

A Service
of
Candlelight, Communion, and Wonder!

"Do You Hear What I Hear?"



Christ Is Born!

Highlands United Presbyterian Church
CHRISTMAS EVE 2016

HIGHLANDS UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
"CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT
COMMUNION SERVICE"

5:00 P.M. -- Dec. 24, 2016

GATHERING MUSIC OF CHRISTMAS

PRELUDE "God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen"
Rhiannon Parker, pianist

WELCOME AND GATHERING

Animals came to prepare your bed.

Come, Lord Jesus, Come!

Shepherds stood guard, marveled and said:

Come, Lord Jesus, Come!

Angels sang to calm your cries.

Come, Lord Jesus, Come!

And all the world gave one great sigh:

Ah, Lord Jesus, you have come!

So the Lord of Hope, the Prince of Peace, the giver of Joy, the King of Love;
came down and crept in beside us.

O come let us adore him.

*LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH The Terrell Family
INVITING PRAYER (unison)

Sisters and brothers, come this holy night;

and let us worship in the increasing light of God's love as we pray:

**All: "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."**

CAROL NO. 23 "Angels We Have Heard On High"

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

Gloria in excelsis Deo; Gloria in excelsis Deo.

2. Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be Which inspire your heavenly song?

Gloria in excelsis Deo; Gloria in excelsis Deo.

3. Come to Bethlehem and see Him whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee Christ, the Lord, the newborn King.

Gloria in excelsis Deo; Gloria in excelsis Deo.



-- if comfortable, please stand



***CHRISTMAS PRAYER OF INVOCATION AND FORGIVENESS**

We come to Bethlehem to see tonight. To see a starlit sky. To hear that multitude of angels sing. To see shepherds quake and a baby in a manger in a crude dwelling.
Let us pray:

“On this holy night we gather because we can hardly contain our joy at the news of our Savior’s birth. Our Advent expectation and anticipation take the form of a star shining in the night sky. We await, with anxious breath the declaration “It’s Christmas!” Even as we wait we express our sorrow in our sinful sadness and look to this one, born a child and yet a king, to forgive and save us. Amen.”

God loves us this much. Enough to become one of us so that in him we might be saved. Amen.

***THE CHRISTMAS STORY FROM LUKE 2:1-20** (from The Message)

***PASSING THE PEACE**

May the peace of the Lord Jesus Christ born this night be with you!

And also with you!

(At this time, you are invited to share a sign of peace: a hug, a handshake, a kiss...)

SPECIAL MUSIC

“Sing We Noel”

Logos Choir



CHRISTMAS STORY TIME FOR CHILDREN OF ALL AGES

“Do You Hear What I Hear?”

***AFFIRMATION OF OUR FAITH** (Unison)

“We embrace the wide-eyed wonder.

We embrace the giddy anticipation.

We embrace the story of a baby’s birth in child like faith.

We embrace the good news the angels proclaimed:

Fear not, Do not be afraid Mary, Joseph, Shepherds, Sleeping Babe...

Do not be afraid you who hope, believe, wish that –

that with our God all things are possible;

that even now, unto us a child is born!

Hark! A Herald Angel proclaims to the world:

(Sung) 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!"

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 God-head see; Hail the incarnate Deity,

Pleased in flesh with us to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel.

Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"



SHARING OUR OFFERINGS, COMMUNION AND THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

WELCOME TO THE TABLE

No longer in a stable, we find the love of God here, this night, on this table.

With humble shepherds of old, with Wise Men giving ourselves as gold,
We come to worship, to eat, to drink, and in this place we seek that link,
That binds us to our God above, full born this night in such great love.

GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

**We Lift Not Only Our Hearts, But Our Souls, Our Minds And Our
Strength To God.**

We give you thanks O God for this great news and for the presence of Christ our Savior in this meal of grace. O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Immanuel. With faithful people throughout the ages we have gathered to hear the angels sing, and to add our voices to the heavenly chorus of praise singing:

**“Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Son 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!"”**

Send the power of your Holy Spirit upon us, that we may experience the presence of the Word-made-flesh - Jesus Christ. Breathe your Spirit in us that we may be one body with him - faithfully following and serving him, and awaiting with expectation the coming of his kingdom. Amen.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

