



CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE
December 24, 2020



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
113 West John Street
Newberry, Michigan 49868
906-293-5631

"Centered in Christ, Inspired by Love, Moved to Action"

Christmas Eve Service
December 24, 2020

*The hymns will include an introduction and one verse.

PRELUDE

Robert Stevens

WELCOME

Pastor Melinda VanderSys

CALL TO WORSHIP

We gather together on this Blessed Christmas Eve in the name of the Father, and of the Son+, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

HYMN

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!**

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

We gather to celebrate the birth of the one who is the Light of the world. We are here to worship God and God's Son Jesus Christ, born this night in Bethlehem of Judea.

We light the candle of Hope to remind us of the promises made by all the prophets that God would raise up a savior for His people, Israel, and through Him bless all the nations.

Let the heavens and the earth rejoice. Our Lord has come.

We light the candle of Peace to remind us that the Prince of Peace comes to enlighten those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death.

Let the heavens and the earth rejoice. Our Lord has come.

We light the candle of Joy to remind us that the Lord has made known His salvation and that grace is poured out upon us.

Let the heavens and the earth rejoice. Our Lord has come.

We light the candle of Love to remind us that God so loved the world that He sent His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him might have eternal life.

Let the heavens and the earth rejoice. Our Lord has come.

**Glory be to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to all people of good will.
Alleluia!**

PRAYER OF CHRISTMAS EVE (please join in the Prayer of Christmas Eve)

Jesus Christ, Holy Child, glory of God revealed, by starlight we first saw Your face; now by candlelight, we sing Your praise. Though the night is long, You are our hope. Though the path is dark, You lead the way. By Your Spirit, help us to shine with the brightness of Your truth and share the warmth of Your great love, so that all may believe, rejoice, and give thanks, for You are the light of the world. Amen.

OUR LORD'S PRAYER

I invite you to join in praying the prayer our Lord 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 debts, as we forgive our debtors;
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen

CALL TO CONFESSION

Gathered together in spirit this evening, awaiting the birth of the Christ Child, let us confess our sins.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (please join in confessing our sins)

Merciful God, how many John the Baptists, how many prophets of Your light, have we ignored because they were not what we were looking for? How many times have we ignored voices crying in the wilderness, "Make straight the way of the Lord."? How many times have we breathed a sigh of relief, and turned our backs on Your messengers, because they did not speak the message we expected to hear?

Help us hear anew, the cry of those who would lead us to Christ. Tune our ears to Your heralds, that we might also testify to Your light. Amen.

SILENT AND INDIVIDUAL PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

HEAR THESE WORDS OF ASSURANCE

May the God of peace sanctify you completely. And may your whole spirit, soul, and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The One who calls you is faithful. It is the Lord who will do this. And it is in Christ+ that your sins are forgiven. Amen.

OFFERING

As God has blessed us with many gifts, including the birth of the Christ Child this night, let us share our gifts with the church and with one another.*

It is generally at this time during the service that we offer our gifts for the mission and ministry of the church. Whether you choose to pause at this time and make your contribution or wait until after the service, we encourage and thank you for your support of this ministry.

OFFERTORY PRAYER (please join in the Offertory Prayer)

Lead us in the path of Your transformation, O God. By the gifts You give and the gifts we share, point us to Your perfect gift in Jesus Christ. Amen.

THE COMING KING - Micah 5:2-5a

But you, O Bethlehem Eph'rathah, who are little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days. ³Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in travail has brought forth; then the rest of his brethren shall return to the people of Israel. ⁴And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they shall dwell secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth. ⁵And this shall be peace.

HYMN

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

**O, come, O, come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear.**

Refrain

**Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel.**

THE PROMISE - Jeremiah 33:14 thru 16

"Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will fulfil the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. ¹⁵In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring forth for David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. ¹⁶In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will dwell securely. And this is the name by which it will be called: 'The LORD is our righteousness.'

A reading from Isaiah 9:2-7

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined. ³Thou hast multiplied the nation, thou hast increased its joy; they rejoice before thee as with joy at the harvest, as men rejoice when they divide the spoil. ⁴For the yoke of his burden, and the staff for his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, thou hast broken as on the day of Mid'ian. ⁵For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult and every garment rolled in blood will be burned as fuel for the fire. ⁶For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government will be upon his shoulder, and his name will be called "Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." ⁷Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David, and over his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and for evermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

HYMN

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

**Come, Thou long expected Jesus,
Born to set thy people free;
From our fears and sins release us,
Let us find our rest in thee.
Israel's strength and consolation,
Hope of all the earth Thou art;
Dear Desire of every nation,
Joy of every longing heart.**

THE MAGNIFICAT- Luke 1:46-50

And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, ⁴⁷and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, ⁴⁸for he has regarded the low estate of his handmaiden. For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed; ⁴⁹for he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name. ⁵⁰And his mercy is on those who fear him from generation to generation.

