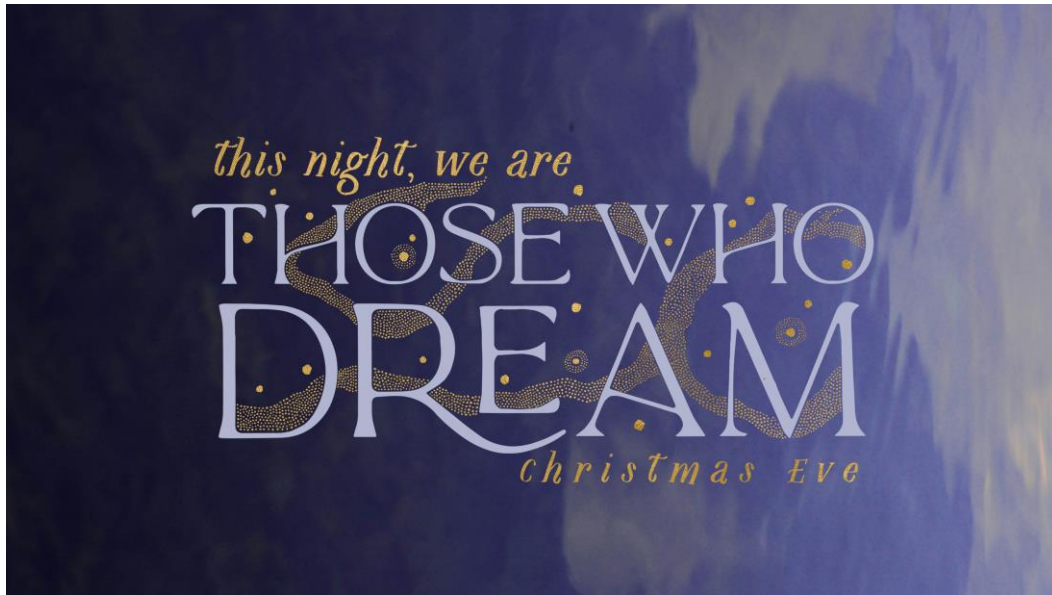


*Christmas Eve Worship Guide*  
Dec. 24, 2020 -Woodstock Presbyterian Church



Prelude - Heartstrings  
Intro to the Story - the Storyteller's Bible

Song:

O Come all Ye Faithful  
**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!**

**O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him,  
O come, let us adore Him, Christ, the Lord!**

Call of the Prophet: Isaiah 9:2-7

<sup>2</sup> [a] The people who walked in darkness  
have seen a great light;  
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—  
on them light has shined.

<sup>3</sup> You have multiplied the nation,  
you have increased its joy;  
they rejoice before you  
as with joy at the harvest,  
as people exult when dividing plunder.

<sup>4</sup> For the yoke of their burden,  
and the bar across their shoulders,  
the rod of their oppressor,

you have broken as on the day of Midian.

<sup>5</sup> For all the boots of the tramping warriors  
and all the garments rolled in blood  
shall be burned as fuel for the fire.

<sup>6</sup> For a child has been born for us,  
a son given to us;  
authority rests upon his shoulders;  
and he is named

Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

<sup>7</sup> His authority shall grow continually,  
and there shall be endless peace  
for the throne of David and his kingdom.  
He will establish and uphold it  
with justice and with righteousness  
from this time onward and forevermore.  
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

### Call to Worship

One: This year, we dreamed of world peace.

**All: We dreamed of deep breaths and restful sleep.**

One: We dreamed of love that lasts and suffering that passes.

**All: We dreamed of doors open wide and a cure to disease.**

One: We dreamed, because to dream is to believe.

**All: For to dream is to hope; to dream is to see.**

One: So make room in your being to dream yet again,

**All: Of a world without fear, and a God that draws near.**

One: For it is almost Christmas.

**All: Love is almost here.**

One: May we dream to see, and hope to believe. Let us worship Holy God.

Song - Love Comes to Us at Christmas

*Love comes to us at Christmas.*

*Love come to heal our souls.*

*Love brings an invitation*

*That our hearts might be made whole.*

*As we gather at the stable in the darkness,*

*Glad and grateful for the Sacred in our midst,*

*For wonder and delight,*

*Christ is born in us this night!*

Lighting the Candle

Rascoe Family

*You are invited to light a candle in your home.*

**Light one candle for Christ.**

**Because the world is broken and the wait is long  
but Christ is with us through it all.**

**In humble manger in a back water town - a baby.**

**On a convict's cross - a king.**

**in every heart and every home where hope, peace, joy, and love  
endure-Christ with us.**

**“Glory to God in the Highest heaven,” she whispers, “and peace to all  
on earth.” So we light one candle, because it only takes one:**

