



Tuesday, December 24, 2024

CHRISTMAS EVE HOLY WORSHIP

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
of BELLA VISTA

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A SERVICE OF HOLY WORSHIP

Sunday December 24, 2024 — 5:00 PM
Christmas Eve Holy Worship

An asterisk () indicates that those who are able may stand;
Bold type — please respond in unison.*

WE GATHER AND PREPARE OUR HEARTS

CHIMING OF THE HOUR

WELCOME

PRELUDE “*The Shepherd’s Hymn*” James Mansfield

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

Pastor: Beloved, today we welcome the Christ Child, the fulfillment of our joy, as we proclaim with the prophet Isaiah, “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” (Isaiah 9:6).

Congregation: Christ our joy has come near. Emmanuel, God with us, has come to dwell with us as a tiny baby. “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” (Isaiah 9:7).

Liturgist: We light this candle as a sign of Christ coming to dwell with us, to live in the neighborhood of vulnerable humanity as a vulnerable child. May the light of Christ warm our hearts and light our way as we share the joy of God’s salvation wherever we go.

CALL TO WORSHIP

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.

*HYMN #147

“The First Noel”

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Gracious God, you call us to celebrate, yet we struggle to find hope in the suffering and despair of our world. What reason is there to rejoice? We turn from each other and from you, questioning the power of love in the face of the world’s cruelty and hate. Comfort your people, sovereign God. Return us to the faith born this night. Save us from hopelessness. May the promise and possibility of every newborn child remind us of the salvation we have in Jesus Christ. Amen.

(Moment of silence for personal confession.)

DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

“The steadfast love of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting.” (Psalm 103:17)

Know that you are forgiven and be at peace. Amen.

*THE PEACE

Since God has forgiven us in Christ, let us forgive one another. The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. **And also with you.**

Please take this opportunity to “pass the peace” to those around you.

***GLORIA PATRI #581** *“Glory Be to the Father”*

WE ENCOUNTER THE WORD

RESPONSIVE READING

Isaiah 9:2-7

² 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.

³ **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.**

⁴ 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.

⁵ **For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments
rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire.**

⁶ For a child has been born for us, a son is given to us;
authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

⁷ **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.**

SECOND READING

Luke 2:1–20

¹ In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ² This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³ All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴ 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. ⁵ He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶ While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷ 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.

⁸ In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ Then an angel of the Lord stood before 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; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹ to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” ¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, ¹⁴ “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”

¹⁵ 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.” ¹⁶ So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷ When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸ and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹ But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰ The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Savior God, liberate us from the sins which distort our vision and disrupt our hearing as we approach your Word. Standing firm in your love, let us open ourselves to the truth you reveal to us today. Amen.

MEDITATION *“The Gift(s) Inside”* Rev. Dr. Judi McMillan

CALL FOR OFFERING

In gratitude for the gift of Christ our Savior, let us present our tithes and offerings to God.

OFFERTORY *“A Lullaby for the Christ Child”*

Franklin Riter

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Emmanuel, in gratitude for the gift of your presence with and among us, we present these offerings to you. Accept and bless these gifts so that they might spread the joy of Christmas to others.
Amen.

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE AND PRAYER

BREAKING OF BREAD & COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

CANDLELIGHTING

***HYMN #122**

“Silent Night, Holy Night”

Please flip the switch on the bottom of your candle

&

Please turn off candle before closing hymn

WE GO FORTH TO MINISTER

***HYMN #134**

“Joy To The World”

***CHRISTMAS BLESSING**

***POSTLUDE**

“Silent Night” Franz Gruber/Joseph Mohr

Merry Christmas

You are invited to return tomorrow for our annual Christmas Day Dinner.

Living God, on this holy night we gather — to stand with shepherds, amazed at your glory; to sing with angels, rejoicing in your work; to wait with Joseph, trusting in your promise; to sit with Mary, cradling your love. May the good news of this night inspire us to tell the world of our great joy: for to us is born a Savior, the Messiah, the Lord. Glory and praise to you forever! Amen.



TONIGHT'S WORSHIP LEADERS:

MINISTER:

Rev. Dr. Judi McMillan

LITURIGIST:

Bev MacDonald

ORGANIST/PIANIST:

Gail Knudsen

COMMUNION SERVERS

Eddie Lou Taylor, Vicki Erickson, Nancy Ortman, Gary Harris