



Wrapped in Love
Advent Carol Service

P: While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, ⁷ and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them. Luke 2:6-7

This Christmas, may we wrap ourselves in the love, light and peace that come from knowing the humble beginning that Jesus endured as he came to earth. Help us to enfold our beginnings and ends with steadfast assurance and unbreakable faith, now more than always.

Opening Hymn

Joy to the world! the Lord is come;
Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare Him room,
And heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n, and heav'n, and nature sing.

Joy to the world! the Saviour reigns;

Let men 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.

Words: Isaac Watts, 1719 Music: Lowell Mason, 1839

Kauma

- P.** †Glory be to the Father our Creator, to the Son our Redeemer and to the Holy Spirit who sanctifies us.
C. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.
P. Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory, Hosanna in the highest.
C. Blessed is He that has come and is to come again in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

- P.** Holy art thou, O God.
C. Holy art thou, Almighty Lord.
P. Holy art thou, Immortal Lord.
C. O Lord, the Messiah who was crucified for us † have mercy on us.

(To be repeated thrice)

- P.** O Lord, have mercy on us.
C. O Lord, have mercy on us and bless us.
P. O Lord, accept our prayers and worship and have mercy on us.
C. Glory be to you, O God.
P. Glory be to you, O Creator.
C. Glory be to you, O King the Messiah; who has mercy on us sinners. Bless us, O Lord.
(Let us sing together the prayer that Jesus taught us)
**All: Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name,
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, On earth as it is done in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, Forever. Amen.**

(Cong to be seated)

1st Lesson: Isaiah 7:10-17

2nd Lesson: Romans 8:31-39

Advent: The story told through poems and carols

L: MARY

We know the scene: the room, variously furnished,

almost always a lectern, a book; always
the tall lily.
Arrived on solemn grandeur of great wings,
the angelic ambassador, standing or hovering,
whom she acknowledges, a guest.

But we are told of meek obedience. No one mentions courage.
Compassion and intelligence,
fused in her, indivisible.
Called to a destiny more momentous
than any in all of Time,
she did not quail,
only asked the engendering Spirit
did not enter her without consent.

God waited.
She was free
to accept or to refuse, choice
integral to humanness.

She had been a child who played, ate, slept
like any other child—but unlike others,
wept only for pity, laughed
in joy not triumph.
A simple, 'How can this be?'
and gravely, courteously,
took to heart the angel's reply,
the astounding ministry she was offered:
to bear in her womb
Infinite weight and lightness; to carry
in hidden, finite inwardness,
nine months of Eternity; to contain
in slender vase of being,
the sum of power—
in narrow flesh,
the sum of light.
Then bring to birth,
push out into air, a Man-child
needing, like any other,
milk and love—
but who was God.
This was the moment no one speaks of,
when she could still refuse.
A breath unbreathed,
Spirit,
suspended,
waiting.
She did not cry, 'I cannot. I am not worthy,'
Nor, 'I have not the strength.'
She did not submit with gritted teeth,
raging, coerced.
Bravest of all humans,
consent illumined her.
The room filled with its light,
the lily glowed in it,
and the iridescent wings.

Consent,
courage unparalleled,
opened her utterly.

Jan Richardson

C: To be sung

**O come, O come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear.**

**Rejoice! Rejoice!
Emmanuel Shall come to Thee, O Israel.**

**O come, Desire of nations, bind
All peoples in one heart and mind;
Bid envy, strife, and quarrels cease,
Fill the whole world with heaven's peace.**

9th Century Latin Hymn Translated: John Mason Neale, 1851
15th Century French Melody Music: Thomas Helmore, 1854

L: MARY AND ELIZABETH

Then Mary thought of Elizabeth. "The angel knew all about her – I must go to her." She got ready, and set off quickly for Elizabeth's home in Judea to the south, near Jerusalem. As soon as she arrived at the house, she hurried to Elizabeth and took her hands. At the sound of Mary's voice, the baby leaped inside Elizabeth, and the Holy Spirit filled her. She understood at once what had happened to Mary. "You are blessed among all women, and blessed is your unborn child!" she said. "Why have I been so honoured? Why should the mother of my Lord God come to visit me?" Elizabeth laughed, and put Mary's hand on her belly. "You see how my child leaps for joy at the sound of your voice?"

