

December 24, 2020  
**Christmas Eve – 7:00 PM**

## **GATHERING**

### **WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**AS WE GATHER THIS CHRISTMAS WE RECONIZE THAT WE DO SO ON THE TRADITIONAL LANDS OF THE ANISHINAABE AND HAUDENOSAUNEE PEOPLES.**

Merry Christmas! Welcome to all who have gathered here this evening.

You may be joining us in a completely exhausted state. You might be joining us and be full of joy. 2020 has been unprecedented and we all have been through a lot. Today we celebrate great hope for today and the future.

May tonight's service stir your heart, feed your soul, and bring you deeper into the celebration of this most holy night.

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### **CALL TO WORSHIP**

Come you hungry and needing shelter. Come you hurting and needing compassion. It is the night of all nights. God is with us.

# GATHERING HYMN: *O Come, O come, Emmanuel*

## O Come, O Come, Emmanuel



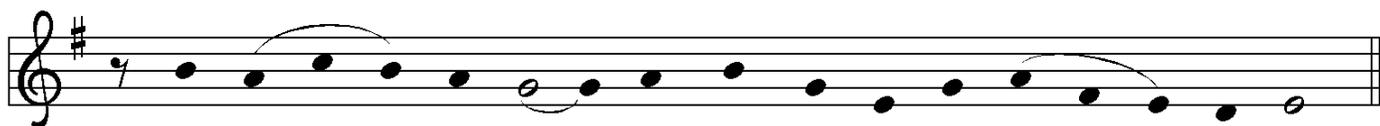
1 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som cap - tive  
2 O come, O Wis - dom from on high, em - brac - ing all things  
3 O come, O come, O Lord of might, as to your tribes on  
4 O come, O Branch of Jes - se, free your own from Sa - tan's



Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here  
far and nigh: in strength and beau - ty come and stay;  
Si - nai's height in an - cient times you gave the law  
tyr - an - ny; from depths of hell your peo - ple save,



un - til the Son of God ap - pear.  
teach us your will and guide our way. Re-joice! Re-joice!  
in cloud, and maj - es - ty, and awe.  
and give them vic - t'ry o'er the grave.



Em - man - u - el shall come to you, O Is - ra - el.

## CANDLE LIGHTING

Hope has brought us here. Hope is revealed in the birth of Jesus. Hope will never leave us.

*(Light the first candle.)*

When hope encounters trouble and despair. When we witness oppression, have hope. When we protect the outcast we do so with hope.

*(Light the second candle.)*

Hope has revealed its continual presence. Today we pay attention to the ways it lives in and beside us each and every day, leading us to justice.

*(Light the third candle.)*

Hope surprises us with its vulnerability... and ours. We expect hope to give us a mighty king, and instead it offers up a baby born in a barn. Today we proclaim that vulnerability to be our strength.

*(Light the fourth candle.)*

On this Christmas Eve, Christ comes into the world not by descending from heaven but through a young mother who has no worldly power or influence. If you feel outcast, isolated or alone... this light of hope is for you.

*(Light the Christmas candle.)*

## **GREETING**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

God of light and life, **you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true Light. Let us worship with hope filled hearts, as Christ's light grows within us and shows us life. Let him speak to us and teach us love, until we open our hearts to be his home. Amen.**

## **HYMN**

## O, Come, All Ye Faithful



1 O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant! O  
 2 The high - est, most ho - ly, light of light e - ter - nal,  
 3 Sing, choirs of an - gels, sing in ex - ul - ta - tion,  
 4 Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this hap - py morn - ing;



come ye, O come ye to Beth - le - hem;  
 born of a vir - gin, a mor - tal he comes;  
 sing, all ye cit - i - zens of heav - en a - bove!  
 Je - sus, to thee be . . . glo - ry giv'n!



come and be - hold him, born the king of an - gels:  
 Son of the Fa - ther now in flesh ap - pear - ing!  
 Glo - ry to God . . . in . . . the . . . high - est:  
 Word of the Fa - ther, now in flesh ap - pear - ing:

### Refrain



Ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus, ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus,  
 O come, let us a - dore him, O come, let us a - dore him,



ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus Do - mi - num.  
 O come, let us a - dore him, Christ the Lord!

