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The Eve of Christmas
A Service of Lessons and Carols
December 24, 2023

The Entrance Hymn: Oh, Come, All Ye Faithful
The Advent Wreath candles are lit

#379

¹Oh, come, all ye faithful, Joyful and triumphant!
Oh, come ye, oh, come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold him Born the king of angels:
Oh, come, let us adore him, Oh, come, let us adore him,
Oh, come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

²Highest, most holy, Light of light eternal,
Born of a virgin, a mortal he comes;
Son of the Father Now in flesh appearing!
Oh, come, let us adore him, Oh, come, let us adore him,
Oh, come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

³Sing, choirs of angels, Sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God In the highest:
Oh, come, let us adore him, Oh, come, let us adore him,
Oh, come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

The Invocation

The Prophecy - Genesis 3:15

The Response - Psalm 51:1-4

P: Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love;

C: according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions.

P: Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,

C: and cleanse me from my sin!

P: For I know my transgressions,

C: and my sin is ever before me.

P: Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight,

C: so that you may be justified in your words and blameless in your judgment.

The first candle is lit

The Hymn: Let the Earth Now Praise the Lord

#352

¹Let the earth now praise the Lord,
Who has truly kept His word
And at last to us did send
Christ, the sinner's help and friend

²Bruise for me the Serpent's head
That, set free from doubt and dread,
I may cling to You in faith,
Safely kept through life and death,

³And when You will come again
As a glorious King to reign,
I with joy will see Your face,
Freely ransomed by Your grace.

The Prophecy - Isaiah 7:14

The Response - Psalm 46:10-11

P: Be still, and know that I am God.

C: I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!

P: The LORD of hosts is with us;

C: the God of Jacob is our fortress.

The second candle is lit

¹Oh, come, Oh, come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice!
Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel.

²Oh, come, Thou Branch of Jesse's tree,
Free them from Satan's tyranny
That trust Thy mighty pow'r to save,
And give them vict'ry o'er the grave.
Rejoice! Rejoice!
Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel.

The Prophecy - Micah 5:2

The Response - Psalm 25:5-7

P: Lead me in your truth and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation;

C: for you I wait all the day long.

P: Remember your mercy, O LORD, and your steadfast love,

C: for they have been from of old.

P: Remember not the sins of my youth or my transgressions;

C: according to your steadfast love remember me, for the sake of your goodness, O LORD!

The third candle is lit

The Hymn: O Little Town of Bethlehem

¹O 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.

²O 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;
Oh, come to us, abide with us,
Our Lord Immanuel!

The Prophecy - Isaiah 9:6-7

The Response - Psalm 2:1-6

P: Why do the nations rage

C: and the peoples plot in vain?

P: The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together,

C: against the LORD and against his anointed, saying,

P: "Let us burst their bonds apart

C: and cast away their cords from us."

P: He who sits in the heavens laughs;

C: the Lord holds them in derision.

P: Then he will speak to them in his wrath,

C: and terrify them in his fury, saying,

P: "As for me, I have set my King on Zion, my holy hill."

The fourth candle is lit

The Hymn: The People That in Darkness Sat

#412

¹The people that in darkness sat
A glorious light have seen;
The light has shined on them who long
In shades of death have been,
In shades of death have been.

²To us a Child of hope is born,
To us a Son is given,
And on His shoulder ever rests
All power in earth and heaven,
All power in earth and heaven.

³His name shall be the Prince of Peace,
The Everlasting Lord,
The Wonderful, the Counselor,
The God by all adored,
The God by all adored.

⁴His righteous government and power
Shall over all extend;
On judgment and on justice based,
His reign shall have no end,
His reign shall have no end.

The Fulfillment - Luke 1:26-38

The Response - Psalm 130:5-8

P: I wait for the LORD, my soul waits,

C: and in his word I hope;

P: my soul waits for the Lord more than watchmen for the morning,

C: more than watchmen for the morning.

P: O Israel, hope in the LORD!

C: For with the LORD there is steadfast love,

P: and with him is plentiful redemption.

C: And he will redeem Israel from all his iniquities.

The fifth and sixth candles are lit

The Hymn: Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

#338

¹Come, Thou long-expected Jesus,
Born to set Thy people free;
From our fears and sins release us;
Let us find our rest in Thee.
Israel's strength and consolation,
Hope of all the earth Thou art,
Dear desire of ev'ry nation,
Joy of ev'ry longing heart.

