

Christmas Eve Worship with
Holy Communion
Congregation responses in bold print.
Please stand as you are able
Please silence your phones.

Gathering

WELCOME

Rev. Althea Albright

PRELUDE

It Came Upon a Midnight Clear by Albert D. Schmutz

Please stand as you are able.

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

Let us come together in this holy place to feel the warmth of God's presence.

We are here to worship our Creator and listen for the Spirit.

We are called to trust in our Creator and Redeemer. God calls us to listen once again for the voice of the Spirit speaking to us in our lives.

**We find ourselves weary and broken. Only You can heal us and refresh us.
Only You can open our hearts and minds.**

Let us remember who created us and loves us just as we are. Let us worship together as we celebrate the coming of the Messiah. **Amen.**

***CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

Let us pray.....Almighty God, you know us inside and out. You are with us in our past, present, and future. We cannot escape your presence. You know us before we were born. You watch over us day and night, and always hear our prayers. We come before you now asking for forgiveness when we stray. Bring us closer to your Holy Spirit once again. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

God of Love,

We confess that we have turned away from you, God. We have not trusted your promises to hear us. We have doubts sometimes that you are by our side. We let worry and fear consume us. We do not always treat our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may know your deep love for us again and glorify your holy name in all that we say and do. Amen.

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was crucified and died for us and for all our sins. As a minister of the church of Christ, I declare to you that God forgives all of your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the † Son, and of the Holy Spirit. God has never left you. Return to the Lord your God, with joyful hearts, ready to accept God's gift of grace. **Amen.**

***GATHERING HYMN**

O Come, All Ye Faithful

ELW # 283

***KYRIE**

***HYMN OF PRAISE**

This is the feast

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Let us pray together....**Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that here on earth we may walk in the light of Jesus' presence and in the last day wake to the brightness of his glory; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

Please be seated

Word

FIRST READING: Isaiah 9:2-7

This poem promises deliverance from Assyrian oppression, a hope based on the birth of a royal child with a name full of promise. While Judah's king will practice justice and righteousness, the real basis for faith lies in God's passion for the people: The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this!

²The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined.

³You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you
as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder.

⁴For the yoke of their burden,
and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor,
you have broken as on the day of Midian.

⁵For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood
shall be burned as fuel for the fire.

⁶For a child has been born for us, a son given to us;
authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

⁷His 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 with righteousness
from this time onward and forevermore.

The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM: Psalm 96

¹Sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth.

**²Sing to the LORD, bless the name of the LORD;
proclaim God's salvation from day to day.**

³Declare God's glory among the nations and God's wonders among all peoples.

**⁴For great is the LORD and greatly to be praised,
more to be feared than all gods.**

⁵As for all the gods of the nations, they are but idols;
but you, O LORD, have made the heavens.

**⁶Majesty and magnificence are in your presence;
power and splendor are in your sanctuary.**

⁷Ascribe to the LORD, you families of the peoples,
ascribe to the LORD honor and power.

**⁸Ascribe to the LORD the honor due the holy name;
bring offerings and enter the courts of the LORD.**

⁹Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness; tremble before the LORD, all the earth.

**¹⁰Tell it out among the nations: "The LORD is king!
The one who made the world so firm that it cannot be moved will judge
the peoples with equity."**

¹¹Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad;
let the sea thunder and all that is in it; let the field be joyful and all that is therein.

**¹²Then shall all the trees of the wood shout for joy at your coming, O LORD,
for you come to judge the earth.**

¹³You will judge the world with righteousness and the peoples with your truth.

SECOND READING: Titus 2:11-14

The appearance of God's grace in Jesus Christ brings salvation for all humanity. Consequently, in the present we live wisely and justly while also anticipating the hope of our Savior's final appearance.

¹¹The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, ¹²training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, ¹³while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. ¹⁴He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

***GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

The holy gospel according to Luke. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

***GOSPEL: Luke 2:1-20**

God's greatest gift comes as a baby in a manger. Angels announce the "good news of great joy" and proclaim God's blessing of peace.

¹In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴Joseph 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. ⁵He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷And 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.

⁸In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." ¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

¹⁴"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

¹⁵When 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." ¹⁶So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them. **The Gospel of the Lord. Praise to you, O Christ.**

OFFERING

We are thankful for however you are able to continue supporting our ministry at Grace. Offering may be received through the mail, church office, or Simply Giving online. Please call the church office if you need assistance with Simply Giving, or have any questions or concerns.

OFFERTORY 5:00 pm

In Dulci Jubilo

by Gwilyn Beechey

7:00 pm

The Coventry Carol

arr. By Tom Scott

*PRESENTATION OF GIFTS

What Child Is This

ELW # 296

*OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray. Almighty God, **You are Creator of all that is in heaven and on earth.**

We rejoice that we have many blessings to be thankful for in our lives.

