

Sunday Morning Service



17 December 2023

Welcome

Prayer

Glory to God in the highest!

And hope to every discouraged heart.

Glory to God in the highest!

And peace to every conflicted soul.

Glory to God in the highest!

And joy to every downcast spirit.

Glory to God in the highest!

And love to everyone.

Let us sing praises to our God.

Let us offer this light against the darkness.

Advent Wreath: Joy

Lighting a candle is a simple yet profound act. It is a testimony to the power of light over darkness. As we light this third candle of Advent, we continue our journey to Christmas. The third candle of Advent is called the **Joy** candle; as we anticipate Christmas, let us remember the **joy** felt by those who realized what was happening.

The Word of the Lord as Prophesied by Jeremiah

I will turn their mourning into gladness; I will give them comfort and **joy** instead of sorrow.

Scripture reminds us that true **joy** comes from trusting in God. Paul wrote in Romans 15:13

May the God of hope fill you with all **joy** and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus Christ is the true answer for hope, peace, and joy in this season and for eternity.

We light this Advent candle, and we pray:

Come Lord Jesus!

**Open our lives to the Joy which you bring;
let us turn to you and get ready!**

Bible Reading 1: Genesis 3:8-15, 17-19 **Jacky Russell**

God tells sinful Adam that he has lost the life of Paradise and that his seed will bruise the serpent's head.

Carol: Once in Royal David's City

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, and meek and lowly lived on earth our Saviour holy.

And through all his wondrous childhood, 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.

Not in that poor lowly stable, with the oxen standing by,
we shall see him: but in heaven, set at God's right hand on high,
When like stars, his children crowned all in white shall gather round.

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Bible Reading 2: Genesis 22:15-18 **Pat Tan**

God promises to faithful Abraham that through his seed all the nations of the earth will be blessed.

Carol: The Stars Dance in Heaven

The stars dance in heaven
They shine through the night
To show us God's grace and God's glory
But one star shines brightest
For he is the light
And he is the real Christmas story



God designed the stars to shine
The heavenly hosts adore him
For he is loving, fair and kind
And no other God stands before him

Jesus came to give us light
So we could all behold him
Salvation, joy, eternal life
Are gifts for which we now adore him

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Bible Reading 3: Isaiah 9.2-7

Zilpha Barker

The light has shone

Carol: Mary's Boychild

Long time ago in Bethlehem, so the Holy Bible says,
Mary's Boy child, Jesus Christ was born on Christmas Day.
Now Joseph and his wife, Mary, came to Bethlehem that night.
They found no place to bear her child,
not a single room was in sight.

**Hark! Now hear the angels sing, A new King born today.
And we will live forever more because of Christmas day.
Trumpets sound and angels sing, listen to what they say,
that man will live for evermore because of Christmas day.**

By and by they found a little nook in a stable all forlorn,
and in that manger, cold and dark, Mary's little boy was born.
While shepherds watched their flocks by night,
They saw a bright new shining star,
and heard a choir from heaven sing the music came from afar.

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Bible Reading 4: Isaiah 11.1-9

Ingrid Tredoux

The peace that Christ will bring is foreshown.

Carol: O Holy Night

O holy night the stars are brightly shining
It is the night of the dear Saviour'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, O hear the angel voices
O night divine, O night when Christ was born
O night O holy night, O night divine

Led by the light of faith serenely beaming
With glowing hearts by His cradle we stand
So led by light of a star sweetly gleaming
Here came the wise men from Orient land
The King of kings lay thus in lowly manger
In all our trials born to be our Friend
He knows our need, to our weakness is no stranger
Behold your King, before Him lowly bend
Behold your King, before Him lowly bend

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, O praise His name forever
His power and glory, evermore proclaim
His power and glory, evermore proclaim

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Bible Reading 5: Luke 1.26-38 **Christine Taylor**

The Annunciation

Carol: Silent night

Silent night, holy night:
All is calm, all is bright
Round the 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 Saviour is born,
Christ the Saviour is born

Silent night, holy night:
Wondrous star, lend your light;
With the angels let us sing,
Alleluia to our King;
Christ our Saviour is born,
Christ our Saviour is born.

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Bible Reading 6: Luke 2.1-7

The birth of Jesus

Lizzie Crombie

Carol: It Came Upon A Midnight Clear

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 men from heaven's all gracious King
The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing

Still thro' 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

All who 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

For lo the days are hastening on by prophet seen of old
When with the ever-circling years shall come the time foretold
When the new heaven and earth shall own
The prince of peace their king,
And the whole world send back the song Which now the angels sing.

Yet with the woes of sin and strife the world has suffered long
Beneath the angel strain have rolled two thousand years of wrong
And man at war with man hears not the love song which they bring
O hush the noise ye men of strife and hear the angels sing

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Bible Reading 7: Luke 2.8-16

Zac Crombie

The shepherds go to the manger.

Carol: 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 the 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 the incarnate Deity!
Pleased as man with man to dwell, Jesus, our Immanuel.

Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Son of Righteousness!
Light and life to all He brings, risen with healing in His wings.
Mild he lays His glory by, born that man no more may die,
born to raise the sons of earth, born to give them second birth.

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Bible reading 8: Matthew 2.1-12

Colin Lloyd

The wise men are led by the star to Jesus.

Offering Carol: The First Nowell

The first nowell 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.

**Nowell, nowell, nowell, nowell,
born is the King of Israel.**

When they looked up
they 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.

And by the light of that same star
three wise men came from country far;
to seek for a king was their intent,
and to follow the star wherever it went.

This star drew nigh to the north-west;
over Bethlehem it took its rest,
and there it did both stop and stay
right over the place where Jesus lay.

Then entered in those wise men three
and reverently, upon their knee,
they offered there in his presence
their gold and myrrh and frankincense.

Now let us all with one accord
sing praises to our heavenly Lord,
who has made heaven and earth from naught,
and with his blood salvation brought.

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Thanksgiving for the Offering

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation. Through your goodness we have these gifts to share. Accept and use our offerings for your glory and for the service of your kingdom.

Blessed be God for ever.

Bible Reading 9: John 1.1-14 **Merylin Weston**

The pre-eminent Word

Confession

Merciful God our maker and our judge,
we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed,
and in what we have failed to do:

we have not loved you with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves;
we repent, and are sorry for all our sins.

Father forgive us.

Strengthen us to love and obey you in newness of life;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Absolution

Almighty God, who has promised forgiveness to all
who turn to him in faith:

pardon you and set you free from all your sins,
strengthen you in all goodness and keep you in eternal life,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prayers for our Church and the World (Zilpha)

The Lord's Prayer

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.

Notices

Carol: Joy to the world!

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 saviour reigns; let men their songs employ;
while fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains
repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy,
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

He rules the world with truth and grace,
and makes the nations prove
the glories of His righteousness
and wonders of His love, and wonders of His love,
and wonders, wonders of His love.

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Blessing

By the tender mercy of our God
love has broken upon us!

Light is given where once there was darkness
and hope where there was only death.

We go into this season knowing
that God will guide our feet into the way of peace.