



Christmas Eve

DECEMBER 24, 2022
6:00, 8:00, and 11:00PM

GATHERING AS THE CHURCH

Asterisks () indicate an invitation to stand as you are able.*

GATHERING VOLUNTARY If This Child Were Born Today

Berta Poorman /

Sonja Poorman

If this child were born today
in a manger on the hay,
would we see a King?
Would we hear angels sing?
If a star were shining bright,
would we notice in the night?
Would we be the ones to behold God's Son?
Would we fall on bended knee
worshiping this Babe?
Would we praise with thankful hearts
God's gift of salvation?
Noel! Born is the King.
Come tenderly on bended knee,
you will see the King.

Words and Music: Berta Poorman and Sonja Poorman

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Noel, Trad. English Carol

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The Little Drummer Boy

Harry Simeone/Katherine Davis/Henry Onorati

Arr. Harry Simeone

Come, they told me,
our newborn King to see.
Our finest gifts we bring,
to lay before the King.
So to honor him, when we come.
Baby Jesu, I am a poor boy, too.
I have no gift to bring,
that's fit to give our King.
Shall I play for you, on my drum?
Mary nodded, the ox and lamb kept time.
I played my drum for him;
I played my best for him.
Then he smiled at me,
me and my drum.

Words and Music: Harry Simeone / Katherine Davis / Henry Onorati; arr. Harry Simeone

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Sure on this shining night of star made shadows round,
kindness must watch for me this side the ground,
on this shining night.

The late year lies down the north,
all is healed, all is health.

High summer holds the earth.

Hearts are whole.

Sure on this shining night.

I weep for wonder wandering far alone
of shadows on the stars.

Words: James Agee, Permit Me Voyage: *Description of Elysium*

Music: Morten Lauridsen, *Nocturnes*

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INTROIT

Good Christian Friends, Rejoice!

German Carol

Arr. Charles Winfred Douglas

Good Christians friends, rejoice!
with heart and soul and voice;
give ye heed to what we say:
Jesus Christ is born today;
ox and ass before him bow,
and he is in the manger now.

Christ is born today!

Good Christian friends, rejoice!
with heart and soul and voice;
now ye hear of endless bliss;
Jesus Christ was born for this!
He hath opened heaven's door,
and we are blest for evermore.

Christ was born for this!

Words: John Mason Neale

Music: *In dulci jubilo*, German Carol arr. Charles Winfred Douglas

*** CALL TO WORSHIP**

If you are like Joseph,
and you are seeking truth,
there is room here for you.

If you are like Mary,
and you are seeking rest,
there is a seat here for you.

If you are like the wise men,
and you are looking for a sign,
these candles are here for you.

If you are like the angels,
and you cannot help but sing,
there is a melody here for you.

Come in.
You are in God's house.
Love was born tonight,
and there is love here for you.
Let us worship the God of love.

*** OPENING CAROL**

O Come, All Ye Faithful

**O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye, to Bethlehem.
Come and adore him, born the king of angels;
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.**

**True God of true God, Light from Light Eternal,
lo, he shuns not the Virgin's womb;
Son of the Father, begotten, not created;
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.**

**Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation;
O sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God, all glory in the highest;
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.**

**Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning,
Jesus, to thee be all glory given.**

Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing:

O come, let us adore him,

O come, let us adore him,

O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

Words: John F. Wade; trans. Frederick Oakeley, and others

Music: *Adeste Fideles*, John F. Wade; harm. The English Hymnal

LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLES

SUNG RESPONSE

**Go, tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere;
go, tell it on the mountain, that Jesus Christ is Born.**

Words: John W. Work

Music: *Go Tell It On the Mountain*, Trad. Spiritual

ANTHEM

O Holy Night

Adolphe Adam

O holy night! the stars are brightly shining,
it is the night of our dear Savior's birth;
long lay the world in sin and error pining,
till he appeared and the soul felt its worth.
A thrill of hope the weary world rejoices,
for yonder breaks a new and glorious morn.
Fall on your knees! Oh, hear the angel voices,
O night divine, O night when Christ was born.
Truly he taught us to love one another;
his law is love and his gospel is peace.
Chains shall he break,
for the slave is our brother,
and in his name all oppression shall cease.
Sweet hymns of joy in grateful chorus raise we,
let all within us praise his holy name.
Christ is the Lord, then ever, ever praise we.
His power and glory evermore proclaim.