As we think of those two women supporting each other, it's good for us to think of ways we can continue to be present for one another, and listen and share lives, through this festive season. It's good, too, to remember the slow growth of a child, how much patience is needed, as we wait and work and pray for the coming of the Kingdom.

C: To be sung

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! The word made flesh,
The Babe, the Son of Mary.

Words: William Chatterton Dix (1865)
16th Century Traditional English Melody - Greensleeves
Music: John Stainer (1871)

L: JOSEPH

There is so little that we know about you
Just that you were a simple carpenter
Taking a young wife
To make a life of you own

Then she surprised you with the news of a babe
How shocked you must have been
It was before you'd made her your own
How could she have deceived you so

The thoughts of having her shamed
When the angel appeared
Telling you this was God's son
You had been chosen, just as much as your betrothed

The responsibility on your shoulders to provide for him
Teaching him about his heavenly father, or maybe learning instead
Keeping him safe from a frightened king
Sharing your craft and heart with him

Then you just disappear
As we wonder where you went
What your life must have been like
To be the earthly father of the KING

Diana Leagh Matthews

C: To be sung

**Away in a manger, no crib for his bed,
The little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head;
The stars in the sky looked down where he lay,
The little Lord Jesus, asleep on the hay.**

**Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask thee to stay
Close by me forever, and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in thy tender care,
And fit us for heaven to live with thee there.**

Words: Martin Luther Music: 'Mueller' James R. Murray

L: THE ANGELS

An urgency lingered in the cold evening air,
A nervous hastiness, an angelic rush of care.
It was to be the greatest celestial show,
The preparations had begun aeons ago.

Birthed in the depths of the galaxies,
The tune strung across time's fantasies.
Composed on the faith and hope of prophets,
With harp, lyre, cymbals, voice and trumpets.

Sopranos tuned to the songs of the breeze,
As Altos flowed with the wind in the trees.
With the rivers' rise and flow the Tenors sing,
The Bass from heaven's depth a beat they bring.

Which celestial prince will with them rejoice?
Which glorious palace will echo their voice?
The galactic sea was to be present in full glory,
With blasts of lightning and thunder roaring.

But, but, they were to sing for ordinary shepherds,
And a stable with animals and people unheard.
What? A shriek, a murmur, voices grumble,
Is this why we really took all the trouble?

But when the clouds finally parted,
Over Bethlehem, their doubts departed.
The most magnificent star blazed in the skies,
With the dance of a billion fireflies.

The great lights danced, the angels sang,
With true heart, while celestial bells rang.
That day life birthed again to lie in a tiny cradle,
And the past and future met in that lowly stable.

C: To be sung
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.

Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
Say what may the tidings be
Which inspire your heav'nly song?

Based on French Carol: 'Les Anges Dans Nos Campagnes'
Translated to English: James Chadwick

L: THE SHEPHERDS

On a dark night outside Bethlehem, the silence was so deep,
All the shepherds stood beneath the sky just watching o'er their sheep.
When so suddenly appeared to them, with haloes 'round their heads,
A multitude of angels, yes, and this is what they said,
"All you shepherds, no need to be afraid,
For a Savior is born unto you, in a manger is He laid!"

When they heard what next the angels said, it came as such a thrill,
"All glad tidings do we bring to you and all men of good will.
So just stop your shivering and listen to the tale we tell.
For today the Savior Child is born! His name's Emmanuel!"
"All you shepherds, no need to be afraid,
For a Savior is born unto you, in a manger is He laid!"

So, the shepherds left the sheep right there, and they walked through the night
'Til they came to a small stable sitting under starry light.
And they found the child lying there, just as the angels said
He was all wrapped in swaddling clothes, a manger for His bed.
"All you shepherds, no need to be afraid,
For a Savior is born unto you, in a manger is He laid!"