## WORD

### FIRST READING: Isaiah 9:2–7

A reading from the Prophet Isaiah,

- <sup>2</sup>The people who walked in darkness  
have seen a great light;  
those who lived in a land of deep darkness —  
on them light has shined.
- <sup>3</sup>You 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.
- <sup>4</sup>For 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.
- <sup>5</sup>For all the boots of the tramping warriors  
and all the garments rolled in blood  
shall be burned as fuel for the fire.
- <sup>6</sup>For 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.
- <sup>7</sup>His 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.

Word of God, word of life. Thanks be to God.

# HYMN: VERSE 1 AND 2

## The First Noel



1 The first No - el the an - gel did say was to  
2 They look - ed up and saw . . . a star shin - ing  
3 And by the light of that . . . same star three . . .  
4 This star drew near to the . . . north - west, o'er . . .  
5 Then en - tered in those wise . . . men three, full . . .



cer - tain poor shep - herds in fields as they lay; in fields where  
in . . . the east . . . be - yond . . . them far; and to the  
wise . . . men came . . . from coun - try far; to seek for a  
Beth - le - hem . . . it took . . . its rest; and there it  
rev - 'rent - ly . . . up - on . . . their knee, and of - fered



they lay, keep - ing their sheep, on a cold win - ter's  
earth it gave . . . great light, and . . . so it con -  
king was their . . . in - tent, and to fol - low the  
did both stop . . . and stay right . . . o - ver the  
there in his . . . pres - ence their . . . gold, . . . and

### *Refrain*



night that was so deep.  
tin - ued both day and night.  
star wher - ev - er it went. No - el, No - el, No -  
place where Je - sus lay.  
myrrh, and frank - in - cense.



el, No - el! Born is the King of Is - ra - el.

## **GOSPEL: Luke 2:1–14**

The holy gospel according to Luke.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

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

<sup>8</sup>In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup>Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. <sup>10</sup>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: <sup>11</sup>to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. <sup>12</sup>This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." <sup>13</sup>And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

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

The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

**SERMON**

# HYMN VERSE 3 AND 4

## The First Noel



1 The first No - el the an - gel did say was to  
2 They look - ed up and saw . . . a star shin - ing  
3 And by the light of that . . . same star three . . .  
4 This star drew near to the . . . north-west, o'er . . .  
5 Then en - tered in those wise . . . men three, full . . .



cer - tain poor shep - herds in fields as they lay; in fields where  
in . . . the east . . . be - yond . . . them far; and to the  
wise . . . men came . . . from coun - try far; to seek for a  
Beth - le - hem . . . it took . . . its rest; and there it  
rev - 'rent - ly . . . up - on . . . their knee, and of - fered



they lay, keep - ing their sheep, on a cold win - ter's  
earth it gave . . . great light, and . . . so it con -  
king was their . . . in - tent, and to fol - low the  
did both stop . . . and stay right . . . o - ver the  
there in his . . . pres - ence their . . . gold, . . . and

### Refrain



night that was so deep.  
tin-ued both day and night.  
star wher - ev - er it went. No - el, No - el, No -  
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## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

As heaven and earth rejoice, let us pray for the needs of the church and all the world.

*A brief silence.*

This Christmas we pray for all who have endured spiritual abuse. We pray for the universal acceptance and protection of LGBTQ lives. We pray for those of other faiths. We pray for anyone who has been forced to tithe beyond their means. We pray for anyone who has been outcast in the name of Christ. We pray for change.

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Your great compassion, O God, has increased our joy. Give us gratitude each day for your light and the bread of life.

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Because of your generosity, the trees clap their hands, the deep waters teem with varied creatures, and the stars burn with distant fire. Make us grateful for all that you call us to nurture and protect.

