

Christmas Eve  
Candlelight Service  
Dec. 24, 2023  
5:00 PM



Christmas Eve  
Candlelight & Communion

Welcome and Announcements

*We tend to think of prophetic oracles as being full of doom and gloom.  
But many proclaimed a time of great joy and excitement when God would  
set everything right.*

How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those bringing good  
news, the news that all is well, proclaiming good times, announcing  
salvation, telling Zion,  
"Your God reigns!"

Listen! Voices! The watchmen are shouting in joyful union. They see with their own eyes God coming back to Zion. Break into song! Boom it out!

“God has comforted his people and redeemed Jerusalem!”

He rolled up his sleeves and all can see his muscled arm.

Everyone from one end of the earth to the other can see him working,  
bringing his salvation to all mankind.

This is how we celebrate the birth of Christ Jesus!

## **Oh, Come, All Ye Faithful**

**Hymn 45**

### The Christmas Story

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be enrolled. This census took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria. Everyone went to his home town to register.

## **O Little Town of Bethlehem**

**Hymn 41**

This is how the birth of Jesus (the Christ) came about. His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. Because Joseph her husband was a righteous man and did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name of Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.”

All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: “The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him ‘God with us.’”

When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. But he had no union with her until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

## **Lo, How a Rose is Growing**

**Hymn 58**

## Luke's Gospel Story

**It Came Upon the Midnight Clear**

**Hymn 54**

**Angels We Have Heard on High**

**Hymn 71**

**Good Christian Friends, Rejoice**

**Hymn 55**

*A later Gospel writer dug deeper to understand the significance of Jesus' birth, completing the picture for us.*

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. Through him all things were made. In him was life, and that life was the light of mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has neither understood nor overcome it.

John (The Baptizer) came from God to testify to the light, the true light that was coming into the world. He was in the world, and even though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. Yet to all who recognize and receive him, he gives the power to become children of God. The Word became flesh and tabernacled for a while among us. We have seen his glory – God's glory – full of grace and truth.

**Of the Father's Love Begotten**

**Hymn 42**

*A later preacher built on John's work and made a few more connections and insights into what happened with Jesus' birth.*

In many and various ways, God spoke to the people of old through the prophets, but now in these last days he has spoken to us through his Son, through whom he created the universe and whom God has appointed heir of all things. The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful Word.

**Let All Together Praise our God**

**Hymn 47**

*Scripture tells us that the ultimate meaning of Christ's birth is God's love for us.*

Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. This is how God showed his love to us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love; not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

Message: "Did We Miss It?"

**Once in Royal David's City**

**(See Music Sheet pg. 7)**

Prayers

Offering

Holy Communion

**Congregation:**

- 1 Holy God, Almighty Father,  
All creation sings your praise.  
Heav'n and earth reflect your glory,  
Light and life fill all our days.  
Israel your chosen people,  
Formed and rescued by your power;  
Abram's offspring – blessing nations,  
Prophets promised us this hour.**
  
- 2 You have sent your son, as promised  
Now the time has been fulfilled,  
At this end of all the ages,  
Here on earth, as you have willed,  
In his Word you reign among us,  
By his deeds your Kingdom's shown.  
In obedience he has suffered**

## **Off'ring his life for our own.**

- 3 In the night before his passion,  
Our dear Savior, taking bread,  
Broke it, gave it to his foll'wers,  
"This my Body," Jesus said.  
"Eat this bread is given for you,  
Drink this cup, my blood now share;  
Thus your sins shall be forgiven  
Call to mind the cross I bear."

## **Congregation**

- 4 **As this loaf and cup are offered  
We proclaim his saving death.  
Ours the task to tell the story  
'Til we draw our final breath.  
Christ has died and Christ is risen  
Christ the Lord shall soon appear!  
With this bread and cup now given,  
Death is conquered, Life is here.**
- 5 **Come, Lord Jesus, feed your people  
Come, great Spirit, help us live.  
Give us hope of resurrection  
As our thanks to you we give.  
Join the prayers of all your people  
With those of our great High Priest,  
'Til he comes again in glory,  
And we join the victory feast.**
- 6 **Through him we are now God's children;  
With him life has just begun.  
In him unity is given,  
Father, Holy Spirit, Son.  
One with us, with all creation,  
One forever, everywhere.  
Praise we now our God forever,  
'Til his glory we all share.**