C: To be sung

**While shepherds watched their flocks by night,
all seated on the ground,
an angel of the Lord came down,
and glory shone around.**

**"All glory be to God on high,
and to the earth be peace;
to those on whom his favor rests
goodwill shall never cease."**

Nahum Tate

L: The Wise Men

The sky was black
On that eerie night
We wondered then
What was that sight?

There was a star
That led the way
Those three men
They stopped to pray

Those Three Wisemen
Who came to see
A sight to share
With you and me

They each brought gifts
To share with You
They saw a babe
So brand new.

In the manger
on that night
That tiny babe
What a sight.

How could we know
When we saw His face
He'd be the one
To change this place?

We offered frankincense
And myrrh
On that night
No one did stir.

The eastern light
That guided them
Is there until
He comes again.

Kathryn Neff Perry

C: To be sung

**We three kings of Orient are;
bearing gifts we traverse afar,
field and fountain, moor and mountain,
following yonder star.**

***O star of wonder, star of light,
star with royal beauty bright,
westward leading, still proceeding,
guide us to thy perfect light.***

**Glorious now behold him arise;
King and God and sacrifice:
Alleluia, Alleluia,
sounds through the earth and skies.**

Words & Music: John Henry Hopkins Jr., 1857
Based on: Matthew 2:1

L: The First Christmas –

No one slept on that first Christmas Eve; The child was so special, no one wanted to leave. They sang praises to God, for sending such joy in the form of a new and perfect baby boy. The star kept on shining so the whole world could see that God loves everyone, including you and me! Today is a time to sing and to say Thank you to God for what happened that day. Today, many years later, we stand together to commemorate a night that changed the world. May we approach this Christmas with the same perseverance as Mary, the same Joy as Elizabeth, the same obedience as Joseph, the same jubilation as the angels, the same renewed faith as the shepherds, the same determination as the wise men, and the same peace of the new born babe. This Christmas, let us wrap ourselves in these virtues as we celebrate and spread the magic of that night.

C: To be sung
**Oh, come, all ye faithful,
Joyful and triumphant!
Oh, come ye, oh come ye to Bethlehem.
Come and behold him,
Born the King of angels;**

***Oh, come, let us adore him;
Oh, come, let us adore him;
Oh, come, let us adore him,
Christ, the Lord.***

**Yea, Lord, we greet thee,
Born this happy morning;
Jesus, to thee be all glory giv'n.
Word of the Father,
Now in flesh appearing;**

Lyrics and Music: John F Wade

Prayer of Confession

***Kyrie Elieson, Kyrie Elieson, Kyrie Elieson
Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy, Lord have mercy***

P: Lord Jesus Christ, you are loving and merciful. Forgive us for being so captivated by Christmas that we forget that you, the little baby in the manger, grew up as the Lord over all creation. It is sometimes easier to leave you in the manger than it is to reckon with your difficult teachings and

fierce challenges. So often we do not follow these teachings, and we do not live up to your challenges.

C: We have buried you so deeply in our hearts, the world doesn't see you. We have not followed Christ, we have ignored your teachings, we have lived lives of apathy against your love, we have built fences and fortresses to push people away, and we have silenced the screams of those in need.

We need your grace and your strength to follow you more closely. This year more than ever, we ask for the magic of Christmas to come alive in our hearts, for the spirit of Christmas to wash over our hearts. In these times of war, uncertainty and doubt, help us to be beacons of your light, love and life so that Christmas becomes an act and not merely a feeling. Amen.

Kyrie Elieson, Kyrie Elieson, Kyrie Elieson
Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy, Lord have mercy

Gospel Reading

P: †Peace be with you all.

C: May the Lord make us all worthy to listen to His Word.

P: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, which proclaims life and salvation to the world as recorded by **Evangelist Matthew**

C: Blessed is He that has come and will come again. Praise to the Father who sent him for our Salvation. May His blessings be ever upon us.

P: In the days of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour, the Word of life, God incarnate of the blessed Virgin Mary, it happened in this way.

