not wait...till hearts were pure.

PEOPLE: In joy he came to a tarnished world of sin and doubt. To a world like ours of anguished shame he came, and his Light would not go out.

LEADER: He came to a world which did not mesh, to heal its tangles, shield its scorn In the mystery of the Word made Flesh the Maker of the stars was born.

PEOPLE: We cannot wait till the world is sane to raise our songs with joyful voice, to share our grief, to touch our pain. He came with Love: Rejoice! Rejoice!

UNISON: Forgive us for taking you for granted, Holy Child and Savior of us all.
(A Time for Silent Confession)

Leader: Through Christ Our Lord we pray. **People:** AMEN.

*Hymn: #133 “O Come, All Ye Faithful” (Congregation with Bell Choir)

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES with a reading of the poem “Plan A or Plan B?” by Brian Wren, English hymn-writer and poet (adapted)

Lighting the First Candle: Hope

God, did you decide to become human only because the human race had gone so badly wrong? Was the birth of Christ, as it were, Plan B?

Lighting the Second Candle: Peace

Or was it Plan A? Did you always plan to come, whatever happened?

Lighting the Third Candle: Joy

Would you have come to a good world where most of the time we loved our neighbors and kept your laws?

Lighting of the Fourth Candle: Love

Or did you come because our world is full of violence and despair and only you can make it right? God, our wondering is not disrespect but a way of saying, “Wow!” and “Thank You!” because the true wonder is, the wonderful truth is, that you did come, and that your Word became flesh, and lived among us, full of grace and truth, full of conviction and love.

Lighting of the Christ Candle:

No one has ever seen you, but your offspring, your child, your Chosen One, the One who is closest to your heart has made you known. We thank you. We praise you. For those whose hearts and minds and eyes are open, Your light shines for all the world to see. We love you and adore you. You are God with-Us!

Unison Prayer: Loving God, we light these candles this night, remembering that Love changed the world. You convinced us of your Love when Love came down at Christmas. With your help, we will transform the world through faith, with conviction and resilience, with Love. AMEN.

ANTHEM: “Gentle Mary Laid Her Child” (GTG#146) arr. Page
Bell Choir with Organ

Scripture: Matthew 1:18-21

Carol #123 “It Came Upon the Midnight Clear”

Scripture: Matthew 1:22-24

Carol #118 “While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks by Night”

Reading: “The Coming God”

Carol #113 “Angels We Have Heard on High”

Reading: “Mary, Nazareth Girl”

Carol #115 “Away in a Manger”

OFFERING AND RESPONSE:

Hymn: #144 “In the Bleak Midwinter” (vs. 4 only)

Reading: “Getting to the Front of the Stable” (paraphrased)

Picture Story Video: The Carol of Joseph

4:0 <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=TGQjoFJLQIE>

CELEBRATING THE LIGHT - “Silent Night”

(As the light comes to you, always tilt your unlit candle toward the lighted one).

CHRISTMAS PRAYER

SENDING FORTH AND BENEDICTION

“And He shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Prince of Peace.”

Isaiah 9:6

POSTLUDE:

“Joy to the World”

Diane Bish

The End of Worship

The Beginning of Service

*Those who wish may stand

Rev. James Shuler, Interim Pastor

Mrs. Dianne Yuninger, Organist/Choir Director

Christmas Eve Service

Leacock Presbyterian Church



7:00 p.m. Sunday, December 24, 2023

The Birth of Jesus Foretold

God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a young maiden named Mary, pledged to be married to Joseph, a descendant of David. The angel said to her, “Greetings, you are highly favored! The Lord is with you. The Holy Spirit will come on you and the power of the Most High overshadow you. The one born to you will be called Holy, the Son of God. Mary answered: “I am the Lord’s servant. May your word be fulfilled.”

Luke 1:26b-28, 35, 38

SILENT NIGHT

Silent night! Holy night! All is calm, all is bright,
Round yon Virgin Mother and Child!
Holy Infant, so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace, Sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night! Holy night! Shepherds quake at the sight,
Glories stream from heaven afar,
Heavenly hosts sing: "Alleluia;
Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born."

Silent night! Holy night! Son of God, love's pure Light
Radiant beams from Thy holy face,
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.

Silent night! Holy night! Wondrous Star, lend thy light;
With the angels let us sing,
Alleluia to our King;
Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born.



