

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE WITH CAROLS AND HOLY COMMUNION

12-24-2015

PRELUDE

WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP

P: The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death light has dawned.

C: Praise be to God for light that shines in darkness.

P: God commanded the light to shine out of darkness, to shine in our hearts and give light of the knowledge of his glory in the face of Jesus Christ.

Praise be to God for the light in Jesus that enlightens every person.

OPENING CAROL "Green Book" 45 vs. 1 and 3 O Come, All Ye Faithful

Oh, come, all ye faithful, Joyful and triumphant!
Oh, come ye, oh, come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold him Born the king of angels;
Oh, come, let us adore him, Oh, come let us adore him,
Oh 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. In the highest:
Oh, come, let us adore him, Oh, come let us adore him,
Oh come let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

PREPARING OUR HEARTS

P: We gather in the name of our loving, saving God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—gathered on this holy night, to reflect on the mystery of birth.

C: The awesome mystery of Christ's birth, the birth of God in the flesh.

P: We pause on this holy eve, to step back from the Christmas rush.

C: We need to keep our focus clear, and remember that Christ's birth is the reason for the season.

P: Give us peace and calm in our hearts now, Lord, fill us with Your presence as we mark this Holy Night of Your birth.

C: Let this be for us a special night, A Holy Night different from all others, because it is Your Birthnight.

CAROL "Green Book" 60 vs. 1 and 2 Hark the Herald Angels

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 hosts proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
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 God-head see! Hail, incarnate deity!
Pleased as man with us to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel!
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king."**

SCRIPTURE READING "God's signature" Isaiah 7:10-14

Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz, "Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven." But Ahaz said, "I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test." And he said, "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary men, that you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

CAROL "Green Book" 56 vs. 1 and 2

The First Noel

**The first Noel the angel did say
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
In fields where they lay, keeping their sheep,
On a cold winter's night that was so deep.
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, Born is the King of Israel.**

**They look-ed 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.
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, Born is the King of Israel.**

SCRIPTURE READING "Love comes from God" I John 4:7-16

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us. By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.

CAROL "Green Book" 71 vs. 1 and 2

Angels We Have Heard

**Angels we have heard on high, Sweetly singing o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply, Echoing their joyous strains.
Gloria in excelsis Deo;
Gloria in excelsis Deo;**

**Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be Which inspire your heav'nly song?
Gloria in excelsis Deo;
Gloria in excelsis Deo;**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P: Welcome to the celebration! God who supplies our every need has given us this meal to share.

C: Lord, we thank You for the bread of eternal life.

P: We come to the table, acknowledging our shortcomings and our need to experience Your presence in bread and wine.

C: Lord, we thank You for the bread of eternal life.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

LORD'S PRAYER

THE DISTRIBUTION

CLOSING CAROL "Green Book" 65

Silent Night, Holy Night

(Individual candles will be lit during the singing, and extinguished after the Benediction. Those with lit candles remain still as those without lit candles bend their candles over to receive the light.)

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.

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE