

Covenant Community Church



Christmas Eve

2020

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A Festival of Lessons and Carols
Christmas Eve 2020

Gathering

Prelude

Welcome

Call to Worship

Pastor: The impossible is about to happen in a stable. The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.

People: Those who lived in a land of deep darkness, on them has the light shined!

Pastor: This is the evening when creation stood still and held its breath, for God was doing the most unbelievable, dangerous thing.

People: This is the evening when God embraced humanity from the inside, as one of us, from birth to death.

Pastor: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

All: And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth. Amen.

Carol #147

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;

Refrain: O come, let us adore him,
O come let us adore him,
O come let us adore him,
Christ, the Lord.

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
O sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above.
Glory to God, all glory in the highest; **(Refrain)**

Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning,
O Jesus, to thee be all glory giv'n;
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing; **(Refrain)**

Invocation and 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 sins, as we forgive those who sin against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Lighting of the Christ Candle

First Lesson

Genesis 3:8-15

Carol #135

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

Come, thou long-expected Jesus,
born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us,
let us find our rest in thee.

Israel's strength and consolation,
hope of all the earth thou art:
dear desire of every nation,
joy of ev'ry longing heart.

Born thy people to deliver,
born a child, and yet a king,
born to reign in us forever,
now thy gracious kingdom bring.

By thine own eternal Spirit
rule in all our hearts alone;
by thine all sufficient merit
raise us to thy glorious throne.

Second Lesson

Genesis 22:15-18

God promises Abraham that his descendent will bless all nations

Special music

I Wonder As I Wander
Patty Woodham

Third Lesson

Isaiah 9:2, 6-7

Isaiah foretells Christ's birth and kingdom

Carol #120

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here,
until the Son of God appear.

Refrain: Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel!

O come, thou Dayspring, come and cheer
our spirits by thine advent here;
disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
and death's dark shadows put to flight. **(Refrain)**

O come, thou Wisdom from on high,
and order all things, far and nigh;
to us the path of knowledge show,
and cause us in her ways to go. **(Refrain)**

O come, Desire of nations, bind
all peoples in one heart and mind;
bid now our sad divisions cease,
and be thy self our King of peace. **(Refrain)**

Fourth Lesson

Micah 5:2-4

The prophet Micah foretells the glory of Bethlehem

Carol #154

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 wond'ring 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 giv'n!
So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of his heav'n.
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!

Fifth Lesson

Luke 1:26-38

The angel Gabriel speaks to Mary

Special music

The Angel Gabriel
Lynn Conner

Sixth Lesson

Matthew 1:18-23

Matthew tells of the birth of Jesus

Carol #171

What Child Is This

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 Christians, 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!

So bring him incense, gold and myrrh, come peasant, king, to own him;
the King of kings salvation brings, let loving hearts enthrone him.
Raise, raise the song on high, the Virgin sings her lullaby;
joy, joy for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mary!

Seventh Lesson

Luke 2:8-20

The shepherds go to the manger

Special music

***Shepherds* (by Bruce Cockburn)
Peter Olson**

Eighth Lesson

Matthew 2:1-11

The star leads the wise men to Jesus

Carol #167

The First Noel

The first Noel the angel did say
was to certain poor shepherds in fields as the lay;
in fields where they lay keeping their sheep,
on a cold winter's night that was so deep.

Refrain: Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel,
born is the King of Israel.

They looked up and saw a star shining in the east, beyond them far;
and to the earth it gave great light, and so it continued both day and night.
(Refrain)

And by the light of that same star three wise men came from country far;
to seek for a king was their intent, and to follow the star wherever it went.
(Refrain)

This star drew nigh to the northwest, o'er Bethlehem it took its rest;
and there it did both stop and stay, right over the place where Jesus lay.
(Refrain)

Then entered in those wise men three, full reverently upon the knee,
and offered there, in his presence, their gold and myrrh and frankincense.
(Refrain)

Then let us all with one accord sing praises to our heavenly Lord;
for Christ has our salvation wrought and with his blood our life has bought.
(Refrain)

Ninth Lesson

John 1:1-14

John announces the incarnation

Special music

O Holy Night
Patty Woodham

Reflection

Sending

Closing Prayer

Carol by Candlelight #172

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,
heav'nly 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.

Benediction

Pastor: Go in peace. Love and serve the newborn king!

People: Thanks be to God!