

Full Liturgy at FCRC December 25, 2021
Christmas Day

Minister: Mark

Worship Leaders: Janie, Bernadette, Irene

Candle-lighters: Bill and Nel

Instrumentalists: Janie, Mark

Prayer leader: Herman

God's Greeting and Call to Worship

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 Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favours!

Advent Moment

Bernadette: Let's express our faith in God together with these words. "Come down, O Lord, tear open the heavens and come down."

All: We have waited. We have waited with hope. We have waited, calling for peace. We have waited in joyful expectation. We have waited with love in our hearts. Our waiting is now over.

Irene: We see God's salvation and rejoice in the peace and good news that has come into this world. We have waited for Christ our Lord. And we wait no longer. Our Christ candle shines.

Irene: Let's sing joyfully, and celebrate triumphantly Jesus, God of God, Light of Light, Begotten yes, but not created. The Glorious Word of God and Christ our Lord Please stand to sing with us.

Song: O Come All Ye Faithful (LUYH 76)

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;
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

God of God, Light of Light eternal, lo, he abhors not the virgin's womb;
Son of the Father, begotten, not created;
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning; Jesus, to thee be all glory given;
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing;
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

The Story's Beginning

Irene: Please be seated. A story has a beginning but Christmas is not the beginning of today's story.

Scripture: Bernadette: (John 1:1-5) In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

Irene: (Isaiah 9:2) The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness— on them light has shined.

Bernadette: (John 1:15-18) John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.'" From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

Irene: (Isaiah 9:6-7) For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Please join us in standing to sing.

Song: Hark the Herald angels Sing (LUYH 80)

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 hosts proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
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 us to dwell, Jesus, our Immanuel.
Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings, risen with healing in his wings.
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.
Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

Bernadette: Please be seated. Let's take this moment to quiet ourselves and talk with God. Irene will lead us to pray a prayer especially for Christmas.

Christmas Prayer

God With Us

Scripture Reading: The story now from Luke 2:1-7

Please remain seated and let's sing together.

Song: What Child is This (LUYH 95)

What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet while shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary!

Why lies he in such mean estate where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear; for sinners here the silent Word is pleading.
Nails, spear shall pierce him through, the cross be borne for me, for you;
hail, hail for Word made flesh, the babe, the son of Mary!

So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh; come, peasant, king, to own him.
The King of kings salvation brings; let loving hearts enthrone him.
Raise, raise the song on high, the virgin sings her lullaby;
joy, joy, for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mary.

Scripture Reading: The story continues with Jesus' first visitors from Luke 2:8-14

Please remain seated as we sing.

Song: Angels we have heard on High (LUYH 82)

Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o'er the plains
and the mountains in reply, echoing their joyous strains.
Glo-ria in excelsis Deo. Glo-ria in excelsis Deo.

Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be which inspire your heavenly song?
Glo-ria in excelsis Deo. Glo-ria in excelsis Deo.

Come to Bethlehem and see him whose birth the angels sing;
come, adore on bended knee Christ the Lord, the newborn King.
Glo-ria in excelsis Deo. Glo-ria in excelsis Deo.

Angels From the Realms of Glory (LUYH 81)

Angels, from the realms of glory, wing your flight o'er all the earth;
you, who sang creation's story, now proclaim Messiah's birth:
Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn King!

Shepherds, in the fields abiding, watching o'er your flocks by night,
God with us is now residing; yonder shines the infant Light:
Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn King!

Though an infant now we view him, he will share his Father's throne,
gather all the nations to him; every knee shall then bow down:
Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn King!

Scripture: Philippians 2:5-11

Message:

Living the Story

Mark: Please stand and let's share our joy this morning as we sing together.

Song: Go tell it on the Mountain (LUYH 93)

Go, tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere;
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.

The shepherds feared and trembled when lo! above the earth
rang out the angel chorus that hailed our Saviour's birth.

Go, tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere;
go, tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born.

Down in a lowly stable the humble Christ was born,
and God sent us salvation that blessed Christmas morn.
Go, tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere;
go, tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born.

Christmas Prayer and Offering: Herman

God Blesses Us

Mark: Please stand and let out your Christmas Joy as we sing, Joy to the World.

Song: Joy to the World (LUYH 92)

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 earth! the Savior reigns: let all their songs employ,
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains repeat the sounding joy,
repeat the sounding joy, repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

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.

Christmas Prayer

When the world was dark and the city was quiet, you came
You crept in beside us and no one knew.
Only the few who dared to believe
that God might do something different.
Will you do the same this Christmas, Lord?

Will you come into the darkness of today's world,
not the friendly darkness as when sleep rescues us from tiredness,
but the fearful darkness, in which people have stopped believing
that the war will end
or that food will come
or that a government will change
or that the church cares?

Will you come into the quietness of this city,
not the friendly quietness as when lovers hold hands,
but the fearful silence when the phone has not rung,
the letter has not come,
the friendly voice no longer speaks,
the doctor's face says it all?

Will you come into that darkness and do something different,
to embrace your people?
And will you come into the dark corners and the quiet places of our lives?

We ask this because the fullness we long for depends on
being open and vulnerable to you – like you were to us when you came
when you came, wearing no more than diapers
and trusting human hands to hold their Maker.

Will you come into our lives, if we open them to you
and do something different?
When the world was dark and the city was quiet,
you came.
You crept in beside us.

Do the same this Christmas, Lord.
Do the same this Christmas. Amen.

From Cloth for the Cradle, pp. 92-93 by the Wild Goose Resource Group, c. 1997, 2000,
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