C: So, we believe and affirm. **Matthew 1:18-25**

(After reading the Gospel, the priest says, †**Peace be with you all**)

C: We thank you, Lord, that you have given us your gospel which is indeed the light of the world, that we may be drawn closer to you through the living words from your gospel which we have now heard.

The Nicene Creed – To be sung

We believe in the one true God, the Father Almighty,
Maker of heaven, Maker of earth,

We believe in our Lord Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,
begotten of the Father before all world;

God of God, Light of Light, Of all things invisible, and all in light.
God of God, Light of Light, of all things invisible and all things right.

Being one with the Father, by whom all things were made,
who for our salvation, came down from heaven,
Incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin and was made man.

In the days of Pilate, He was crucified,

He suffered and died and was buried.
The third day He rose again, ascended into heaven,

He will come again for the living and the dead
and of His kingdom there will be no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life;
together with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified;
God of God, Light of Light,
who spoke through the prophets and the apostles.

We believe in one Holy Church,
One baptism for the remission of sins;
We look forward to the resurrection of the dead,
and the new life to come.
Amen

Birthday, Wedding Anniversary and Thanksgiving

Hark! the herald angels sing,
"Glory to the new born King,
Peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled!"
Joyful, all ye nations rise,
Join the triumph of the skies;
With angelic hosts proclaim,
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
Hark! the herald angels sing,
"Glory to the new born King!"

Christ, by highest Heav'n adored;
Christ, the everlasting Lord;
Late in time behold Him come,
Offspring of a virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the God-head see;
Hail th' incarnate Deity,
Pleased as man with men to appear,
Jesus, our Immanuel here.
Hark! the herald angels sing,
"Glory to the new born King!"

Hail the Heav'n-born Prince of Peace!
Hail the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all He brings,
Ris'n with healing in His wings.
Mild He lays His glory by,
Born that man no more may die,
Born to raise the sons of earth,
Born to give them second birth.
Hark! the herald angels sing,
"Glory to the new born King!"

Words: Charles Wesley Music: Felix Mendelssohn

Announcements

Offertory

Once in Royal David's city
Stood a lowly cattle shed.
Where a mother laid her Baby

In a manger for His bed.
Mary was that mother mild,
Jesus Christ, her little child.

He came down to earth from Heaven,
Who is God and Lord of all.
And His shelter was a stable,
And His cradle was a stall.
With the poor and mean and lowly,
Lived on earth our Saviour Holy.

Jesus is our childhood's pattern:
Day by day like us He grew;
He was little, weak and helpless;
Tears and smiles like us, He knew:
And He feeleth for our sadness,
And He shareth in our gladness.

And our eyes at last shall see Him
Through His own redeeming love,
For that Child so dear and gentle
Is our Lord in Heav'n above;
And He leads His children on
To the place where He is gone.

Words: Cecil Frances Alexander (1848)

Music: Henry J. Gauntlett (1849)

MESSAGE

(Cong. to stand)

Closing Prayer

P: At Christmas, lights burn brighter,
and friendly hugs get even tighter.
The spirit of Christmas fills the air,
and people seem to really care.

Merry hearts are filled with cheer.
Families and friends all draw near.
The streets around are all filled
despite the cold winter chill.

C: Everywhere there's smiling faces,
giving and receiving warm embraces.
And for a time, sadness disappear.
Peace, joy and hope replaces fear.

All because God's love came down
and filled the earth all around.
So we celebrate at Christmas time
our Savior and Lord, holy, divine!

We honour Jesus throughout the year
so the Christmas spirit will linger near.

For the story of His birth is ours to tell -
that Jesus became our Emmanuel! Amen.

Benediction

P: O God, you have caused that Holy night
to shine with the brightness of the true Light:
Grant that we, who have known the mystery of that Light on earth,
may also enjoy him perfectly in heaven;
where with you and the Holy Spirit he lives and reigns,
one God, in glory everlasting.
In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Doxology and Kiss of Peace

*Chorus: 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 the Saviour's birth.*

*Down in a lowly manger
The humble Christ was born,
And God sent us salvation,
That blessed Christmas morn.*

*Words & Music: John Wesley Work, Jr. (1907)
African-American Spiritual*