**Christ with us.**

*1.*

*Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: the virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.*

**Blessed is the day of grace, when God sent a Son.**

*Blessed is Mary, to bear such a child. Blessed is Joseph, to care for him on earth.*

**Blessed are we, to know him in our hearts.**

*He comes to us quietly, with little fanfare.*

**Softly, as in a whisper, God sends salvation to this fallen world.**

*Into the quiet of the long night the Light of the world flickers into human life, a spark which will engulf the world.*

**Come, little Lord Jesus, and be our guest. Stay with us; live with us; be with us,  
forever. Amen.**

Reading:

Luke 2:1-7

Pat Ladehoff

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. <sup>2</sup>This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. <sup>3</sup>All went to their own towns to be registered. <sup>4</sup>Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. <sup>5</sup>He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. <sup>6</sup>While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. <sup>7</sup>And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

*2.*

*A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit. The Spirit of the Lord will rest upon him – the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord. A girl full of grace bears a Child who is grace.*

**We praise and bless the Lord!**

*Our God calls us to himself, with the voice of a child.*

**He calls us to believe, and not to be afraid.**

*As Mary answered the angel, so too we respond,*

**“I am the Lord’s servant. May it be to me as you have said.”**

Reading:

Luke 2:8-14

Malinda Johnston

8 In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup>Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. <sup>10</sup>But the angel said to them, ‘Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: <sup>11</sup>to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. <sup>12</sup>This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.’ <sup>13</sup>And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

<sup>14</sup>‘Glory to God in the highest heaven,  
and on earth peace among those whom he favours!’

Song:

### O HOLY NIGHT

*O holy night, the stars are brightly shining;  
It is the night of the dear Savior's birth!  
Long lay the world in sin and error pining,  
Till He appeared and the soul felt its worth.  
A thrill of hope, the weary soul rejoices,  
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn.  
Fall on your knees, O hear the angel voices!  
O night divine, O night when Christ was born!  
O night, O holy night, O night divine!*

*Led by the light of faith serenely beaming,  
With glowing hearts by His cradle we stand.  
So led by light of a star sweetly gleaming,  
Here came the wise men from Orient land.  
The King of kings lay thus in lowly manger,  
In all our trials born to be our Friend!  
He knows our need—to our weakness is no stranger.  
Behold your King; before Him lowly bend!  
Behold your King; before Him lowly bend!*

*Truly He taught us to love one another;  
His law is love and His Gospel is peace.  
Chains shall He break for the slave is our brother  
And in His Name all oppression shall cease.  
Sweet hymns of joy in grateful chorus raise we,  
Let all within us praise His holy Name!  
Christ is the Lord! O praise His name forever!  
His pow'r and glory evermore proclaim!  
His pow'r and glory evermore proclaim!*

Reading:

Luke 2:15-20

Irene Mertens

15 When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.' 16 So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. 17 When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; 18 and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. 19 But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. 20 The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

**MEDITATION** – *Tonight... we are those who dream.*

Affirmation of Faith

One: We believe in hope.

**All: We believe that to hope is to dream with our eyes wide open.**

One: We believe in peace.

**All: We believe that peace is not found by accident. Prepare the way.**

One: We believe in joy.

**All: We believe that joy is angel choruses and gifts from the Magi,**

**As well as soul food, big tables,**

**Open doors, candle light, fireside,**

**Singing in the shower, and the body of Christ gathered as one.**

One: We believe in love.

**All: We believe that God loves us so much that God could not stay away.**

**So God showed up as a child.**

**We believe that that love is real, and we know that it changes us.**

One: Therefore, we believe in the power of dreams,

**All: And we believe that nightmares, which are all too real here and now,**

**Will have no place in God's promised day.**

One: Until then, we believe in passing the light,

In showing up, in doing the work,

In listening for angel choruses, and in learning from the youngest among us.

**All: We believe.**

**Help our unbelief.**

**Amen.**

Song:

Go, Tell It on the Mountain!

**Offering**

**Song**

What Child is This?

Sterling Presbyterian musicians

**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!**

3.

*Our thanks be to God, the Creator,*

**Who brings us all that we have.**

*Our thanks be to God, the Savior,*

**Who gives us back our lives.**

*Our thanks be to God, the Spirit,*

**Who keeps us close by God's side.**

*Our Lord, take what we offer you – gifts of self, time, goods. Use them, for they are yours.*

**Thanks be to God!**

*In all things we listen for your voice, to do your will.*

Communion



Invitation – All are invited to this family's table – God invites us to remember, to be renewed, and to re-commit to God's Dream...

