



ST. FRANCIS
EPISCOPAL
CHURCH

Christmas Eve

December 24, 2014 — 6:00 PM

The Word of God



Welcome (* indicates when to stand) Welcome to worship tonight. We're glad you've come to glorify God with us. We invite you to take part in everything. Follow the singing with the words in this bulletin and come to the Table for communion.

Prelude

Lighting of the candles: Almighty God, you have made this night holy by the gift of your son, born of the Holy Spirit and Mary. Upon him rested all your grace, through him has come all your mercy. Let his light shine within our hearts tonight even more brightly than it shines from the candles in this place. Help us to hear your word and to celebrate your everlasting love through him. **Amen.**

The candles are lit during the singing of the following carol:

* O Little Town of Bethlehem

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.

Where children pure and happy pray to the blessed child, where misery cries out to thee, Son of the mother mild; where charity stands watching and faith holds wide the door, the dark night wakes, the glory breaks and Christmas comes once more.

O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray; cast out our sin and enter in, be born in us today. We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell; O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel!

Priest: Blessed be God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

All: And blessed be His kingdom now and forever. Amen.

Priest: Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid. Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

* **Angels We Have Heard On High**

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

(Refrain:) Gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why these songs of happy cheer? What great brightness did you see? Which glad tidings did you hear? *(Refrain)*

Come to Bethlehem and see Him whose birth the angels sing; Come, adore on bended knee, Christ the Lord, the newborn King. *(Refrain)*

See Him in a manger laid, Whom the angels praise above; Mary, Joseph, lend your aid, while we raise our hearts in love. *(Refrain)*

***All:** 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.

A Reading from Hebrews

(1:1-4)

Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, but 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. He 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, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

Reader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's People.

All: Thanks be to God.

* **O Come All Ye Faithful**

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.

God from God, Light from Light eternal, Lo! He abhors not the Virgin's womb: only begotten Son of the Father. *(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 Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ According to Luke** (2:1-20)

All: Glory to you, Lord Christ

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 to those on whom his favor rests."

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.

Priest: The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Christ.

Message (please be seated)

***Leader:** Let us stand and profess our faith using the words of the Nicene Creed.

All: We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

* Prayers for Ourselves and Others

Leader: Let us pray for ourselves and others. We pray for all who work through the power of Christ, serving the needs of the poor and healing the wounds of injustice, division and materialism in our society. Lord, in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray for the elderly, the sick and the lonely among us: that they may receive comfort, companionship and care from those around them. Lord, in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray that those who have been persecuted or seriously wronged by others may experience warmth and love with Christ, and be able to forgive those who have hurt them. Lord, in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray that when we are discouraged, we may find strength in the signs of a loving and faithful God in those around us, and the joy of the Holy Spirit within us. Lord, in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: We pray for those whom we love but no longer see; those who have gone beyond the veil of this mortal life, that their souls and the souls of all the departed may rest in peace. Lord, in your mercy,

All: Hear our prayer.

Leader: Lord of eternity, bind us together by your Holy Spirit in communion with your saints, that we may entrust ourselves, and one another, and our whole lives to you. **Amen.**

* **Exchange of Peace**

Priest: The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People: And also with you.

The Holy Communion

Offertory: Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Hark! the herald angels sing "Glory to the new born 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 new born 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 men 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)*

* **Doxology**

All: 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. Amen.

* **Eucharistic Prayer from A New Zealand Prayer Book, 1989** (adapted)

Priest: Christ is risen!

People: Christ is risen indeed.

Priest: Lift your hearts to heaven.

People: Where Christ in glory reigns.

Priest: Let us give thanks to God.

People: It is right to offer thanks and praise.

Priest: It is the joy of our salvation God of the universe, to give you thanks through Jesus Christ. You said, 'Let there be light'; there was light. Your light shines on in our darkness. For you the earth has brought forth life in all its forms.

You have created us to hear your Word, to do your will, and to be fulfilled in your love. It is right to thank you. You sent your Son to be for us the way we need to follow and the truth we need to know. You send your Holy Spirit to strengthen and to guide, to warn and to revive your Church. Therefore, with all your witnesses who surround us on every side, countless as heaven's stars, we praise you for our creation and our calling, with loving and with joyful hearts:

All (Sung): Open the eyes of my heart, Lord, open the eyes of my heart, I want to see You, I want to see You; Open the eyes of my heart, Lord, open the eyes of my heart, I want to see You, I want to see You. To see You high and lifted up, shining in the light of Your glory; Pour out Your power and love as we sing, "Holy, holy, holy."

