

Welcome to CHRIST CHURCH

December 24, 2022—Christmas Eve—5:00 p.m.



Welcome to Christ Church!

Today we celebrate the birth of Jesus. We welcome people of every race and tongue and faith to this celebration. We invite you to participate fully and to join us in rejoicing at the birth of the one who is the fulfillment of the deepest and best hopes of all people and all faiths.

Luke describes Jesus' birth with the song of angels and the shepherds who were the first to learn of that birth and the first to come to see the infant. In those days shepherds were a despised group rejected by most people. Luke's inclusion of them in the story stresses that God has come for all people, high and low, rich and poor.

That which Isaiah in the seventh century B.C. hoped for, came, bringing light to the nations. "Unto us a child is born.. his name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." Paul, in writing to Titus, reminds him that the coming of Christ into the world calls us to a new life, a life of uprightness and godliness as we prepare for Christ's return.

In story, song, word, and sacrament we celebrate the coming of God into the world and renew our own place in the story of God's salvation of all of humanity.

From *The Rite Light: Reflections on the Sunday Readings and Seasons of the Church Year*. Copyright © 2007 by Michael W. Merriman. Church Publishing Incorporated, New York.

PRELUDE

1. GOD'S PEOPLE GATHER TOGETHER

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH—CHRISTMAS EVE

Written by The Rev. Matthew Kozlowski

Celebrant: Today we light all the candles of the Advent wreath. Each candle has a meaning. The first candle is **HOPE**, the second candle is **PEACE**, the third candle is **JOY**, and the fourth candle is **LOVE**. The center candle is the **Christ** candle.

The candles are lit.

Scripture: Isaiah 9:6 – For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

PRAYER

O God of hope, peace, joy, and love. As Mary and Joseph welcomed you into the world, now help us welcome you into our lives. Give us courage to hope; strength to seek peace. Fill our spirits with joy; and our hearts with love. Through Jesus Christ, the Lord of all. Amen.

PROCESSIONAL HYMN

O come, all ye faithful

HYMNAL 83

(verses 1,2 and 3)

1 O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant, O
2 God from God, Light from Light e - ter - nal,
3 Sing, choirs of an - gels, sing in ex - ul - ta - tion,
*4 See how the shep - herds, sum - moned to his cra - dle,
*5 Child, for us sin - ners poor and in the man - ger,

1 come ye, O come ye to Beth - le - hem;
2 lo! he ab - hors not the Vir - gin's womb;
3 sing, all ye ci - ti - zens of heaven a - bove;
4 leav - ing their flocks, draw nigh to gaze;
5 we would em - brace thee, with love and awe;

1 come, and be - hold him, born the King of an - gels;
2 on - ly - be - got - ten Son of the Fa - ther;
3 glo - ry to God, glo - ry in the high - est;
4 we too will thith - er bend our joy - ful foot - steps;
5 who would not love thee, lov - ing us so dear - ly?

Refrain

O come, let us a - dore him, O come, let us a -

dore him, O come, let us a - dore him, Christ the Lord.

Celebrant The word was made flesh and dwelt among us:
People **And we beheld his glory.**

Celebrant + Blessed be the one, holy, and living God.
People **Glory to God for ever and ever. Amen.**

Gloria in Excelsis

Hymnal 96

(verse 1, 2 and 4)

1 An - gels we have heard on high, sing - ing sweet - ly through the night,
2 Shep - herds, why this ju - bi - lee? Why these songs of hap - py cheer?
3 Come to Beth - le - hem and see him whose birth the an - gels sing;
4 See him in a man - ger laid whom the an - gels praise a - bove;

and the moun - tains in re - ply ech - o - ing their brave de - light.
What great bright - ness did you see? What glad tid - ings did you hear?
come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ, the Lord, the new - born King.
Ma - ry, Jo - seph, lend your aid, while we raise our hearts in love.

Refrain
Glo - - - - - ri - a

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

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

COLLECT FOR CHRISTMAS

Celebrant The Lord be with you.
People And also with you.

Celebrant Together, let us pray.
O God, you have caused this holy night to shine with the brightness of the true Light: Grant that we, who have known the mystery of that Light on earth, may also enjoy him perfectly in heaven; where with you and the Holy Spirit he lives and reigns, one God, in glory everlasting. *Amen*

The people sit.

II. THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

FIRST READING

ISAIAH 9:2-4,6-7

A Reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

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. 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. 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. 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. 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.

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People Thanks be to God.

The people stand as they are able.

SEQUENCE HYMN

“Hark! The herald angels sing”

HYMNAL 87

1 Hark! the her-ald an-gels sing glo-ry to the new-born King!
2 Christ, by high-est heaven a-dored; Christ, the ev-er-last-ing Lord;
3 Mild he lays his glo-ry by, born that we no more may die,

Peace on earth and mer-cy mild, God and sin-ners rec-on-ciled!
late in time be-hold him come, off-spring of the Vir-gin's womb.
born to raise us from the earth, born to give us sec-ond birth.

Joy-ful, all ye na-tions, rise, join the tri-umph of the skies;
Veiled in flesh the God-head see; hail the in-car-nate De-i-ty.
Risen with heal-ing in his wings, light and life to all he brings,

with the an-gel-ic host pro-claim Christ is born in Beth-le-hem!
Pleased as man with us to dwell; Je-sus, our Em-man-u-el!
hail, the Sun of Right-eous-ness! hail, the heaven-born Prince of Peace!

Refrain
Hark! the her-ald an-gels sing glo-ry to the new-born King!

HOLY GOSPEL

LUKE 2:1-20

Priest The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.

People Glory to you, Lord Christ

About that time Caesar Augustus ordered a census to be taken throughout the Empire. This was the first census when Quirinius was governor of Syria. Everyone had to travel to his own ancestral hometown to be accounted for. So Joseph went from the Galilean town of Nazareth up to Bethlehem in Judah, David's town, for the census. As a descendant of David, he had to go there. He went with Mary, his fiancée, who was pregnant. While they were there, the time came for her to give birth. She gave birth to a son, her firstborn. She wrapped him in a blanket and laid him in a manger, because there was no room in the hostel.

There were shepherders camping in the neighborhood. They had set night watches over their sheep. Suddenly, God's angel stood among them and God's glory blazed around them. They were terrified. The angel said, "Don't be afraid. I'm here to announce a great and joyful event that is meant for everybody, worldwide: A Savior has just been born in David's town, a Savior who is Messiah and Master. This is what you're to look for: a baby wrapped in a blanket and lying in a manger."

At once the angel was joined by a huge angelic choir singing God's praises: Glory to God in the heavenly heights, Peace to all men and women on earth who please him.

As the angel choir withdrew into heaven, the shepherders talked it over. "Let's get over to Bethlehem as fast as we can and see for ourselves what God has revealed to us." They left, running, and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger. Seeing was believing. They told everyone they met what the angels had said about this child. All who heard the shepherders were impressed.

Mary kept all these things to herself, holding them dear, deep within herself. The shepherders returned and let loose, glorifying and praising God for everything they had heard and seen. It turned out exactly the way they'd been told!

Priest The Gospel of the Lord.
People *Praise to you, Lord Christ.*

A CHRISTMAS CHILDREN'S HOMILY FOR ALL AGES

Fr. Peter Ackerman

The people sit.

After the Sermon, the people stand as they are able.

THE APOSTLES' CREED

Officiant and People together,

*I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.*

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only son, our Lord.

*He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary.*

*He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.*

He descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again.

*He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.*

He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,

the holy catholic Church,

the communion of saints,

the forgiveness of sins,

the resurrection of the body,

and the life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE—A LITANY FOR CHRISTMAS EVE

Written by Fran Pratt

Lay Eucharistic Minister

Creator God, you opened up the heavens and sent part of yourself down in human form. He was, and is

Immanuel, God-With-Us

You sent your Angel to speak to Mary and Joseph, that she would conceive a miracle child, the Son of God; and that Joseph should take Mary as his wife, and name the child

Immanuel, God-With-Us

This is Jesus Christ, who was born in a stable and laid in a manger, whose life was Spirit-filled and blameless, who healed the sick and opened his arms to sinners, took upon himself the sins of all humankind, was crucified, died, and is risen.