You have changed our lives forever with your Word made flesh.

Grant us courage to change the lives of others with your Good News.

Bless our congregation, this community, and all the offerings we give back to you for your holy work, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Please be seated

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Pastor: Joining our voices with the song of the angels, let us pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

Pastor: The heavens and angels sing in praise. All the earth is full of joy at Jesus' birth. Come, let us adore Christ our Lord, and kneel before God with our prayers.

A brief silence.

Pastor: Almighty God, may your church all over the world proclaim the Good News of your Son's birth. Provide us with resources to keep your creation thriving and restore habitats. Protect all animals and ecosystems on land, seas, skies, deserts, rainforests, and mountains. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Pastor: Prince of Peace, Bring stillness and safety to all places which suffer violence and war. Grant wisdom to leaders of all nations. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Pastor: Jesus, our Emmanuel, you bring hope and healing to all who suffer, in mind, body, or spirit. Send your healing presence to all those on our hearts this Christmas Eve *especially those we name now or in our hearts* Hold them all in your loving care. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Pastor: Ever faithful God, we lift all our prayers to you and we trust that you hear us, in the name of Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen**

HYMN

What Child Is This

ELW # 296

Meal

*Follow the direction of pastor for the taking of communion elements
after singing the Lamb of God*

GREAT THANKSGIVING

PREFACE

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. In the wonder and mystery of the Word made flesh you have opened the eyes of faith to a new and radiant vision of your glory, that, beholding the God made visible, we may be drawn to love the God whom we cannot see. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn: Holy, Holy, Holy

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Holy God, you have filled all of creation with light and life.

Heaven and earth are full of your glory.

You are faithful to your people in every age and sent the gift of your Son, Jesus, so that we may not die, but live because of your grace and love.

On the night before Jesus would face suffering and death he sat with his disciples, gave thanks, broke bread, and said:

Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, Jesus took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying:

This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

God of all time, as we celebrate Jesus' birth in this Christmas meal, we pray for the gift of your spirit to be among us in our gathering, among your people, and throughout the world.

May all glory and praise, honor, power, and might be to you, our God, forever and ever. **Amen**

LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us;

and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Your Word, O God, is revealed in a manger, and you are with us in this bread and wine. Come meet Christ in the meal.

Youth, who are receiving First Communion, will come forward first with their family. Then, those in the Social Hall will receive Communion followed by those in the Sanctuary.

Please stand as you are able

***PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Let us pray together..... **We give you thanks, gracious God, that you have once again fed us from your very self with the body and blood of Christ.**

Through this mystery, send us forth to proclaim your promise to a world in need, through the same Jesus Christ, our Messiah. Amen.

CELEBRATION OF THE LIGHT OF CHRIST

The prologue to the Gospel of John describes Jesus as the Word of God made flesh, the one who reveals God to be "full of grace and truth."

***LESSON OF LIGHT: John 1:1-14**

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. ⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

¹⁰He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. ¹²But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. ¹⁴And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

***Carol**

"Silent Night"

ELW #281

- 1 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.

- 2 Silent night, holy night! Shepherds quake at the sight;
 glories stream from heaven afar, heav'nly hosts sing, alleluia!
 Christ, the Savior, is born! Christ, the Savior, is born!

- 3 Silent night, holy night! Son of God, love's pure light
 radiant beams from your holy face, with the dawn of redeeming grace,

Jesus, Lord, at your birth, Jesus, Lord, at your birth.

Text: Joseph Mohr, 1792-1849; tr. John F. Young, 1820-1885

Please be seated

Sending

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SENDING PRAYER

Let us pray. Dearest Lord Jesus, in this time of holy worship you have refreshed us with your holy Word. We find hope and joy again because of God's love come down in Jesus. Send us forth now as witnesses of the Good News of your birth, that we also may be light for the world, in the name of Jesus, our Emmanuel.

Amen.

Please stand as you are able

***BLESSING**

May Almighty God bless you and keep you.

May the presence of the Messiah give you comfort and peace.

May the Holy Spirit light a fire within you and ✠ give you everlasting hope. **Amen.**

***SENDING HYMN**

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

ELW # 270

Please be seated for the postlude.

Take this time to listen to the music and contemplate the Christmas Message.

POSTLUDE

For Unto Us a Child is Born

arr. By Henry Smart

DISMISSAL

Pastor: Go and tell everyone that the Messiah is born! Merry Christmas!

Thanks be to God! Merry Christmas!

***SENDING HYMN**

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

ELW # 270