CHRISTMAS EVE DECEMBER 24, 2020

# GATHERING

# PRE-SERVICE MUSIC Ruth & Paul Heinecke, Diane Dangerfield

#

**WELCOME**

**+HYMN** #45(Green) ***Oh, Come, All Ye Faithful***

 O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant! Oh come, ye, oh, come ye to Bethlehem;

 Come and behold him born the king of angels.

 **REFRAIN: Oh, come, let us adore him. Oh, come, let us adore him.**

 **Oh, come, let us adore him. Christ the Lord!**

The highest, most holy, light of light eternal, . Born of a virgin, a mortal he comes.

 Son of the Father, now in flesh appearing. **REFRAIN**

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation. Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!

 Glory to God in the highest! **REFRAIN**

 Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning. Jesus, to thee be all glory giv’n!

 Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing. **REFRAIN**

**CHRISTMAS EVE LITANY**

L: We were walking in cold and darkness. Now we dwell in the warmth of your light. For your love and goodness

**C: we give you thanks, O God.**

L: A child has been born for us, a new beginning is given to us. For your love and goodness

**C: we give you thanks, O God.**

L: You are our creator, you dwell in our midst, you bring us your peace. For your love and goodness

**C:** we give you thanks, O God.

# PRAYER OF THE DAY

**All: Dear Father, we are in darkness, but with you there is light. We thank and praise you this night for the birth of Jesus into our flesh and our world.  Let his light drive out our darkness and fear. Let his love warm our cold hearts, and let his grace set us free. In Jesus name we pray. Amen.**

# +HYMN #54 (Green) *It Came Upon a Midnight Clear* (vs. 1 & 3)

#  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 all, from heav’n’s all gracious king”

#  The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing.

#  And you, 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,

#  Oh, rest beside the weary road and hear the angels sing.

# THE WORD

**FIRST 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. 3You 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. 4For 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. 5For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. 6For 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. 7His 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.

SECOND READING: HEBREWS 1:1-4 Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, 2but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds. 3He is the reflection of God’s glory and the exact imprint of God’s very being, and he sustains all things by his powerful word. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, 4having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

**CHRISTMAS GOSPEL: Luke 2:1-7** In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be enrolled.  This was the first enrollment, when Quirin'ius was governor of Syria. And all went to be enrolled, each to his own city.  And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be enrolled with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. And while they were there, the time came for her to be delivered.  And she gave birth to her first-born son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

**HYMN** #41 (Green) ***O Little Town of Bethlehem* (vs. 1-2)**

O 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.

 For Christ is born of Mary and gathered all above

 While mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wond’ring love.

 O morning stars together proclaim thy holy birth.

 And praises sing to God the king, and peace to all the earth!

#### CHRISTMAS GOSPEL: Luke 2:8–14 And in that region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.  And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear. And the angel said to them, "Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which will come to all the people;  for to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.  And this will be a sign for you: you will find a babe wrapped in swaddling cloths 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, and on earth peace among men with whom he is pleased!"

**HYMN** #71 (Green) ***Angels We Have Heard on High* (vs. 1 & 3)**

Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o’er the plains,

And the mountains in reply, echoing heir joyous strains.

**REFRAIN Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria Gloria in excelsis Deo**

 Come to Bethlehem and see Him whose birth the angels sing;

 Come, adore on bended knee Christ the Lord, the newborn king. **REFRAIN**

#### CHRISTMAS GOSPEL: Luke 2:15-20 When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us."  And they went with haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.  And when they saw it they made known the saying which had been told them concerning this child; and all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them.  But Mary kept all these things, pondering them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them

# HYMN #60 (Green) *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing* (vs. 1 & 3)

Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn king;

Peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled.”

Joyful, all you nations, rise; Join the triumph of the skies;

With angelic host proclaim, “Christ is born in Bethlehem!”

**REFRAIN: Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn king!”**

Christ 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, incarnate deity!

Pleased as man with us to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel! **REFRAIN**

Hail the heav’nborn Prince of Peace! Hail the sun of righteousness!

Light and life to all he brings, Ris’n with healing in his wings.

Mild he lays his glory by, Born that we no more may die,

Born to raise each child of earth, Born to give us second birth. **REFRAIN**

# CHRISTMAS MESSAGE Pastor John Twiton

# HYMN #40 (Green) *What Child Is This?* (vs. 1 & 2)

What child is this, who, laid to rest on Mary’s lap is sleeping?

 Whom angels greet with anthems sweet, while shepherds watch are keeping.

 This, this is Christ the king, whom shepherds guard and angels sing;

 Haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary.

 Why lies he in such mean estate where ox and ass are feeding?

 Good Christian, fear, for sinners here the silent Word is pleading.

 Nails, spear shall pierce him through, the cross be borne for me, for you;

 Hail, hail the Word made flesh, the babe, the son of Mary.

**OFFERING**

**OFFERTORY PRAYER: Lord God, we rejoice in the birth of Jesus, who came among the poor to bring the riches of your grace. Bless the gifts we offer this day, and let them be blessings for others. We pray in the name of Jesus. Amen.**

**SPECIAL MUSIC Noah Strube**

# CELEBRATING THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD (We ask you to join in the sharing of light and song)

# HYMN #67 (Green) *Away in a Manger*

 Away in a manger, no crib for his bed, the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head,

 The stars in the sky looked down where he lay, the little Lord Jesus asleep in the hay.

 The cattle are lowing, the poor baby wakes, but little Lord Jesus no crying he makes.

 I love you, Lord Jesus, look down from the sky, and stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.

 Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask you to stay close by me forever and love me I pray.

 Bless all the dear children in your tender care and fit us for heaven to live with you there.

**CHRISTMAS EVE PRAYER** by Robert Louis Stevenson

Loving God, Help us remember the birth of Jesus that we may share in the song of the angels, the gladness of the shepherds, & worship of the wise men.

Close the door of hate and open the door of love all over the world. Let kindness come with every gift and good desires with every greeting. Deliver us from evil by the blessing which Christ brings, and teach us to be merry with clear hearts.

May the Christmas morning make us happy to be thy children,
and Christmas evening bring us to our beds with grateful thoughts, forgiving and forgiven, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

**HYMN** #65(Green) ***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. Heav’nly hosts sing Alleluia!

 Christ, the savior is born! Christ, the savior is born!

 Silent night, holy night! Son of God, love’s pure light.

 Radiant beams from your holy face, with the dawn of redeeming grace,

 Jesus, Lord, at your birth, Jesus, Lord, at your birth.

# CLOSING PRAYER

# All: Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true Light.  Grant that here on earth we may walk in the light of Jesus' presence and in the last day wake to the brightness of his glory; Through your only Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.  Amen.

**BENEDICTION**

**BLESSING (from John 1)**

L: Jesus, Light of the World, all good things shine brightly in your kingdom. Transform us so that we shine with the brilliance of your grace and truth, to bring light to the darkness, hope where there is fear, and life where there was death, in Your Name we pray.

**C: Amen.**

**DISMISSAL**

L: Go in peace, and with the light of Christ, love and serve the world!

**C: Thanks be to God!**

**CLOSING HYMN** #39 (Green) ***Joy to the World***

 Joy 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,

 heav’n and nature sing, and heav’n and heav’n and nature sing!

 Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns! Let all their songs employ.

 While fields and flood, rocks, hills and plains

 Repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy,

 Repeat, repeat the sounding joy!

 No more let sin and sorrow 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, far as the curse is found/

 He rules the world with truth and grace and

 Make the nations prove the glories of his righteousness

 And wonders of his love, and wonders of his love

 And wonders and wonders of his love.