Blessed be Immanuel, God-With-Us

This Jesus lives, and intercedes for his people at the right hand of the Father-God, and sent his Holy Spirit to remain with us.

Blessed be Holy Spirit, and blessed be Immanuel, God-With-Us

We celebrate and give thanks for Christ's birth, life, death, and resurrection, and we anticipate his return.

May your power be perfected in us, may we be a testament to your Great Love, and may our lives reflect your coming Kingdom, Immanuel, God-With-Us.

PEACE

Celebrant The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People *And also with you.*

Then the Ministers and the People may greet one another in the name of the Lord.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The people sit.

III. HOLY COMMUNION

The Celebrant says

Walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself for us, an offering and sacrifice to God. *Ephesians 5:2*

OFFERTORY HYMN

Away in a manger

HYMNAL 101

1 A - way in a man-ger, no crib for his bed,
 2 The cat - tle are low - ing, the ba - by a - wakes,
 * 3 Be near me, Lord Je - sus; I ask thee to stay

the lit - tle Lord Je - sus laid down his sweet head.
 but lit - tle Lord Je - sus no cry - ing he makes.
 close by me for ev - er, and love me I pray.

The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,
 I love thee, Lord Je - sus! Look down from the sky,
 Bless all the dear chil - dren in thy ten - der care,

the lit - tle Lord Je - sus a - sleep on the hay.
 and stay by my side un - til morn - ing is nigh.
 and fit us for hea - ven to live with thee there.

THE DOXOLOGY

Praise God from whom all blessings flow, in ev-ery gen-er-a-tion. Praise
 God, all crea-tures here be-low, who gives to us sal - va-tion. Praise
 God a-bove, ye heaven-ly host. Praise Fa-ther, Son, and Ho-ly Ghost. Let
 all cre-a-tion praise the Lord with love and ad - or - a - tion.

WORDS: Thomas Ken, 1674; adapt. Dale A. Schoening, 2001 O TANNENBAUM
 MUSIC: Traditional German carol. 87.87.88.87

Words copyright © 2001 Dale A. Schoening. Published by The General Board of Discipleship
 of The United Methodist Church, PO Box 340003, Nashville TN 37203-0003. Web site

GREAT THANKSGIVING—EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER B

The Lord be with you. And also with you.
Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give him thanks and praise.

The Celebrant proceeds

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

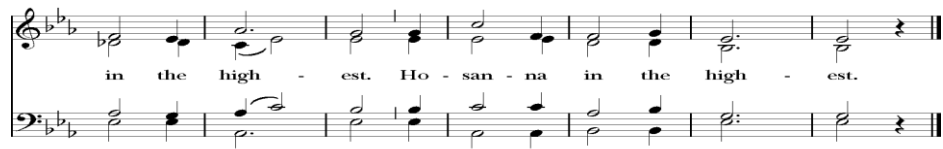
Here a Proper Preface is sung or said on all Sundays, and on other occasions as appointed.

And now we give you thanks because in his earthly childhood you entrusted him to the care of a human family. In Mary and Joseph you give us an example of love and devotion to him, and also a pattern of family life. Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

SANCTUS

S 130

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of power and
might, Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord,
God of power and might, hea - ven and earth are
full, full of your glo - ry. Ho -
san - na in the high - est. Ho - san - na
in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes
in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na



The Celebrant continues

We give thanks to you, O God, for the goodness and love which you have made known to us in creation; in the calling of Israel to be your people; in your Word spoken through the prophets; and above all in the Word made flesh, Jesus, your Son. For in these last days you sent him to be incarnate from the Virgin Mary, to be the Savior and Redeemer of the world. In him, you have delivered us from evil, and made us worthy to stand before you. In him, you have brought us out of error into truth, out of sin into righteousness, out of death into life.

On the night before he died for us, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said,

"Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said,

"Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore, according to his command, O Father,

Celebrant and People

We remember his death, We proclaim his resurrection, We await his coming in glory;

The Celebrant continues

And we offer our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to you, O Lord of all; presenting to you, from your creation, this bread and this wine.

We pray you, gracious God, to send your Holy Spirit upon these gifts that they may be the Sacrament of the Body of Christ and his Blood of the new Covenant.