The story

Celebrant: Now let us hear the story of how this sacrament began:

On the night on which Jesus was

betrayed, he sat at supper with his disciples. While they were eating, he took a piece of bread, said a blessing, broke it and gave it to them with the words, 'This is my body. It is broken for you. Do this to remember me.'

Later, he took the cup of wine saying, 'This cup is God's new covenant, sealed with my blood. Drink from it, all of you, to remember me.'

So now, following Jesus' example and command, we take this bread and this Cup, the ordinary things of the world which Christ will make special.  
And as he said a prayer before sharing, let us do so too.

### Prayer of Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

AND ALSO WITH YOU.

Lift up your hearts.

WE LIFT THEM UP TO THE LORD.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

IT IS RIGHT TO GIVE OUR THANKS AND PRAISE.

We thank you, Lord...

You created light out of darkness  
and brought forth life on the earth.

You formed us in your image  
and called us to love and serve you.

When we were unfaithful  
and turned from your ways,  
you did not forsake us,  
your love remained steadfast.  
You delivered us from captivity,  
made covenant to be our sovereign God,  
and sent prophets to call us back to your way.

In the fullness of time  
you sent your only Son Jesus Christ to be our Savior.  
In him, your Word, dwelling with you from all eternity,  
became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth,  
and we beheld your glory,  
Immanuel!

Since you have called us, Since you have kept a place for us,  
Since your face lights up when we sit at your table, gracious God,

HOW CAN WE KEEP FROM SINGING?

When deep down, despite contradictions, We know, we sense, we believe  
that life is good; when one of your words rings truer than ever before,  
When in one unexpected moment we are given a glimpse of your kingdom,

Gracious god,

HOW CAN WE KEEP FROM SINGING?

Therefore with the Church throughout the world,  
With the Church on the other side of time,  
With those who once praised you  
and have now joined the closer harmony of heaven,  
We sing a song of your everlasting praise:

**Sung Response**

*to the tune of Joy to the World!*

*Praise the eternal Holy One,  
and tell the spirit's worth.  
To Christ sing praise,  
God-with-us all our days.  
O sing the Savior's birth,  
O sing the Savior's birth,  
O sing, O sing the Savior's birth.*

And now, lest we believe that our praise alone fulfills your purpose,  
We fall silent and remember he who came because words weren't enough...  
Setting our wisdom, our will, our words aside, emptying our hearts, and bringing nothing  
in our hands, we yearn for the healing, the holding, the accepting, the forgiving which  
Christ alone can offer.

(silence)

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.***

Prayer of Consecration

*Among friends, gathered round a table, Jesus took bread, broke it and said, 'this is my body, it is broken for you.'*

*And later he took the cup and said, 'this is the new relationship with God, made possible because of my death. Take this – all of you – to remember me.'*

He who was first held by Mary is held for us in this bread.

He whose body was laid in a manger, is cradled in this cup.



**These are the gifts of God for the people of God.**

*Bless the Lord, for salvation has come to us in Christ, the babe of Bethlehem.  
Glory be to Christ Jesus, who has borne the cross for us and cleansed us with his blood.  
In the quiet agony of death, Jesus redeemed the world from sin, and gave us a grace by  
which to remember him.*

Song

Angels from the Realms of Glory

**Angels, from the realms of glory, Wing your flight o'er all the earth;  
Ye, who sang creation's story Now proclaim Messiah's birth:  
Come and worship, come and worship, Worship Christ, the newborn King!**

**All creation, join in praising God the Father, Spirit, Son,  
Evermore your voices raising To the eternal Three in One:  
Come and worship, come and worship, Worship Christ, the newborn King!**

Celebration of Light

*The whisper of God has become a shout!*

**Jesus, the Savior, is born!**

*Praise the Lord with heart-filled joy!*

**We praise him! We bless him! Christ our newborn King!**

*And he blesses you with his presence – then and now and always!*

**Amen.**

*A young girl, alone with her betrothed husband, in a strange town, far from the comfort  
of the familiar, gives birth to a child in the stable of an inn. Hardly the stuff of interest to  
the world. Yet that is how God comes: not in the hurricane, not in the earthquake, not in  
the fire, but in a gentle whisper, the person of a baby.*

*(You are invited to light your candle. At the conclusion of the service, place it where it  
can be seen from the outside. We are a witness to the Light of the World!)*

*Behold the Light, the Word made flesh, a Savior, Christ the Lord. Welcome the Light, the  
Baby Jesus, a Savior, Christ the Lord. Spread the news the angels told. Tell the world:  
Your Savior is here!*

Song:

Silent Night

**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**



Center Christ, by Lauren Wright Pittman

Inspired by Luke 2:22-40 | Digital painting

Credits:

Prayers adapted from a prayer by Sarah Are | A Sanctified Art LLC | [sanctifiedart.org](http://sanctifiedart.org).

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