

Christmas Eve Family Service with Carols
St. Paul's Episcopal Church ~ December 24th, 2011

The Word of God

The Opening Hymn

O Come, all ye faithful

vss1,3,6

Hymnal 83

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
come, and behold him, born the King of angels;
Refrain O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above;
glory to God, glory in the highest; *Refrain*

Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning;
Jesus, to thee be glory given; Word of the Father,
now in flesh appearing; *Refrain*

The Acclamation

Celebrant
People

Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
And blessed be God's kingdom, now and forever. Amen.

Lighting of the Advent Wreath- *Light one candle of Hope (Peace, Joy, Love, Christ) Sing:*

Light one candle for hope, One bright candle for hope, He brings hope to every heart, He comes, he comes.

Light one candle for peace, One bright candle for peace, He brings peace to every heart, He comes, he comes.

Light one candle for joy, One bright candle for joy, He brings joy to every heart, He comes, he comes.

Light one candle for love, One bright candle for love, He brings love to every heart, He comes, he comes.

Light one candle for Christ, One bright candle for Christ, He brings light to every heart, He comes, he comes!

Song of Praise

Hark! The herald Angels

Hymnal 87

Hark! the herald angels sing glory to the newborn King!
Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!
Joyful, all ye nations, rise, join the triumph of the skies;
with the angelic host proclaim Christ is born in Bethlehem!

Refrain Hark! the herald angels sing glory to the newborn King!

Christ, by highest heaven adored; Christ, the everlasting Lord;
late in time behold him come, offspring of the Virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see; hail the incarnate Deity.
Pleased as man with man to dwell; Jesus, our Emmanuel! *Refrain*

Mild he lays his glory by, born that we no more may die,
born to raise us from the earth, born to give us second birth.
Risen with healing in his wings, light and life to all he brings,
hail, the Sun of Righteousness! hail, the heaven-born Prince of Peace! *Refrain*

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Celebrant Let us pray.

Celebrant 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.**

Please be seated.

The people who walked in darkness have seen a bright light;
And it shines upon everyone who lives in the land of darkest shadows.
Oh LORD, you have made your nation stronger.
Because of you, its people are glad and celebrate like workers at harvest time
or like soldiers dividing up what they have taken.
You have broken the power of those who abused and enslaved your people.
You have rescued them just as you saved your people from Midian.
The boots of marching warriors and the blood-stained uniforms have been fed to flames and eaten by fire.

A Child Has Been Born. A child has been born for us.
We have been given a son who will be our ruler.
His names will be Wonderful Advisor and Mighty God, Eternal Father and Prince of Peace.
His power will never end; peace will last forever.
He will rule David's kingdom and make it grow strong.
He will always rule with honesty and justice.
The LORD All-Powerful will make certain that all of this is done.

People The Word of the Lord.
 Thanks be to God.

Celebrant: Let us now hear the story of the child who was born for us, as promised~ The story of Christmas.

A Simple Nativity*- The Christmas Story:

Once in Royal David's City vs 1 **Hymnal 102**

Once in royal David's city stood a lowly cattle shed,
where a mother laid her baby in a manger for his bed:
Mary was that mother mild, Jesus Christ her little child.

Narrator and children: The Story of going to Bethlehem

Away in a Manger vs 1 **LEVAS 27**

Away in a manger, no crib for a 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 on the hay.

Narrator and children: Gabriel and Angels announce the birth of the Savior

Angels We Have Heard on High vs 1 **Hymnal 96**

Angels we have heard on high, singing sweetly through the night,
And the mountains in reply echoing their brave delight.
Gloria in excelsis Deo. Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Narrator and children: Shepherds go to Bethlehem and find the baby Jesus

Joy to the World! All Sing!

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.

No more let sins and sorrows 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 makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness, And wonders of His love,
And wonders of His love, And wonders, wonders, of His love.

Words: Isaac Watts: Public Domain

**A Simple Nativity - written by Anya Kawka, directed by Lowry Browning and Gretchen Kimsey; Anna Miller, Narrator; children from near and far!*

The Prayers of the People

Loving Father, Help us remember the birth of Jesus, that we may share in the song of the angels, the gladness of the shepherds, and the 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 all darkness and evil by the blessing which Christ brings;

Teach us to be merry with clear hearts.

Be with all those who suffer, grieve, sorrow, or feel lost and abandoned by You, or in any kind of need.

Congregation adds petitions

May the Christmas morning make us happy to be your children;

And Christmas evening bring us to our beds with grateful thoughts, forgiving and forgiven.*

Bless all those we love and care for;

That they may be filled with joy and the love of Christ.

Fill all people with your love and grace and mercy that they may celebrate this day with joy.

Heavenly Father, we pray that all your children feel your loving arms wrapped around them this Holy Night. May our actions and prayers show forth your love, and help to bring to all, your peace that passes all understanding. In the name and love of Jesus whose birth we celebrate this night, Amen.

The Peace *Please stand*

Celebrant The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People **And also with you.**

The Holy Communion

The Offertory

The First Nowell vss 1-3

Hymnal 109

The first Nowell the angel did say was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
in fields as they lay, keeping their sheep, on a cold winter's night that was so deep.

Refrain *Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, born is the King of Israel.*

They looked up and saw a star shining in the east beyond them far,
and to the earth it gave great light, and so it continued both day and night. *Refrain*

And by the light of that same star three wise men came from country far;
to seek for a king was their intent, and to follow the star wherever it went. *Refrain*

English Carol, Public Domain

The Doxology

Hymnal 380

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise him, all creatures here below;
Praise him above, ye heavenly host: Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.**

Eucharistic Prayer

Celebrant God our Father, you have brought us here together so that we can give you thanks and praise for all the wonderful things you have done. We thank you for all that is beautiful in the world and for the happiness you have given us. We thank you for daylight, the earth, and all the people who live on it, and for our life which comes from you.