+ Unite us to your Son in his sacrifice, that we may be acceptable through him, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit. In the fullness of time, put all things in subjection under your Christ, and bring us to that heavenly country where, with Mary, Joseph, the shepherds, and all your saints, we may enter the everlasting heritage of your sons and daughters; through Jesus Christ our Lord, the firstborn of all creation, the head of the Church, and the author of our salvation.

By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever. Amen.

The Celebrant then continues

THE LORD'S PRAYER

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,
Celebrant and People

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,
 for ever and ever. Amen.

BREAKING OF THE BREAD

A period of silence is kept.

Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;
 Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia

The Celebrant says

The Gifts of God for you the People of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

Communion Norms-- We welcome our guests this evening. All are welcome at the Lord's table. The people respond after receiving the bread or the wine by saying "**Amen.**" If you prefer not to receive the wine, please cross your arms over your chest. If you do not want to receive communion, you are still welcome to come forward, cross your arms over your chest, and receive a blessing from the priest.

COMMUNION HYMN

What child is this

HYMNAL 115

Unison or harmony

1 What child is this, who, laid to rest, on
 2 Why lies he in, such mean es - tate where
 3 So bring him in - cense, gold, and myrrh, come,

Ma - ry's lap is sleep - ing? Whom an - gels greet with
 ox and ass are to feed - ing? Good Chris - tian, fear: for
 peas - ant, king, to own - ing? him; the King of kings sal -

an - thems sweet, while shep - herds watch are keep - ing?
 sin - ners here, the si - lent Word is plead - ing.
 va - tion brings, let lov - ing hearts en - throne him.

Refrain

This, this is Christ the King, whom shep - herds
 guard and an - gels sing; haste, haste to
 bring him laud, the babe, the son of Ma - ry.

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

After Communion, the Celebrant says

Let us pray.

Celebrant and People

God our Father, whose Word has come among us in the Holy Child of Bethlehem: may the light of faith illumine our hearts and shine in our words and deeds; through him who is Christ the Lord. Amen.

HYMN

"Silent Night"

HYMNAL III

The people kneel as they are able.

Si - lent night, ho - ly night, all is calm,
Si - lent night, ho - ly night, shep - herds quake
Si - lent night, ho - ly night, Son of God,

all is bright round yon vir - gin mo - ther and child.
at the sight, glo - ries stream from hea - ven a - far,
love's pure light ra - diant beams from thy ho - ly face,

Ho - ly in - fant, so ten - der and mild, sleep in hea - ven - ly
heaven - ly hosts— sing al - le - lu - ia; Christ, the Sa - vior, is
with the dawn of re - deem - ing grace, Je - sus, Lord, at thy

peace. Sleep in hea - ven - ly peace.
born! Christ, the Sa - vior, is born!
birth. Je - sus, Lord, at thy birth.

Words: Joseph Mohr (1792-1848); tr. John Freeman Young (1820-1885)
Music: *Stille Nacht*, melody Franz Xaver Gruber (1787-1863); harm. Carl H. Reinecke (1824-1910)

BLESSING FOR CHRISTMAS (Church of England)

The priest blesses the people, saying

May the joy of the angels,
the eagerness of the shepherds,
the perseverance of the wise men,
the obedience of Joseph and Mary,
and the peace of the Christ-child be yours this Christmas;
and the blessing of God Almighty:
+ the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit
be upon you and remain with you always. *Amen.*

RECESSIONAL HYMN

Joy to the world

HYMNAL 100

(verses 1, 2 and 4)

1 Joy to the world! the Lord is come: let earth re -
2 Joy to the world! the Sa - vior reigns; let us our
*3 No more let sins and sor - rows grow, nor thorns in -
4 He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the

ceive her King; let ev - ery heart pre - pare him room, and
songs em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains, re -
fest the ground; he comes to make his bless - ings flow far
na - tions prove the glo - ries of his right - ous - ness, and

sing, and heaven, and heaven 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.

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

DISMISSAL

Celebrant

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. Alleluia, alleluia!

People

Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia!

POSTLUDE

Please note that the Parish Office will be closed from December 26th- January 2nd.