
Order of Worship

December 8, 2024

Reflection

To enter heaven is to become more human than you ever succeeded in being on earth.

– C.S. Lewis

Prelude

As worship begins, please silence your electronic devices.

Call to Worship

Luke 2

Leader: Fear not, for behold I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

People: And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.

Leader: And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

People: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!

Song

Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven

Praise, my soul, the King of heaven;
To His feet thy tribute bring.
Ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven,
Who like me His praise should sing?
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Praise the everlasting King.

Praise Him for His grace and favor
To our fathers in distress.
Praise Him still the same forever,
Slow to chide, and swift to bless.
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Glorious in His faithfulness.

Frail as summer's flower we flourish
Blows the wind and it is gone
But while mortals rise and perish
God endures unchanging on
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Praise the high eternal One

Father-like He tends and spares us;
Well our feeble frame He Knows.
In His hands He gently bears us,
Rescues us from all our foes.

Alleluia! Alleluia!
Widely as His mercy goes.

Angels help us to adore Him;
Ye behold Him face to face;
Sun and moon, bow down before Him,
Dwellers all in time and space.
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Praise with us the God of grace.

Prayer of Adoration

Almighty God, whose blessed Son Jesus Christ promised to come again to receive his people unto himself; keep us ever watchful for his glorious appearing. Help us to set our affections on things above, and to live as those who wait for their Lord, that when he appears we may be made like him, and see him as he is. Through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

Lighting the Advent Wreath *The Bethlehem Candle*

Luke 1:68-75

Reader: We light the second candle of Advent, the Bethlehem Candle. We light these candles to remind us that Jesus is the Light of the world. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

All: Thanks be to God!

Doxology

Old Hundredth

Praise God whose light fills all the earth
Whose love we see in Jesus' birth
Whose Spirit forms one family
Whose grace brings peace and harmony. Amen.

Prayer of Confession

God of grace and truth, in Jesus Christ you came among us as light shining in the darkness. We confess that we have not welcomed the light, or trusted good news to be good. We have closed our eyes to your glory in our midst, expecting little, and hoping for less. Forgive our doubt, and renew our hope, so that we may receive the fullness of your grace, and live in the truth of Christ the Lord. Amen.

Private Confession

Song

How Deep the Father's Love for Us

How deep the Father's love for us,
How vast beyond all measure
That He should give His only Son
To make a wretch His treasure
How great the pain of searing loss,
The Father turns His face away

As wounds which mar the chosen One,
Bring many sons to glory

Behold the Man upon a cross,
My sin upon His shoulders
Ashamed I hear my mocking voice,
Call out among the scoffers
It was my sin that left Him there
Until it was accomplished
His dying breath has brought me life
I know that it is finished

I will not boast in anything
No gifts, no power, no wisdom
But I will boast in Jesus Christ
His death and resurrection
Why should I gain from His reward?
I cannot give an answer
But this I know with all my heart
His wounds have paid my ransom

Words of Pardon and Comfort

Galatians 4:4-5

When the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son,
born of a woman, born under the law, in order to
redeem those who were under the law, so that we might
be adopted as children.

Song

Jesus Loves Me

Jesus loves me! This I know,
For the Bible tells me so;
Little ones to Him belong;
They are weak, but He is strong.

Refrain:

Yes, Jesus loves me!
Yes, Jesus loves me!
Yes, Jesus loves me!
The Bible tells me so.

Jesus loves me! This I know,
As He loved so long ago,
Taking children on His knee,
Saying, "Let them come to Me." (Refrain)

Jesus loves me! He who died
Heaven's gate to open wide;
He will wash away my sin,
Let His little child come in. (Refrain)

Jesus loves me! He will stay
Close beside me all the way;
Thou hast bled and died for me,
I will henceforth live for Thee. (Refrain)

(Children through Kindergarten are dismissed for Children's Church; they will return for Communion.)

Prayer of Intercession *Concluded by the Lord's Prayer*
Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is 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, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

High Desert Highlights *See 'Church Life' on p. 17*

Prayer of Dedication

Offertory

If you have a financial gift, you may place it in the offering plate, located on the information table. Donations can also be given electronically; see highdeserttpca.com for more information.

Scripture

Matthew 2:1-12

Sermon

Rev. Dan Rose

“O Little Town of Bethlehem”

O Come, Let Us Adore Him: Songs Fit for a King

Song

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 men 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

Celebration of the Lord's Supper

This is a time for all people to seek the Lord. For Christians, the Lord's Supper (also called Communion or The Eucharist, which means 'thanksgiving') is a time to meet with their Savior by faith, to be strengthened and renewed by Him as they eat the bread and drink the elements. All baptized Christians who trust in Christ alone as their Savior and Lord, belong to a church that embraces the gospel, are at peace with their fellow neighbor, and seek strength and grace to live more faithfully to Christ, are invited to participate.