THE ONE WHO PREPARED THE WAY - Luke 1:68-79, the Song of Zechariah,

"Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has visited and redeemed his people, ⁶⁹and has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David, ⁷⁰as he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets from of old, ⁷¹that we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all who hate us; ⁷²to perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant, ⁷³the oath which he swore to our father Abraham, ⁷⁴to grant us that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear, ⁷⁵in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life. ⁷⁶And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways, ⁷⁷to give knowledge of salvation to his people in the forgiveness of their sins, ⁷⁸through the tender mercy of our God, when the day shall dawn upon us from on high ⁷⁹to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace."

THE STORY OF JESUS' BIRTH – Luke 2:1 thru 21, intermittent with hymns

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

HYMN

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.**

⁶While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷And 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.

HYMN

Away in A Manger

**Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
The little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head.
The stars in the sky all looked down where He lay,
The little Lord Jesus, asleep on the hay.**

⁸In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” ¹³And 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!”

HYMN

Angels We Have Heard on High

**Angels we have heard on high
Sweetly singing o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply
Echo back their joyous strains.**

Refrain:

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

¹⁵When 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.”

HYMN

Go Tell It on the Mountain

Refrain:

**Go tell it on the mountain,
Over the hills and ev'rywhere;
Go tell it on the mountain
That Jesus Christ is born.**

**While shepherds kept their watching
O'er silent flocks by night,
Behold, throughout the heavens
There shone a holy light. [*Refrain*] (5)**

¹⁶And they went with haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. ¹⁷And when they saw it they made known the saying which had been told them concerning this child; ¹⁸and all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them.

¹⁹But Mary kept all these things, pondering them in her heart. ²⁰And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

HYMN **Hark! The Herald Angels Sing**

**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"**

THE LORD'S TABLE

This Word of God made flesh and full of grace was sent to deliver us from our sin, from the power of evil and the fear of death. As a servant, Jesus emptied Himself of might upon the cross, and as the risen Anointed One is enthroned at God's right hand to bring mercy and justice to all the earth at the end of days.

And so, rejoicing in all God has done for us, we proclaim the mystery of our faith:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again!

Words of Institution

In a moment, I will invite you to share in the Holy Communion elements you have available.

In the night in which He was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;

 broke it, and gave it to His disciples,

 saying: Take and eat; this is My body, given for you.

Do this for the remembrance of Me.

Again, after supper, He took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink,

 saying: This cup is the new covenant in My blood,

 shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.

Do this for the remembrance of Me.

Invitation to Holy Communion

At this time, I invite you to receive your bread in joy as I share these words:

The body of Christ given for you.

And now I invite you to receive your cup hearing these words:

The blood of Christ shed for you.

And now may the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in His grace. Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Blessed God, shed your grace brighter than starlight on us that we may bear your good tidings to all and renew the weary world in your name: the name of Emmanuel—God-With-Us, to whom we give honor and glory in joy, now and forever. Amen.

CANDLE PREPARATION

Please prepare to light your candle.

CANDLE LIGHTING

We light the Christ candle to celebrate and rejoice that the Light of the world is born this night.

HYMN

Silent Night, Holy Night

- | | | | |
|----------|--|----------|--|
| 1 | 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. | 3 | 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. |
| 2 | 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!" | | |

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. Those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness - on them a light has shined. You, O Lord, have multiplied the nation. You have increased its joy. For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given. And the government shall be upon His shoulder. He is called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.

Glory be to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to all people of goodwill.

Alleluia!

You may extinguish your candle if it is a wax candle or feel free to keep it lit if it is a battery-operated candle.

HYMN

Joy to the World

**1 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.**

**3 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.**

**2 Joy to the world! the Savior reigns;
Let all their songs employ,
While fields and flocks, rocks, hills, and plains
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.**

**4 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.**

Thank you for joining us! We wish you and your family a Blessed Christmas!

Announcements

Holy Communion will also be celebrated as a part of the Worship Service. Please have grape juice and bread available in your home to participate in sharing Christ's body and blood.

The lighting of candles will also be a part of the Worship Service. If you wish, please have a candle available near you while watching the service. The candle can be whatever you have available; wax or battery-operated. There will be a time towards the end of the service inviting you to light the candle.

A special thank you is extended to those who participated and assisted with this service: Pastor Nancy Barkat, Derek Dake, Lynn Dake, Amy McNamara, Kim Papist, Cheryl Powell, Barb Sleeper, Mary, Sleeper, Nancy Sleeper, Robert Stevens, and Jim Waybrant.

*You may send your Christmas Offering to FPC, P.O. Box 443, Newberry, MI 49868. Thank you for your Christmas offering.

Sources:

<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/resource/prayers-christmas/>

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<http://www.spirit-net.ca/sermons/b-ad01sm.php>, Fairchild, Rev. Richard J, PCUSA

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