Words and Music: Adolphe Adam

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THE CHRISTMAS STORY

LUKE 2:1-5

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph 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. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child.

All sing:

**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.**

**For Christ is born of Mary,
and gathered all above,
while mortals sleep,
the angels keep their watch of wondering love.**

**O morning stars together,
proclaim the holy birth,
and praises sing to God the King,
and peace to all on earth.**

Words: Phillips Brooks

Music: *St. Louis*, Lewis H. Redner

LUKE 2:6-7

While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And 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.

All sing:

**Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.
The stars in the sky looked down where he lay,
and little Lord Jesus, asleep on the hay.**

**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.**

Words: Anon.

Music: *Away in a Manger*, James R. Murray

LUKE 2:8-12

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.”

All sing:

**The first Noel, the angel did say
was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
in fields where they lay keeping their sheep,
on a cold winter’s night that was so deep.
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel,
born is the King of Israel.**

**They looked up and saw a star
shining in the east beyond them far,
and to the earth it gave great light,
and so it continued both day and night.
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel,
born is the King of Israel.**

Words: English Carol

Music: *The First Noel*, English Carol; harm. John Stainer

LUKE 2:13-14

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”

All sing:

**Angels we have heard on high
sweetly singing o’er the plains,
and the mountains in reply
echoing their joyous strains.
Gloria, in excelsis Deo!
Gloria, in excelsis Deo!**

**Come to Bethlehem and see
Christ whose birth the angels sing;
come, adore on bended knee,
Christ the Lord, the newborn King.
Gloria, in excelsis Deo!
Gloria, in excelsis Deo!**

Words: French Carol, trans. Crown of Jesus

Music: *Gloria*, French carol medley, arr. Edward Shippen Barnes

LUKE 2:15-20

When 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." So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

All sing, standing:

**Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her King;
let every heart prepare him room,
and heaven and nature sing,
and heaven and nature sing,
and heaven, and heaven, and nature sing.**

**Joy to the world, the Savior reigns!
Let all their songs employ;
while fields and floods, rocks hills, and plains
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.**

Words: Isaac Watts

Music: *Antioch*, George Frederic Handel, arr. Lowell Mason

WELCOME

SERMON

FEASTING AT GOD'S TABLE

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

God earnestly invites all of you to this table, where the Christ is both the giver and the gift, the host and the meal. You don't have to be a member of this church or of any church to come. But sometimes we have to give up things that stand between us and God. In that Spirit, let us join our hearts in prayer.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God of Joy,
we come to celebrate again
the arrival of Love Incarnate
here in our very midst.

**Your glorious arrival
is enough to cause the forests to sing for joy,
yet we still find reasons to complain and sigh.**

Your light of salvation
is bright enough to illuminate
every corner of our lives,
yet we still find ourselves
shrouded in worry and doubt.

**Your gift of Love
is big enough for the whole world,
yet we still find ourselves resentful
your love extends to those
whom we deem to be unworthy.**

God,
you invite us into the light of the stable
where the overlooked and forgotten
have gathered to celebrate the miracle of your love.

**Give us the strength and courage
to join you at the manger. Amen.**

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Do not be afraid!
Hear the good news of great joy for all people:
A savior has been born this night for you!
Nothing in the past, present, or future
can stand between us and God.
This is the good news:
God has heard our confession.
God has forgiven our sin.

Thanks be to God!

