

December 24, 2023

The Nativity of the Lord: Christmas Eve

PRELUDE "Merry Christmas, Mister Lawrence" Sakamoto
Feng Kang, piano

"Christmas Meditations" arr. Manookin
Laura Johnson, organ

WELCOME Rev. Bill Pinches

PRAYER OF ADORATION

ANTHEM "O Magnum Mysterium" Ramos
Sanctuary Choir – Tenors and Basses
The cows, oxen, and donkeys come to the manger.
O magnum mysterium O great mystery,
et admirabile sacramentum and wonderful sacrament,
ut animalia viderunt that animals should see
Dominum natum the newborn Lord
jacentem in praesepio. lying in a manger.
O magnum mysterium. Amen. O great mystery. Amen.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT AND CHRIST CANDLES Youth of the Church
... Let us walk in the light of the Lord. **Amen.** Isa. 9:2

INTROIT "Come, Behold the Newborn King" Scholes
Sanctuary Bells

OPENING SENTENCES Luke 2:10-11; Luke 2:14; Isa. 9:2, 6
There is good news of great joy for all!
Our Savior is born: the Messiah, the Lord.
Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to God's people on earth.
Light shines on those who live in darkness,
for a child is born to us this night.
Let us worship God!

PRAYER OF THE DAY

+HYMN: GTG #123 "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear" CAROL

ASCRPTION OF PRAISE Luke 2:14

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

THE FIRST LESSON *The Angel Gabriel Visits the Virgin Mary* Luke 1:26-38
Jill Castle
Gabriel and Mary come to the manger.

THE SECOND LESSON *Mary's Song of Praise* Luke 1:46-55
Hannah Koutz

+ Those who are able may stand. 1

HYMN: GTG #145 "What Child Is This" GREENSLEEVES

THE THIRD LESSON *The Angel Visits Righteous Joseph* Matthew 1:18-25
Violet Mackey
Joseph comes to the manger.

THE FOURTH LESSON *The Birth of Jesus the Messiah* Luke 2:1-7
Keren Tayong
Baby Jesus comes to the manger.

+HYMN: GTG #119 "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" MENDELSSOHN

THE FIFTH LESSON *The Angels Visit the Shepherds* Luke 2:8-20
Erin McGonigal
The shepherds, sheep, and angels come to the manger.

ANTHEM "In the Bleak Midwinter" arr. Forrest
Sanctuary Choir

THE SIXTH LESSON *The Word Became Flesh* John 1:1-5, 14, 16
Sam Pinches

+HYMN: GTG #113 "Angels We Have Heard on High" GLORIA

INVITATION TO OFFER OUR GIFTS Isa. 9:6; Luke 2:11; John 1:16
*All gifts collected tonight, unless otherwise designated,
will be donated to Mason Community Services
and Capital Area Community Services
to benefit people in our area who are in need.*

ANTHEM "Is He Worthy?" Peterson/Shive
Travis Archer, soloist arr. Duren

+HYMN: GTG #133 "O Come, All Ye Faithful" ADESTE FIDELES

A WORD FOR THE CHILDREN Katharine Wise

HYMN: GTG #115 "Away in a Manger" MUELLER
Monte Shuck, guitar

A WORD FOR THE ADULTS Rev. Bill Pinches

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION AND THANKSGIVING

ANTHEM "All Is Well" Kirkpatrick/Smith
Sanctuary Choir arr. Larson

SHARING THE LIGHT OF CHRIST

*Acolytes will move through the sanctuary as we begin singing
"Silent Night," lighting the candle of those seated near the aisles.
Tip your unlit candle towards a candle that is already lit;
do not tip your candle after it is lit.
We invite you to sit in quiet meditation as the light grows.
We will extinguish our candles as "Joy to the World" begins.*

GTG = Glory to God (purple) 2

HYMN: GTG #122 "Silent Night, Holy Night!" STILLE NACHT

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,
heavenly 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 thy holy face,
with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

Silent night, holy night!
Wondrous star, lend thy light;
with the angels let us sing
Alleluia to our King:
Christ the Savior is born;
Christ the Savior is born.

MOMENT OF PEACE

+HYMN: GTG #134 "Joy to the World" ANTIOCH

+BLESSING Titus 3:4-7
... and the renewing power of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
Amen!

+CHARGE Luke 2:10-11
Go and tell this good news of great joy: to us a Savior is born.
Alleluia!

+POSTLUDE "Go Tell It on the Mountain" arr. Work
Feng Kang, piano

*You are welcome to greet one another during the postlude.
Merry Christmas!*

SERVING US TODAY

Guest Organist: Laura Johnson
Greeters: Sarah Fay-Koutz, Hannah Koutz, and Nancy Sue MacDonald
Sound: Marty Subject
Livestream: Tami Chapman
Security: Dan Baker and Tim Hammond

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THE SEASON OF CHRISTMAS

“Christmas” (from Christ-mass) is the church’s celebration of the incarnation and nativity of Jesus Christ. At the Nativity of the Lord and throughout the season of Christmas we give thanks that, in the fullness of time, God’s Word became flesh to live among us, full of grace and truth. We proclaim this good news of great joy for all people: that God has sent us a Savior, the Messiah, the Lord. We bear witness to the light of Christ that has come into the world, the light that darkness cannot overcome.