We know that you are good. You love us and do great things for us.
And so we shout with joy:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest!**

Thank you for always thinking about your people; you never forget us.
You sent your Son Jesus, who gave his life for us and who came to save us.
He cured sick people; he cared for those who were poor and wept with those who were sad.
He forgave sinners and taught us to forgive each other.
He loved everyone and showed us how to be kind.
He took children in his arms and blessed them.

So we are glad to say:

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest!

Dear God, all over the world people praise you.
So we join them, the angels, and all the saints in heaven and on earth, as we sing:

**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. Hosanna in the highest.**

WLP 858

Celebrant On the night before he died, Jesus was having supper with his friends.
He took bread from the table; gave you thanks and praise; and then he broke the bread, gave it to his friends,
and said: Take this, all of you, and eat it: this is my body which will be given up for you.

When supper was ended, Jesus took the cup that was filled with wine. He thanked you, gave it to his friends, and said: Take this, all of you, and drink from it: this is the cup of my blood, the blood of the new and everlasting covenant. It will be shed for you and for all so that sins may be forgiven. Then he said to them: do this in memory of me.

We do now what Jesus told us to do. We remember his death and resurrection and we offer you, Father, the bread that gives us life, and the cup that saves us.

Jesus brings us to you; welcome us as you welcome him.

Father, because you love us, you invite us to come to your table. We remember all that Christ has done for us, we offer you these gifts of bread and wine. Please make them by your Holy Spirit to be for us the very life and presence of Jesus, and a sign of unending life in Christ.

Please Bless us, and Fill us with the joy of the Holy Spirit, as we receive this sacrament of Christ, and keep us always in your tender loving care.

By Christ, and with Christ, and Through Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor is yours, almighty Father, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

And now let us say together the Prayer 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 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, forever and ever. Amen.**

The Breaking of the Bread

The Celebrant breaks the consecrated Bread. A period of silence is kept.

Celebrant The gifts of God for the People of God: Holy Food for Holy People. Please come.
All are welcome to eat of God's food at God's table.

All are welcome to receive; Please come forward for the elements or for a blessing. The Bread and the Cup are given with these words: The Body of Christ, the bread of heaven. [Amen.] The Blood of Christ, the cup of salvation. [Amen.] Grape juice and gluten free wafers are available: please just ask the server for these alternatives.

The Communion Hymn

O little town of Bethlehem

Hymnal 79

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 wondering love.
O morning stars, together proclaim the holy birth!
and praises sing to God the King, and peace to men on earth.

How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of his heaven.
No ear may hear his coming, but in this world of sin,
where meek souls will receive him, still the dear Christ enters in.

Away in a manger, no crib for a 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 on the hay.

The cattle are lowing the Baby awakes,
But little Lord Jesus, no crying He makes,
I love thee, Lord Jesus! Look down from the sky,
And stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask thee to stay
Close by me forever, and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in thy tender care,
And fit us for heaven to heaven to live with thee there.

Public Domain

The Postcommunion Prayer *Please stand.*

Celebrant Let us pray.

**We thank you, Dear Jesus, for coming to be with us
and for loving us each and every day.
Thank you for the food you have given us to eat.
Thank you for all the people who love us and help us.
Thank you for this Communion today.
We pray that we will now be stronger, and will always share what you have given us.
Help us to be stronger in believing and more generous in all things.
Help us to be filled with your love and joy on Christmas and always. Amen.**

The Christmas Blessing

May God, who sent his angels to proclaim the glad news of the Savior's birth,
brighten your hearts, make you heralds of the Gospel, and fill you with joy and peace;
And may the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be upon you and remain with you forever. **Amen.**

The Lighting of the Candles

The Closing Hymn

Silent Night

Hymnal 111

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, 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.

Words: Joseph Mohr; Public Domain

Deacon [Dismissal]

People **Thanks be to God. Alleluia! Alleluia!**



**Haitian Nativity Scene
In Banana Bark**

*Please gather in the Library for simple refreshments and time to greet one another,
And give Thanks as we prepare to greet the day of Jesus' Birth and to celebrate the Joy of Christmas!*

This Evenings' Servers~

*Celebrant: The Rev. Janet Fullmer; Deacon: The Rev. Georgia Giacobbe, Acolyte: Matthew Kirby;
Torchbearers: Macauley Baker and Anna Horn; Worship Leader: Lowry Browning;
Eucharist Minister: Gretchen Kimsey; Lector: Anne Frazier; Prayers of the People: Jerry Frazier;
Pianist: Rule Beasley; Altar Guild: Mary Ellen Lowe, Monte Dickinson; Flowers: Poinsettias;
Greeters: The Kirby Family; Coffee Hosts: Don and Monte Dickinson*

***The Christmas Story-** *A Simple Nativity - written by Anya Kawka, directed by Lowry Browning and Gretchen Kimsey; Anna Miller, Narrator; Characters depicted by children from near and far- **Thanks** to all for telling the story!*

**Prayers of the People adapted in part from: From A Christmas Prayer by Robert Louis Stevenson;
International Committee on English in the Liturgy (ICEL)*

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!

Coming!!

Mark your calendars and make plans to enjoy:

Friday- January 6th ~ 7:00 pm **Epiphany Service**

Saturday- January 7th ~ 6:00 pm **Haitian Dinner** to support our outreach team.

The team going to Haiti departs January 13 to provide education training in Cap Haitien;

Sunday- February 12th ~ Coffee Hour after 10:00 am service:

Creole Coffee Hour to support the New Orleans Rebuild Team.

St. Paul's is a loving, welcoming Christian community gathered to be Christ's hands and heart in the world.

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