All sing:

**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!**

Words: Phillips Brooks

Music: *St. Louis*, Lewis H. Redner

OFFERING OUR GIFTS TO GOD

To our guests: Your presence today is itself a gift to God and to this church. Please do not feel obligated to make an offering. We believe that all we have and all we are is a gift from God, and so we give joyfully to participate in God's good work in the world. When you make a gift to First Church this Christmas, your gift is a response to that greatest gift God has given to us. If you would like to support the ongoing opportunities for faith formation and community transformation of First United Methodist Church and help us move nimbly and sustainably into a new year when we will begin to restore and renovate our historic Sanctuary building, please be sure to write "Christmas Offering" on your gift and place your offering in the basket as it passes.

OFFERTORY

Tomorrow Shall Be My Dancing Day

John Gardner

Tomorrow shall be my dancing day;
I would my true love did so chance
to see the legend of my play,
to call my true love to my dance:
sing O my love;
this have I done for my true love.
Then was I born of a virgin pure,
of her I took fleshly substance;
thus was I knit to man's nature,
to call my true love to my dance:
sing O my love;
this have I done for my true love.
In a manger laid and wrapped I was;
so very poor this was my chance,
betwixt an ox and a silly poor ass,
to call my true love to my dance:
sing O my love;
this have I done for my true love.
Then afterwards baptized I was;
the Holy Ghost on me did glance,
my Father's voice heard from above,
to call my true love to my dance:
sing O my love;
this have I done for my true love.

Words: Trad. English Carol

Music: John Gardner, Op. 75 No.2

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* PRESENTATION OF THE OFFERING

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise God, all creatures here below: Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-lu-ia! Praise God, the source of all our gifts! Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts! Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit! Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-lu-ia!

Words: Thomas Ken; adapt. Gilbert H. Vieira

Music: *Geistliche Kirchengesänge*; harm. Ralph Vaughan Williams

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* THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing,
always and everywhere to give thanks to you,
Almighty God, creator of heaven and earth.

You created light out of darkness
and brought forth life on the earth.

You formed us in your image
and breathed into us the breath of life.

When we turned away, and our love failed,
your love remained steadfast.

You delivered us from captivity,
made covenant to be our sovereign God,
and spoke to us through your prophets.


In the fullness of time

you gave your only Son Jesus Christ to be our Savior,
and at his birth the angels sang
glory to you in the highest and peace to your people on earth.


And so,

we bow in holy splendor before the wonder of your incarnation,
and join with the heavenly host in their unending hymn,
praising and glorifying you, singing:


Intro (first time only) *All*




Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of hosts, all praise be given!
Bles-sed is the one who came, bring-ing love and light di - vine.



All your glo - ry fills the earth; all your pow - er fills the heavens. Glo - - - -
Bles-sed is the king who comes in the bread and in the wine.



- - - - ri - a, in ex - cel - sis De - o! Glo - - - - - - - -




- ri - a, in ex - cel - sis De - o!

Please be seated. Pastor continues leading the prayer, recalling the acts of Christ.


...And so,

in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ,
we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving
as a holy and living sacrifice,
in union with Christ's offering for us
as we proclaim the mystery of faith:


Intro *All*




Christ has died, Christ is ris'n, Christ will come to earth a - gain.



Great the myst - ry of God's grace; great the myst - ry of our faith. Glo - - - - -



- - - - ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o. Glo - - - - - - - -



- ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o.

Pastor continues leading the prayer, asking God to pour out God's Holy Spirit on us and this meal.

...Through your Son Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit in your holy Church,
all honor and glory is yours, almighty God,
now and forever.

Amen.

All sing:

Glo - - - - - ri - a, in ex - cel - sis De - o!

Glo - - - - - ri - a, in ex - cel - sis De - o!

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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.
Amen.

RECEIVING THE BREAD AND CUP

We invite you to receive communion by coming forward when directed. The minister will place the bread in your open hand, saying, "The body of Christ given for you," to which you respond, "Amen." You will then pass on to the server with the tray. Help yourself to a cup from the tray. Move to the altar rail or to your seat to eat and drink.