Holy Holy Holy, Holy Holy Holy, Holy Holy Holy I want to see You. (2 times)

Priest: Blessed are you, most holy, in your Son, who washed his disciples' feet. 'I am among you,' he said, 'as one who serves.' On that night before he died he took bread and gave you thanks. He broke it, gave it to his disciples, and said: "Take, eat, this is my body which is given for you; do this to remember me." After supper, he took the cup, and gave you thanks. He gave it to them and said: "Drink this. It is my blood of the new covenant, shed for you, shed for all, to forgive sin; do this to remember me." Therefore with this bread and wine we recall your goodness to us:

People: God of the past and present, we your people remember your Son. We thank you for his cross and rising again, we take courage from his ascension; we look for his coming in glory and in him we give ourselves to you.

Priest: Send your Holy Spirit, that we who receive Christ's body may indeed be the body of Christ, and we who share his cup draw strength from the one true vine.

People: Called to follow Christ, help us to reconcile and unite. Called to suffer, give us hope in our calling. For you, the heavenly one, make all things new; you are the beginning and the end, the last and the first. Praise, glory and love be yours this and every day from us and all people here and everywhere *Amen*.

Priest: And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to pray,

All: 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, for ever and ever. Amen.

The priest breaks the consecrated bread and says:

Priest: Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

People: Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.

Priest: The gifts of God for the people of God.

[NOTE: All are welcome to receive Communion, whatever your faith tradition. Please receive the bread in the open palm of your hand. Then, either consume the bread and move to a chalice and receive from the chalice by guiding the base of the chalice to your mouth or take the chalice from the chalice minister. Or, you may intinct or dip the bread into the chalice and consume it. The glass chalice contains non-alcoholic wine for those who do not wish to consume alcohol for any reason. If you do not wish to receive communion but would like a blessing, please come forward with your arms crossed over your chest.]

Communion Song 1: Away In A Manger

Away in a manger no crib for a bed; The little Lord Jesus lay 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 live with Thee there.

Communion Song 2: Silent 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, 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.

*** Post-Communion Prayer:**

Lord, make us instruments of your peace. Where there is hatred, let us sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is discord, union; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy. Grant that we may not so much seek to be loved as to love. For it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen.

*** Blessing**

*** 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 us our 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.

Priest: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord and each other.

People: Thanks be to God.

Christmas Poinsettias

Given in memory of:

Libby and John Clark
Martha Dickinson
Marian Elam
Sue and Chuck Haack
Susan and Larry Kidd
Jack and Pat Martin

Janice and Carl Nelson

Evelyn Staples
The Staunton Family
George and Debbie Taylor

Richard and Hedy Walker

Mary Emily Shortt
Neale Dickinson
John and Robbie
Charles Enders and Jane Enders
Gene Owen
Anne and Arthur Miller
Mary and Jack Martin
Mr. and Mrs. Charles Haack, Sr.
Rev. and Mrs. Carlton Nelson, Sr.
The Reynolds and Young Families
Our Family
Helen and George Taylor
Victor Lindsley
Juan Guerrero, Bella Walker,
Peter Walker, and David Walker

Make yourself comfortable!

Welcome to worship tonight. We're glad you've come to glorify God with the people of St. Francis Church.

There is no "one right way" to participate. Join in as much as you want.

If you wish to sing, all our music is included in the bulletin. We have a lively contemporary band and music is a significant part of our worship experience. However, we recognize that visitors may not know the music. If you and your family are among these, we encourage you to hum along or simply sit back and enjoy the sound.

Filling out a name tag and placing it on your person will permit us all to greet each other by name while visiting here at St. Francis. Likewise, signing our guest roster will permit us to follow-up with you following this Sunday's worship.

If you are a guest, don't feel obligated to make a financial contribution to the offering.

Rest rooms are located in the entrance Narthex and in the mobile office/classroom building adjacent to the worship hall.

"We are a welcoming community seeking to share God's unconditional love with all."