Christians have commemorated the Nativity of the Lord on December 25 since at least the fourth century in Rome. As with Advent, the origin of this festival is unclear. Some have proposed that it was established to replace the Roman feast of Dies Natalis Solis Invicti (the “day of the birth of the unconquered sun”). According to another theory, Jesus’ conception was thought to correspond with the day of his crucifixion: March 25, according to early Christian tradition; December 25 is exactly nine months later.

As with Easter, Christmas refers not only to a single day, but to a whole season of celebration in the Christian year. The season of Christmas spans the twelve days between the Nativity of the Lord (December 25) and the Epiphany of the Lord (January 6). Traditionally, the first service of Christmas takes place on the eve of the Nativity of the Lord. Depending on the year, one or two Sundays fall within the season of Christmas; on these Sundays we continue to rejoice in the wondrous gift of Emmanuel—God with us in Jesus Christ.

CREDITS

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MINISTERS

All Members

STAFF

Pastor: Rev. Bill Pinches
Parish Associate: Rev. Dr. Jim Hegedus
Pastor Emeritus: Rev. Charlie Herrick
Spiritual Growth Director: Lori Filka
Office Manager: Sheren Wright
Sanctuary Choir Director / Bell Choir Director: Deb Melse
Choral Music Accompanist / Organist: Feng Kang
Office Assistant: Nancy Sue MacDonald
Sexton: Eric VanDyke
Adult Spiritual Growth Coordinator: Michelle Mackey
Child Care: Jill Castle, Aimee Cruickshank, Isaiah Hawkins, Hannah Koutz, Jasmine Leffew, Sam Pinches, Lucy Simons

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Class of 2024: Jerry Ambrose, Lucinda Davenport, Loren Harkness, Tonya Seely.
Class of 2025: Doreen Chapman, Anita Cote, Mary Garland Jackson, Monte Shuck.
Elders-Elect: Bruce Archer, Ginnie Gibson, Jane Hamelink, Tim Hammond

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Class of 2023: Lisa Castle, Jay Harkness, Vern Schrock.
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Class of 2025: Marge Clarke, Julie Dart, Timothy Pinches, Tom Seely.
Deacons-Elect: Ron Dlouhy, Sandy Leutscher, Nancy Sue MacDonald

DAILY PRAYER

Book of Common Worship: Daily Prayer (2018)

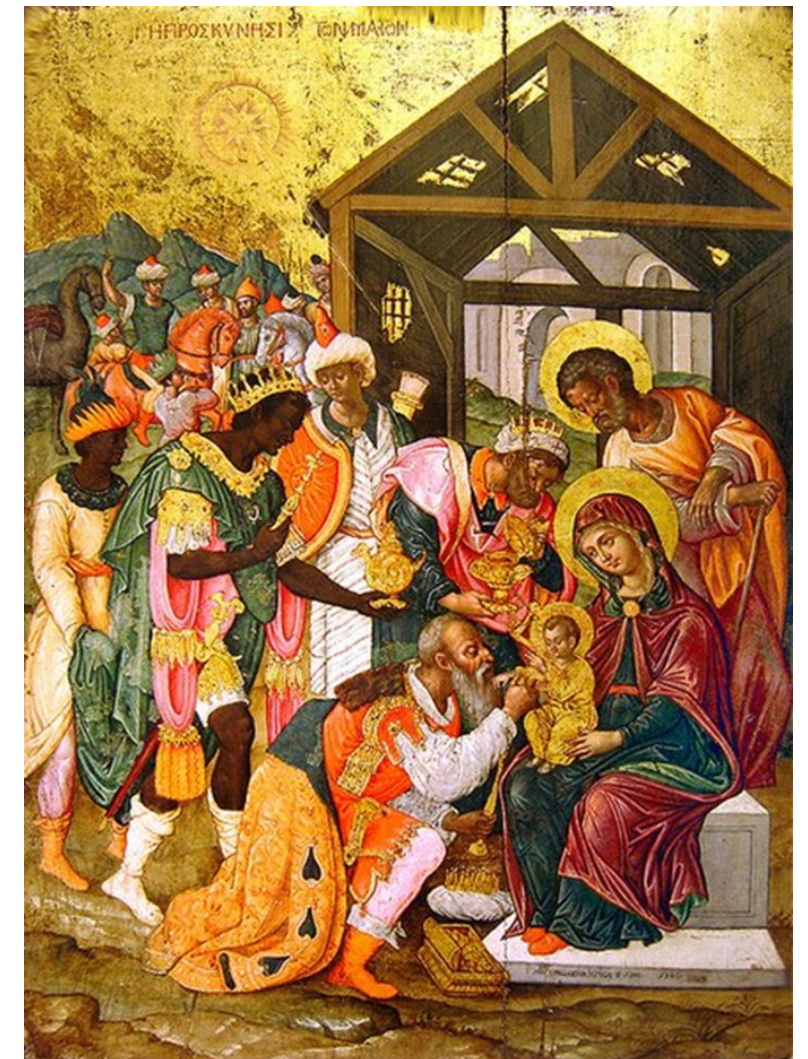
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Adoration of the Magi
Byzantine icon; artist unknown
Byzantine and Christian Museum, Athens, Greece

*The fruit of the Spirit
is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity,
faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.*
(Galatians 5:22-23)