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Because you know our need for order, you give us nations, cities, and neighborhoods. Help us to welcome the expertise of leaders, to uphold their good direction, and to oppose what harms the vulnerable.

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Because you are a God of healing and renewal, you make whole what is broken. We beg your mercy on all who find this time of year a burden. Strengthen the grieving and comfort those who struggle with addictions. We pray especially for those we name aloud or silently (*a long pause*).

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

By the power of the Holy Spirit, you have given us to each other to encourage and challenge. Give us hearts that remember your Christmas gifts beyond this night. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We pray for victims of the COVID-19 virus. Those who have died. Those who mourn. Those who are isolated. Those in long term care. Those who have shut their businesses, been laid off and who are now unemployed. Those who suffer from mental health issues. We also pray for front line workers. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We give thanks for those before us who witnessed to your presence, taught us to pray, and strengthened us in the truth, and all with whom we share the feast of eternal life. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God of mystery and miracle, may we never forget to approach you with childlike wonder. May the mystery and miracle of your presence bring us awe and wonder now and forever. Amen.

## **PEACE**

On this night of quietness and joy God calls us to be at peace: with God, with other nations, other cultures, other religions and with each other. As we are forgiven and reconciled to God through Christ Jesus, let us be reconciled to each other. The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

## **OFFERING PRAYER**

Let us pray,

Good and loving God, we rejoice in the birth of Jesus, who came among the poor to bring the riches of your grace. As you have blessed us with your gifts, let them be blessing for others. With the trees of the field, with all earth and heaven, we shout for joy at the coming of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## **LORD'S PRAYER**

God is with us, and so we pray,

**Our Father in heaven,**

**hallowed be your name, your kingdom come,  
your will be done, on earth as in heaven.**

**Give us today our daily bread.**

**Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.**

**Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,  
now and forever. Amen.**

## **CANDLE LIGHTING**

# Silent Night, Holy Night!

## *Stille Nacht, Heilige Nacht!*



*Stil - le Nacht, hei - li - ge Nacht! Al - les schläft,*  
 1 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! All is calm,  
 2 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Shep - herds quake  
 3 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Son of God,



*ein - sam wacht nur das trau - te, hoch - hei - li - ge Paar.*  
 all is bright round yon vir - gin moth - er and child.  
 at the sight; glo - ries stream from heav - en a - far,  
 love's pure light ra - diant beams from your ho - ly face,



*Hold - er Kna - be im lok - ki - gen Haar, schlaf in himm - li - scher*  
 Ho - ly In - fant, so ten - der and mild, sleep in heav - en - ly  
 heav'n - ly hosts . . . sing, al - le - lu - ia! Christ, the Sav - ior, is  
 with the dawn of re - deem - ing grace, Je - sus, Lord, at your



*Ruh, schlaf in himm - li - scher Ruh.*  
 peace, sleep in heav - en - ly peace.  
 born! Christ, the Sav - ior, is born!  
 birth, Je - sus, Lord, at your birth.

Text: Joseph Mohr, 1792–1849; tr. John F. Young, 1820–1885  
 Music: STILLE NACHT, Franz Gruber, 1787–1863

## BLESSING

May the Word that Joseph cradled in his arms enfold you with love and strength.

May the Word that angels proclaimed in song bring harmony to our world.

And the blessing of almighty God, the Father, the +Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you always.

## SENDING HYMN:

### Joy to the World



1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re -  
2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their  
3 No more let sin and sor - row grow nor thorns in -  
4 He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the



ceive her king; let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare him  
songs em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and  
fest the ground; he comes to make his bless - ings  
na - tions prove the glo - ries of his righ - teous -



room and heav'n and na - ture sing, and heav'n and na - ture  
plains re - peat the sound - ing joy, re - peat the sound - ing  
flow far as the curse is found, far as the curse is  
ness and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his



sing, and heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.  
joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.  
found, far as, far as the curse is found.  
love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.

## DISMISSAL

Now go tell it on the mountains and in the valleys.  
Jesus Christ is born.

Go in peace to share the good news.  
Thanks be to God.