²Born Thy people to deliver;
Born a child and yet a king!
Born to reign in us forever,
Now thy gracious kingdom bring.
By Thine own eternal Spirit
Rule in all our hearts alone;
By Thine all-sufficient merit
Raise us to Thy glorious throne.

Sermon

The Hymn: A Great and Mighty Wonder

#383

¹A great and mighty wonder,
A full and holy cure:
The virgin bears the infant
With virgin honor pure!
Proclaim the Savior's birth:
"To God on high be glory
And peace to all the earth!"

²The Word becomes incarnate
And yet remains on high,
And cherubim sing anthems
To shepherds from the sky.
Proclaim the Savior's birth:
"To God on high be glory
And peace to all the earth!"

³While thus they sing your Monarch,
Those bright angelic bands,
Rejoice, O vales and mountains,
And oceans clap your hands.
Proclaim the Savior's birth:
"To God on high be glory
And peace to all the earth!"

⁴Since all He comes to ransom,
By all be He adored,
The infant born in Bethl'em,
The Savior and the Lord.
Proclaim the Savior's birth:
"To God on high be glory
And peace to all the earth!"

⁵All idols then shall perish
And Satan's lying cease,
And Christ shall raise His scepter,
Decreeing endless peace.
Proclaim the Savior's birth:
"To God on high be glory
And peace to all the earth!"

The Fulfillment - Luke 2:1-7

The Response - Luke 1:68-75

P: Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,

C: for he has visited and redeemed his people

P: and has raised up a horn of salvation for us

C: in the house of his servant David,

P: as he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets from of old,

C: that we should be saved from our enemies

P: and from the hand of all who hate us;

C: to show the mercy promised to our fathers

P: and to remember his holy covenant,

C: the oath that he swore to our father Abraham,

P: to grant us that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies,
might serve him without fear,

C: in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.

The Christ Candle is lit

¹From heav'n above to earth I come
To bear good news to ev'ry home;
Glad tidings of great joy I bring,
Whereof I now will say and sing:

²To you this night is born a child
Of Mary, chosen virgin mild;
This little child, of lowly birth
Shall be the joy of all the earth.

³This is the Christ, our God Most High,
Who hears your sad and bitter cry;
He will Himself your Savior be
From all your sins to set you free.

⁴These are the signs that you shall mark:
The swaddling-clothes and manger dark;
There you will find the Infant laid
By whom the heav'ns and earth were made."

⁵Ah, dearest Jesus, holy Child,
Prepare a bed, soft, undefiled,
A quiet chamber set apart
For You to dwell within my heart.

⁶My heart for very joy must leap,
My lips no more can silence keep;
I, too, must sing with joyful tongue
That sweetest ancient cradle-song:

⁷Glory to God in highest heav'n,
Who unto us His Son has giv'n!
While angels sing with pious mirth
A glad new year to all the earth.

The Fulfillment - Luke 2:8-20

The Response - Luke 1:51-55

P: He has shown strength with his arm;

C: he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts;

P: he has brought down the mighty from their thrones

C: and exalted those of humble estate;

P: he has filled the hungry with good things,

C: and the rich he has sent empty away.

P: He has helped his servant Israel,

C: in remembrance of his mercy,

P: as he spoke to our fathers,

C: to Abraham and to his offspring forever.

The Hymn: Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

#380

¹Hark! 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!”

²Christ, by highest heav’n 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 as Man with man to dwell;
Jesus, our Immanuel!
Hark! The herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn King!”

The Offering & The Lighting of the Candles

Pastor will light his candle from the Christ candle. He will then distribute the light to the ushers, who will bring it down the aisles. For safety, as you are spreading the light, please tip the unlit candle to the one that is lit.

The Hymn: Silent Night

#363

¹Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht!
Alles schläft, einsam wacht
Nur das heilige Elternpaar
Das im Stalle zu Bethlehem war
Bei dem himmlischen Kind,
Bei dem himmlischen Kind.

²Silent 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.

³Silent 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!

⁴Silent 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.

The Fulfillment - John 1:1-14

The Prayers

(Please extinguish your candles carefully, placing your hand behind to prevent flying wax)

The Benediction

The Closing Hymn: Joy to the World!

#387

¹Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her King;
Let ev'ry heart prepare Him room
And heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n and nature sing.

²Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!
Let men their songs employ,
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains,
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy.

³No more let sins and sorrows grow
Nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make His blessings flow
Far as the curse is found,
Far as the curse is found,
Far as the curse is found.

⁴He 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 of His love.