

**Order of Service**  
**December 24, 2020**

**Welcome**  
**Announcements, concerns & celebrations**

**Advent wreath**

**Carol: *Angels we have heard on high***

Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o'er the plains,  
and the mountains in reply, echoing the joyous strains.  
"Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!"

Words . . .

Light four candles

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!"

Words . . .

We light the Christ candle

Words . . .

Come to Bethlehem and see Christ, who comes in lowly birth.  
Come adore on bended knee Jesus, joy of heav'n and earth.  
"Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!"

**Invitation to the offering**

**Dedication of the offering**

### **The first reading**

From Charles M. Shultz: *A Charlie Brown Christmas*

#### **Carol**

##### **O come, all ye faithful**

1

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.

3

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,  
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above;  
glory to God in the highest. R

5

Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning;  
Jesus, to thee be glory given;  
word of the Father, now in flesh appearing. R

### **The second reading**

*The oxen* by Thomas Hardy

#### **Carol: 'Twas In the moon of wintertime** (VU 71)

1

'Twas in the moon of wintertime,  
when all the birds had fled,  
that mighty Gitchi Manitou  
sent angel choirs instead;  
before their light the stars grew dim,  
and wandering hunters heard the hymn:

**Refrain**

Jesus your King is born,  
Jesus is born,  
in excelsis gloria.

2

Within a lodge of broken bark  
the tender babe was found,  
a ragged robe of rabbit skin  
enwrapped his beauty round;  
but as the hunter braves drew nigh,  
the angel song rang loud and high. R

3

The earliest moon of wintertime  
is not so round and fair  
as was the ring of glory on  
the helpless infant there.  
The chiefs from far before him knelt  
with gifts of fox and beaver pelt. R

4

O children of the forest free,  
the angel song is true,  
the holy child of earth and heaven  
is born today for you.  
Come, kneel before the radiant boy,  
who brings you beauty, peace, and joy. R

**The third reading**

Charles Dickens: *A family Christmas party*

**Carol : *Once in Royal David's City*** (vv 1, 2 &4)  
(VU 62)

1

Once in royal David's city  
stood a lowly cattleshed,  
where a mother laid her baby  
in a manger for his bed.  
Mary was that mother mild,  
Jesus Christ her little child.

2

He came down to earth from heaven  
who, with God, is over all,  
and his shelter was a stable,  
and his cradle was a stall.  
There among the poor and lowly  
lived on earth our Saviour holy.

4

And our eyes at last shall see him,  
through his own redeeming love;  
for that child who seemed so helpless  
is our Lord in heaven above;  
and he leads his children on  
to the place where he is gone.

### **The fourth reading**

From Dr. Seuss: *The Grinch who stole Christmas*

### **Carol: *Hark! The herald angel sing***

(VU 48)

1

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!'

2

Christ, by highest heaven adored,  
Christ, the everlasting Lord,  
late in time behold him come,  
offspring of a virgin's womb.  
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see;  
hail, the incarnate deity,  
pleased with us in flesh to dwell,

Jesus, our Emmanuel! R

3

Hail, the heavenborn 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. R

### **The fifth reading**

Robert Frost (New Hampshire, 1923): *Stopping by woods on a snowy evening*

**Carol: *It came upon a midnight clear***  
(VU 44)

1

It came upon the midnight clear,  
that glorious song of old,  
from angels bending near the earth  
to touch their harps of gold,  
'Peace on the earth, good will to all,  
from heaven's all-gracious King!'  
The world in solemn stillness lay  
to hear the angels sing.

2

Still through the cloven skies they come  
with peaceful wings unfurled;  
and still their heavenly music floats  
o'er all the weary world;  
above its sad and lowly plains  
they bend on hovering wing,  
and ever o'er its Babel sounds  
the blessed angels sing.

3

Yet with the woes of sin and strife  
the world has suffered long;  
beneath the angel strain have rolled  
two thousand years of wrong;  
and warring humankind hears not  
the love song which they bring.  
O hush the noise, and cease your strife,  
to hear the angels sing.

4

For, lo! the days are hastening on,  
by prophets seen of old,  
when with the ever-circling years  
shall come the time foretold,  
when peace shall over all the earth  
its ancient splendours fling,  
and the whole world send back the song  
which now the angels sing.

### **The sixth reading**

A Christmas Version of 1st Corinthians 13

### **Carol: *O little town of Bethlehem***

(VU 64)

1

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.

2

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 all on earth.

3

How silently, how silently  
the wondrous gift is given!  
So God imparts to human hearts  
the blessed gift of 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.

4

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.

### **Scripture Lesson: Luke 2: 1-20**

And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed.

(And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.)

And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.

And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem;

(because he was of the house and lineage of David:)

To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.

And so it was, that, while they were there,

the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.

And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them,

and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.

And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold,

I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

And this shall be a sign unto you;

Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, 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, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem,

and see this thing which is come to pass,

which the Lord hath made known unto us.

And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph,

and the babe lying in a manger.

And when they had seen it, they made known abroad

the saying which was told them concerning this child.

And all they that heard it wondered at those things

which were told them by the shepherds.

But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.

And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God  
for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.  
**A Christmas sermon** . . . if there's time

**Carol: *Silent Night, Holy Night***  
(VU 67)

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.

2

Silent night! Holy night!  
Shepherds quake at the sight:  
glories stream from heaven afar,  
heavenly hosts sing Hallelujah,  
Christ the Saviour is born, Christ the Saviour is born.

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.

**Candle lighting**

**Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer**

**Benediction**



**Carol: *Go! Tell it on the mountain***  
(VU 43)

**Refrain**

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

1

While shepherds kept their watching  
o'er silent flocks by night,  
behold, throughout the heavens  
there shone a holy light. R

2

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

3

Down in a lonely manger  
the humble Christ was born,  
and God sent our salvation  
that blessed Christmas morn. R