

CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLE-LIGHT SERVICE
JESUS --THE LIGHT TO THE WORLD
DECEMBER 24, 2024 AT 10:00 PM

Opening Prayer Solo - Jeremy Racine "O Holy Night"

Invocation: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **C: Amen.**

Candle-Light Litany:

P: He came to bring Light into the darkness **C: He was the Light of heavenly grace!**

P: Jesus came in the dark of night **C: He brought everlasting Light into the world!**

P: The Father sent His Son into the world **C: His Light brought hope that would never dim!**

P: Jesus came humbly into this world **C: Yet He was the Light of Salvation for all mankind!**

P: His Light shines in the darkness **C: He brings the Light of life to all mankind!**

Christmas Eve Psalmody: *Psalm 27 vs. 1, 4, 7, 11, 14*

P: The Lord is my Light and my Salvation; **C: Whom shall I fear?**

P: The Lord is the stronghold of my life; **C: Of whom shall I be afraid.**

P: One thing that I have asked of the Lord, **C: This is what I will seek:**

P: That I may dwell in the house of the Lord **C: All the days of my life,**

P: To gaze upon the beauty of the Lord **C: And to seek Him in His temple.**

P: Hear, O Lord, when I cry aloud; **C: Be gracious to me and answer me!**

P: Teach me Your way, O Lord, **C: And lead me on a level path because of my enemies.**

P: Wait for the Lord; **C: Be strong and let your heart take courage; wait for the Lord!**

ALL: *Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.*

Collect: Holy Father, Whose love for we who were lost in sin, sent Your only begotten Son into the world to bring unity and life to all who would look to You in faith; bless us this night and enable our worship to honor Your name and bring a strengthening of our heart and mind to all Your own. We humbly thank and praise You for the miracle birth of You Son which has brought the "Light of Salvation" to us all; through the Christ-Child, Your Son, our Lord who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, ever one God, world without end. **C: Amen.**

Hymn: *Tune "Away in the Manger"* (Acapella)

We look to a city that's humble and small
We look to a cradle that is filled with straw
To Bethlehem city known as "House of Bread"
The "Bread of Life" who would be born as God said.

Our hope is bound in a small child to be born
He comes to bring peace to a world that is "torn"
He is the Almighty, yet Mary's own son
A Child of God's promise so His work is done!

Jesus the One promised who brings "light" to all
A Child whose birth did take place in a stall
He'll be the Lord Jesus, the "Immanuel"
Our "God in our midst" who on earth He would dwell.

The Light of salvation was sent to a stall
The Light of salvation was given for all
A gift from the Father, so mankind may see
The wonder of His love that's given freely.

Offerings brought to the Altar:

A Light that Illumined - opened the eyes of the blind, Gentiles, Sinners

The Light, illumined the minds and the hearts of those, who were not of His chosen people. He gave a Light to the Gentiles to enable them to see and receive His grace and the hope He sent into the world. Jesus came as the Lord of all and His light was sent to open the eyes of all people, all sinners. His light brings the gift of eternal life to those who are lost in sin.

1. Isaiah 7: 14 Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call His name Immanuel!

2. Isaiah 9: 2 The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in the land of deep darkness on them has light shined.

3. Isaiah 9: 6-7 For to us a child is born, to us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder, and His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over His kingdom, to establish it and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore.

Hymn: "O Come, All Ye Faithful" 379 vs. 1-3

A Light of Salvation- Promises of Old- God's Promises

There was a Light coming into the world. It was unlike any other light that had ever been upon the earth. It was the Light of God, in the form of a Child. It was the Christ-Child, Immanuel, God in the midst of His own people to bring them the only means by which all men could be saved. He came to accomplish the work and plan of the Father to save mankind from their sinfulness and iniquities. It was a promise from of old, but a promise that never wavered or changed. It was in the hands of the loving and gracious Father: which He carried out through His Son.

4. Isaiah 60: 1 – 3 Arise, shine, for your light has come and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the Lord will arise upon you and His glory will be seen upon you. And nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising.

5. Micah 5: 2-5a But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the tribes of Judah, from you shall come forth for me One who is to be the ruler of Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days. Therefore, He shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has given birth; then the rest of his brothers shall return to the people Israel. And He shall stand and shepherd 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. And He shall be their peace.

6. Micah 7: 7-8, 9c But as for me, I look to the Lord; I will wait for the God of my salvation; my God will hear me. Rejoice not over me, O my enemy; when I fall, I shall rise; when I sit in darkness, the Lord will be a light to me..... He will bring me out to the light; I shall look upon His vindication.