HYMNS DURING RECEIVING

Hark! the Herald Angels Sing

**Hark! the herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King;
peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!”
Joyful, all ye nations rise, join the triumph of the skies;
with th’angelic host proclaim, “Christ is born in Bethlehem!”
Hark! the herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King!”**

**Christ, by highest heaven adored; Christ the everlasting Lord;
late in time behold him come, offspring of a virgin’s womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see; hail th’incarnate Deity,
pleased with us in flesh to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel.
Hark! the herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King!”**

**Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace!
Hail the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings, risen with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by, born that we no more may die,
born to raise us from the earth, born to give us second birth.
Hark! the herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King!”**

Words: Charles Wesley, alt. George Whitefield, and others

Music: *Mendelssohn*, Felix Mendelssohn, arr. William H. Cummings

What Child Is This

**What child is this who, laid to rest, on Mary’s lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet, while shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary.**

**Why lies he in such mean estate where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christians, fear, for sinners here the silent Word is pleading.
This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary.**

**So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh, come, peasant, king, to own him;
the King of kings salvation brings, let loving hearts enthrone him.
This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary.**

Words: William C. Dix

Music: *Greensleeves*, 16th cent. English melody

He Is Born

**He is born, the holy Child, play the oboe and bagpipes merrily!
He is born, the holy Child, sing we all of the Savior mild.
Thru long ages of the past, prophets have foretold his coming;
thru long ages of the past, now the time has come at last!**

**He is born, the holy Child, play the oboe and bagpipes merrily!
He is born, the holy Child, sing we all of the Savior mild.
O how lovely, O how pure is this perfect child of heaven;
O how lovely, O how pure, gracious gift to human-kind!**

**He is born, the holy Child, play the oboe and bagpipes merrily!
He is born, the holy Child, sing we all of the Savior mild.
Jesus, Lord of all the world, coming as a child among us,
Jesus, Lord of all the world, grant to us thy heavenly peace.
He is born, the holy Child, play the oboe and bagpipes merrily!
He is born, the holy Child, sing we all of the Savior mild.**

Words: French carol, trans. anon.

Music: *Il est Né*, French carol

Infant Holy, Infant Lowly

**Infant holy, infant lowly, for his bed a cattle stall;
oxen lowing, little knowing, Christ the babe is Lord of all.
Swift are winging angels singing, noels ringing, tidings bringing:
Christ the babe is Lord of all.**

**Flocks were sleeping, shepherds keeping vigil till the morning new
saw the glory, heard the story, tidings of a gospel true.
Thus rejoicing, free from sorrow, praises voicing, greet the morrow:
Christ the babe was born for you.**

Words: Polish carol; trans. Edith M. G. Reed

Music: *W Złobie Lezy*, Polish carol, arr. Edith M. G. Reed

SPREADING THE LIGHT

* CLOSING PRAYER

**O God,
you have made this night radiant
with the splendor of the true Light, Jesus Christ.
May the Light of Him who was born the Prince of Peace
shine in our lives and keep us in his perfect peace,
tonight and always.
Amen.**

* CLOSING CAROL

Silent Night, Holy 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.**

Words: Joseph Mor, alt; sts. 1, 2, 3 trans. John F. Young; st. 4 trans. anon.

Music: *Stille Nacht*, Franz Gruber

After the pastors carry the light out, the congregation may leave quietly. As we leave tonight, we carry the light of Christ into the world with songs of faith on our lips and love of God in our hearts.

WORSHIP LEADERS

Preacher: Reverend Taylor Fuerst

Liturgists: Reverend Cathy Stone and Dr. Brad King

Music Director/Organist: Scott Davis

6:00 and 8:00PM FUMC Choir: Mario Contreras and Lewis Worthington

11:00PM Cantors: Victoria Tijerina and Christina Whitford

GREAT THANKSGIVING MUSICAL SETTING

Words: Unknown origin, revised Daniel Benedict and Dean McIntyre

Music: *Gloria*, French carol melody

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