

Midnight Candlelight Christmas Eve Service

December 24, 2021

PRELUDE

Away in a Manger Dr. Troy Winemiller, Piano
*Someday*¹ Tenor, T.D. Winemiller
*Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring*² Piano, T.D. Winemiller
*Ava Maria*³ Tenor, T.D. Winemiller

PRELUDE

The Messiah is Born (Little)⁴

WESTMINISTER CHIMES

GREETING and LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLES (Based on Isaiah 9)

Pastor: Today we light all the candles of the Advent wreath. Each one has a meaning. The first candle is HOPE, the second is PEACE, the third is JOY, and the fourth is LOVE. The center candle is the Christ candle. (The candles are lit.)

Liturgist: "For unto us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. He will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."

All people: *The baby's mother, Mary, named him Jesus. It is a name which means "he saves." Thank you, Jesus, for being the light in our darkness. Thank you, Jesus, for saving us.*

HYMN

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 through 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 sound the blessed angels' sing.*

*O ye, 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 their wings;
Oh rest beside the weary road, and hear the angels' sing.*

*For lo! the days are hastening on, by prophet bards foretold;
When with the ever-circling years, shall come the time foretold,
When peace shall over all the earth, its ancient splendors fling,
And the whole world send back the song, which now the angels sing.*

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² CCLI #3166529 CCLI Streaming License #20270653

³ 1954 Brentwood Benson Music Publishing, Inc. Use with permission, CCLI license #444251

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SCRIPTURE READING

Luke 2:1-20

In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. ² (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) ³ And everyone went to their own town to register.

⁴ So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. ⁵ He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. ⁶ While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, ⁷ and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

⁸ And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. ⁹ An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. ¹¹ Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”

¹³ Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

¹⁴ “Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.”

¹⁵ When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.”

¹⁶ So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. ¹⁷ When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, ¹⁸ and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. ¹⁹ But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰ The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

A CHRISTMAS STORY

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION PRAYER OF GREAT THANKSGIVING

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them to the Lord.

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: It is right to give God thanks and praise.

Pastor: Let us pray. With joy, we praise you, Gracious God, for you created all things. You created us in your image and kept covenant with us – even when we rebelled against you. Time and again, you called us to live in the fullness of your love and so we join with the saints and angels in the chorus of praise that rings through eternity:

All people: Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Pastor: Almighty God, you loved the world so much that in the fullness of time, you sent your Son, Jesus, to be born of Mary; a light to shine in our darkness. Living among us, Jesus loved us. He ate with outcasts and sinners, healed the sick, and proclaimed good news to the poor.

All people: He yearned to draw the world to him, yet we neglected to heed his call to walk in love.

Pastor: Then the time came for him to complete upon the cross the sacrifice of his life, and to be glorified by you. On the night before he died for us, Jesus was around a table with his friends He took bread, gave you thanks, broke it...and gave it to them, saying:

All People: "Take and eat; this is my body, which is broken for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Pastor: As supper was ending, Jesus took the cup of wine and said:

All People: "Take and drink. This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

Pastor: Come, Holy Spirit, come. Pour out your Spirit on these your gifts of bread and wine and us. Breathe your Spirit over the whole earth and make us your faithful disciples, showing your love to the whole world.

Al people: To God our Maker, Christ our Lord, and to the Holy Spirit be glory and honor, now and forevermore. Amen.

SHARING THE ELEMENTS

Pastor: These are the gifts of God, for the people of God.

DISTRIBUTION OF ELEMENTS

RESPONSE OF PRAISE AND PRAYER

All people: Almighty God, you have caused this holy night to shine with the brightness of the one true Light of the World, Jesus Christ, the Holy Child of Bethlehem. In your Word and Sacrament, we have seen him and know that your promises are true. Send us forth from this faith community to live in hope and peace, until we gather again. This we ask in the name of Emmanuel, God-with-us. Amen.

* After partaking of the bread and cup, please put your mask/face covering back on for the final moments of the service.*

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

Pastor: We will now light our candles.

All people: We light our candles remembering the baby born this night is Jesus, Light of the World.

Pastor: We light our candles trusting that the Light will always overcome our darkness.

All people: We light our candles in hope that the Light of Christ will be born again, in us tonight.

Pastor: We light our candles eager for the Light to shine forth from us.

All people: With our lit candles, we are promising to share the Light of the World, which overcomes the darkness.

Pastor: As the lights are dimmed let us hold up our candles and sing...

HYMN

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! 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!*

*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.*

TOLLING OF TWELVE BELLS

BENEDICTION

Pastor: Merry Christmas! Today the Christ is born. Today a Savior appears. The Word of God dwells among us. The Light of God shines in the world. Sing praises! Shout for joy! Celebrate the hope and promise given to us this day. Go – filled with the hope, love, peace, and joy of the Christ Child.

All: Joy to the world! Let the earth receive her King! Amen!

HYMN

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 Savior 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.*

POSTLUDE

He is Born (Michaels) ⁵

⁵ Used by permission 1972, CCLI Streaming License #113351, Michaels, Hollander Publishing, Los Angeles, CA