Hymn: "O Little Town of Bethlehem" 361 vs. 1-3

A Light that Enlightened: Joseph

Joseph was a righteous man, a man of faith, which God chose to care for His Son on earth. Joseph was placed into an impossible situation with Mary being pregnant and it was not his own. So God visited him in a dream, through an Angel of the Lord, and brought the wisdom he needed in order to follow through with his promise of marriage. Joseph's gift of faith enabled him to accomplish what was being asked of him by the Father. He was blessed with seeing the birth of the Son of God!

7. Matthew 1: 18-25 Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. But as he considered these things, behold an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you shall call His name, Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.

8. All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophets: “Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call His name Immanuel” (which means, “God with us”). When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him: he took her as his wife, but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called His name Jesus.

Hymn: *What Child is This?* 370 vs. 1, 2

Light that Amazed: Mary

Mary- was young, honorable, and a servant of her Lord. God sent the Arch Angel Gabriel to prepare her and help her understand what was going to take place in the coming year. She, the most blessed of all women, was going to conceive and fulfill the Plan of the Father to bring His Son into the world. There is no way anyone could understand how she felt or what she faced. Yet Mary, through the gift of faith, walked the path given her and she was able to “carry” the Son of God, and rejoiced over the wonder of His love and the anticipation of His birth.

9. Luke 1: 26- 33 In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city in Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin’s name was Mary. And he came to her and said, “Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!” But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. And the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to Him the throne of His father David, and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end.”

10. Luke 1: 34-38 And Mary said to the angel, “How will this be, since I am a virgin?” And the angel answered her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God. And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was barren. For nothing will be impossible with God. And Mary said, “Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word.” And the angel departed from her.

Hymn: “I Gabriel Was Sent to Earth” Tune 358

I Gabriel was sent to earth To bear good news, the precious birth
I came to see a maiden fair To bring her news so ever rare.

I came to her from God’s own throne My Words were gifts, from Him alone.
His Son was to be born on earth Mary was chosen for the birth.

Mary asked how this e’er could be A man has not been close to me
I told her God alone could bring This life, His Gift, His own offspring.

He was to be the Light of all He would bring glory to a stall
His Light of love would never dim The Light of hope shines forth from Him.

A Light that lived- He was born as the Light of the world

Mary and Joseph were the most highly blessed of any couple ever on earth. They shared the birth of their Lord and they looked upon the face of their salvation. His Light was life. He came as a Child, the Christ-Child; the only Son of the Father. The One true Messiah who would bring redemption for His people.

Jesus came into this world as a Jew, born of a Virgin, and declared by God as the King of all people. He came as the humble Child, born as a descendant of David, born in a cattle stall, and laid on hay in a manger. God Almighty- the Light of the World, came into the world in the most humble of means to save His people.

11. Luke 2: 1-7 In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. And all went to be registered, each to his own town. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child.

And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

Hymn: “Joy to the World” 387 vs. 1-3

A Light Heavenly choirs- Shepherds

The Shepherds, raising sheep for temple sacrifice, were chosen by the Father to hear the long promised Messiah had been born. They were chosen to hear the Angels of heaven proclaim the wonder of His birth. They were chosen to help point us to the truth of Christ being the “Shepherd of His Sheep” who had come into the world to care for His people. No other group of human beings has ever experienced anything as awesome as what they were given the blessing of seeing.

12. Luke 2: 8-14 And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear. And the angel said to them, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.” And suddenly there was with the angels a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom He is pleased!”

Hymn: “It Came Upon a Midnight Clear” 366

Sermon:

Prayers

Lord’s Prayer

Confession of Sins C: *Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, have mercy upon us. Forgive us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.*

Absolution: *Upon this your confession, I by virtue of my office as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce the grace of God unto all of you, and in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

Admonition to Communicants: *I exhort you in Christ, that you give attention to the Testament of Christ in true faith, and above all take to heart the Words with which Christ presents His body and blood to us for forgiveness. That you take note of, and give thanks for, the boundless love that He showed us when He saved us from the wrath of God, sin, death, and hell by His blood; and that you then externally receive the bread and wine, that is, His body and blood, as a guarantee and pledge. Let us then in His name, according to His command, and with His own Words administer and receive His Sacrament.*

Blessing of the Elements

Distribution

Distribution Hymns: *“From Heaven Above to Earth I Come” 358; “Let All Together Praise our God” 389*

Closing Hymn: *“Silent Night, Holy Night” 363 (sung acapella)*

Benediction: (Sung to tune “O Little Town”)

The Lord ev-er bless and keep you The Lord make His face to shine
On you and be grac-ious to you By His light that’s divine
The Lord lift up His fa-vor upon you ev-er-more
And give you peace, His ho-ly peace, His gift to all man-kind. **C: Amen.**

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