If you are not a Christian, or if you are not prepared to share in this meal, we encourage you to spend this time in prayer (see Prayers on page 16) and to consider more deeply your relationship to Jesus Christ.

We also ask that children who have not yet publicly professed their faith in Christ refrain from partaking until doing so. Both wine (red) and grape juice (white) are offered. Gluten-free bread is also available.

Words of Institution

Memorial Acclamation

Minister: Therefore, we proclaim the mystery of the faith:

All: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again!

Minister: Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.

All: Therefore, let us keep the feast.

Minister: The gifts of God for the people of God.

Song

Heaven Has Come to Us

Unto us from on high
Reaching down into the deepest night
To the world hope has come
In the dark the Light of Life has dawned

Chorus:

What a myst'ry oh what love
Oh how can it be that Heaven has come (to us)

Unto us meek and mild
God eternal born a helpless child
Set aside Heaven's throne
Veiled in weakness came unto His own (Chorus)

Unto us grace has come
Here to seek and bring the sinner home
Lived to die rose to reign
Son of Man the Lamb for sinners slain (Chorus)

Heaven has come to us
Heaven has come to us

Song

The Solid Rock

My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness;
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,
But wholly lean on Jesus' name.

Chorus:

On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand;
All other ground is sinking sand,
All other ground is sinking sand.

When darkness veils his lovely face,
I rest on His unchanging grace;
In ev'ry high and stormy gale
My anchor holds within the veil. (Chorus)

His oath, his covenant, his blood
Support me in the whelming flood;
When all around my soul gives way,
He then is all my hope and stay. (Chorus)

When He shall come with trumpet sound,
O may I then in him be found;
Dressed in his righteousness alone,
Faultless to stand before the throne. (Chorus)

Prayer of Thanksgiving

**Gracious God, Jesus is the center point of history,
and his presence is our new beginning. Center our
lives on your lavish grace that not only saves but
renews us to be like Jesus. May our godly living be a**

fitting testimony of thanksgiving that draws others to the joyful reign of Christ the King. Amen.

Song

O Sing a Song of Bethlehem

O sing a song of Bethlehem,
Of shepherds watching there,
And of the news that came to them
From angels in the air:
The light that shone on Bethlehem
Fills all the world to-day;
Of Jesus' birth and peace on earth
The angels sing always.

O sing a song of Nazareth,
Of sunny days of joy,
O sing of fragrant flowers' breath,
And of the sinless Boy:
For now the flowers of Nazareth
In every heart may grow;
Now spreads the fame of His dear Name
On all the winds that blow.

O sing a song of Galilee,
Of lake and woods and hill,
Of Him who walked upon the sea
And bade its waves he still:

For though, like waves on Galilee,
Dark seas of trouble roll,
When faith has heard the Master's word,
Falls peace upon the soul.

O sing a song of Calvary,
Its glory and dismay;
Of Him who hung upon the tree
And took our sins away:
For He who died on Calvary
Is risen from the grave,
And Christ our Lord, by Heaven adored,
Is mighty now to save.

Benediction

Postlude

All songs used by permission. CCLI License #11101021

Prayers

Prayer for Those Searching for Truth: Lord Jesus, you claim to be the way, the truth, and the life. Grant that I might be undaunted by the cost of following you as I consider the reasons for doing so. If what you claim is true, please guide me, teach me, and open me to the reality of who you are. Give me an understanding of you that is coherent, convincing, and that leads to the life you promise. Amen.

Prayer of Belief: Lord Jesus Christ, I admit that I am weaker and more sinful than I ever dared admit, but through you I am more loved and accepted than I ever dared hope. I thank you for paying my debt on the cross, taking what I deserved in order to offer me complete forgiveness. Knowing that you have been raised from the dead, I turn from my sins and receive you as my Savior and Lord. Amen.

Prayer for Those Struggling with Sin: Lord Jesus, grant that I may see in you the fulfillment of all my need, and may turn from every false satisfaction to feed on you, the true and living bread. Enable me to lay aside the sin that clings so closely, and run with perseverance the race set before me, looking to you, the Pioneer and Perfecter of my faith. Amen.

Prayer of Commitment: Lord Jesus, you have called us to follow you in baptism and in a life of committed discipleship in your church. Grant that I may take the necessary steps to be one with your people and live in the fullness of your Spirit. Amen.