

Christmas Eve worship
December 24, 2021
The Nativity of the Lord

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

INTROIT

Christmas Joy

Handbells

CALL TO WORSHIP/LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES

Leader: We light these candles as a sign of the coming light of Christ. As the Lord has promised, in days to come the nations shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks;

All: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.

The first candle is lit.

Leader: The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid,

All: the calf and the lion and the fatling will lie down together, and a little child shall lead them.

The second candle is lit.

Leader: the wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom;

All: like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing.

The third candle is lit.

Leader: The Lord will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child.

All: She shall bear a son, and name him Emmanuel: "God is with us."

The fourth candle is lit.

Leader: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;

All: those who lived in a land of deep darkness, on them light has shined.

The Christ candle is lit.

Leader: Let us walk in the light of the Lord.

All: Let us worship God.

ANTHEM

O Come, All Ye Faithful

Handbells

FIRST READING*Luke 1:26-38*

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

ANTHEM*Blessed Assurance/Jesu Joy of Man's Desiring**Paul Piller
Brian Cashwell***SECOND READING***Isaiah 9:2-7*

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 all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. 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.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

... And now hear as we pray as Jesus taught us:

**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 debts

as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

ANTHEM

Christmas Sanctus

*Sue Poulos, Susie Lewis,
Joyce Counts, Steve Thiel*

THIRD READING

Luke 2:1-20

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

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

"Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

MESSAGE

On the End of Waiting

Rev. Ben Shaw

ANTHEM

Jesus is Emmanuel

Gay Piller, Paul Piller

CALL TO OFFERING

Tonight's special offering will benefit the victims of the recent tornados in Kentucky, via Presbyterian

Disaster Assistance. Per COVID-19 safety measures, we will not pass the offering plate for some time. As you feel called, you may leave your offering in the plate in the Gathering Room or donate online at MPChurch.net.

FOURTH READING

John 1:1-18

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. (John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.'") From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

HYMN

Silent Night, Holy Night

122

SHARING OF THE LIGHT OF CHRIST

As we sing Silent Night, we will pass the candlelight through the congregation.

CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

And now may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all this day, and unto your life eternal. Amen.

POSTLUDE