OUR OFFERING AND COMMUNION FELLOWSHIP

{We will come forward in families and/or small groups to commune together. Please come down the center aisle and back down the side aisles. You are invited to use a pew envelope for your Christmas offering. A basket is provided for your offering at the chancel steps.}

MUSIC DURING COMMUNION

**“Joseph’s Song”
J.O.Y. Choir**

CAROL NO. 30 “Born In The Night, Mary’s Child”

- 1. Born in the night, Mary's Child, A long way from Your home;
Coming in need, Mary's Child, Born in a borrowed room.**
- 2. Clear shining light, Mary's Child, Your face lights up our way;
Light of the world, Mary's Child, Dawn on our darkened day.**
- 3. Truth of our life, Mary's Child, You tell us God is good;
Yes, it is true, Mary's Child, Shown on your cross of wood.**
- 4. Hope of the world, Mary's Child, You're coming soon to reign;
King of the earth, Mary's Child, Walk in our streets again.**

CAROL NO. 27 "Gentle Mary Laid Her Child"

**Gentle Mary laid her child Lowly in a manger;
There He lay, the undefiled, To the world a stranger.
Such a babe in such a place, Can He be the Savior?
Ask the saved of all the race Who have found His favor.**

**Angels sang about His birth, Wise men sought and found Him;
Heaven's star shone brightly forth, Glory all around Him.
Shepherds saw the wondrous sight, Heard the angels singing;
All the plains were lit that night, All the hills were ringing.**

**Gentle Mary laid her child Lowly in a manger;
He is still the undefiled, But no more a stranger.
Son of God, of humble birth, Beautiful the story;
Praise His name in all the earth, Hail the King of glory!**

CAROL NO. 43 "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.**

**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.**

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

**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!**



***PRAYER OF DEDICATION** (responsive)

At the table we meet you once again, incarnate one.

**For us the babe of Bethlehem has become the bread of life,
the cup of salvation.**

This night of starlight and candle glow and angels singing and shepherds rushing;
Fills us with your love.

May we, this night and always, share the wonder and the love.

Now, as we sing of that Silent, Holy night, bless us once again.

Help us, with the shepherds, to go and announce your presence here.

Alleluia, Amen!

***CAROL AND SHARING OF THE LIGHT NO. 60**

"Silent Night, Holy Night"

(As the worship leader passes you the light, please turn to face the back of the sanctuary.)

**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.**

***BLESSING AND BENEDICTION BEFORE THE NIGHT**

(Baskets for extinguished candles are outside)



Silent Night, Holy Night

WELCOME!! We welcome all who worship with us on this Christmas Eve! We hope that the joy and light of Christmas will be yours on this Holy Night! A HUGE thanks tonight to all who are providing special music for our service.

OUR CHRISTMAS OFFERING will be received tonight as we come forward for Communion. We appreciate your offerings this night as we, like the Wise Men of old, bring our gifts to the Christ Child. A "manger" is in front of the chancel steps and 'pew envelopes' are available for your use. Thank you for your gifts for the work of Christ's church in the world.

SHARING THE LORD'S SUPPER: In the Presbyterian Church the table is open to all who profess faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. We invite you to join us in communion. Tonight, we will commune by coming forward in small groups which may be families and friends or however you like. Two (2) stations of Elders will hold the bread and the cup. The method of communion is to gather your entire group with the elders, they will then offer each the bread. When **all** have bread, you will be invited to dip your bread into a cup and commune with the words, 'this is Christ's body and blood given for you.' After your entire group has communed we request that you return to your pew down the side aisles. If anyone would rather be served in the pew, please indicate this to an elder who is ushering.

After all have been served the Pastor will bring to your pew light from the Christ candle as we sing "Silent Night". You are invited to turn and share the light with others. As we sing you are invited to turn and face the exit as the pastor passes by your pew. We will face the world with the light of Christ in our hands, and after the benediction will extinguish our candles and go out into the world filled with joy and with the light of Christ in our hearts. **(Parents please help your children with their candle. A basket is outside the door for your extinguished candle.)**

Christmas Sunday Worship: Please join us tomorrow morning at 10 a.m. for our Christmas Sunday Worship and Fellowship. Let us remember the reason we share in this joyful celebration of our faith.

A BLESSED CHRISTMAS TO ALL! It is our greatest hope that this service has been a blessing to you and yours and that your Christmas Day will be one of hope filled wonder, grace and peace!

Heaven
and Nature
Sing



Peace to all...
this Holy Night!