*We invite all who confess Christ as Lord to join us in receiving the Body and Blood of our Lord. Children are invited forward to receive a blessing. Follow the instruction of the ushers. After you have received the Elements, return to your seat.*

May the Body and Blood of our Savior Jesus Christ strengthen and preserve you to life everlasting. Amen

### Candlelighting Ceremony

*As the light of Christ comes to you, tilt the unlit candle and pass it to your neighbor.*

**Silent Night**

**Hymn 65**

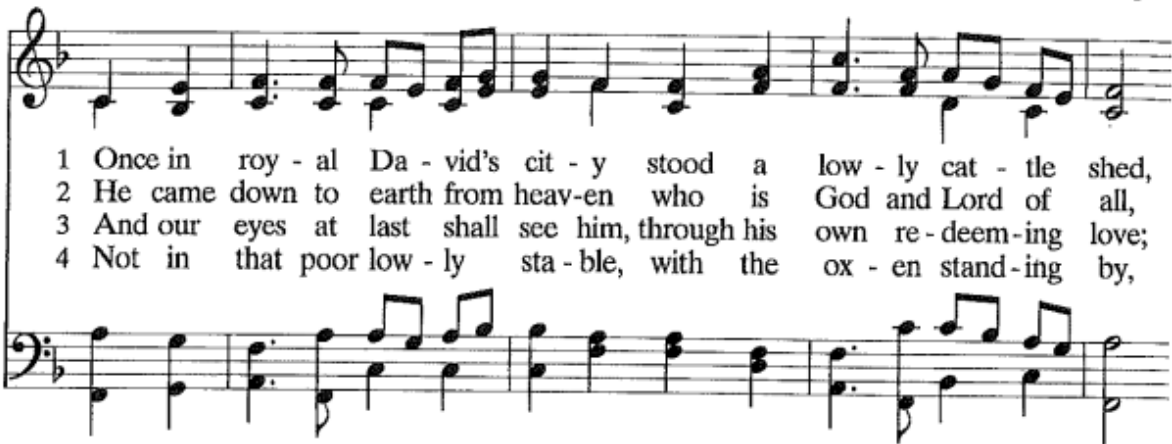
Go from here in peace. In courage hold to what is good. Love and serve all mankind. Rejoice in the power of the Holy Spirit. And may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ born this night, the love of God for you displayed in his birth, and the friendship of the Holy Spirit be with you all forevermore.

**Amen.**

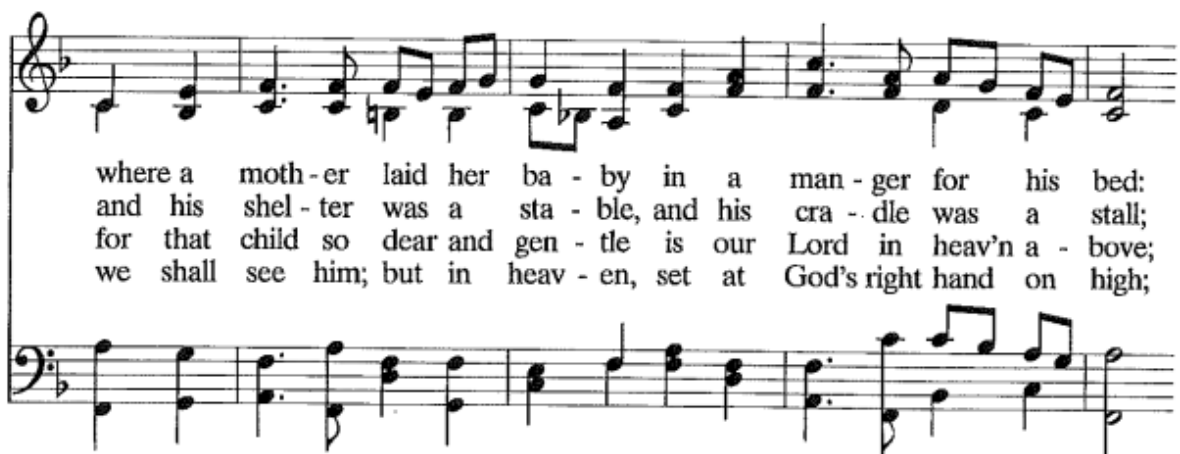
**Joy to the World**

**Hymn 39**

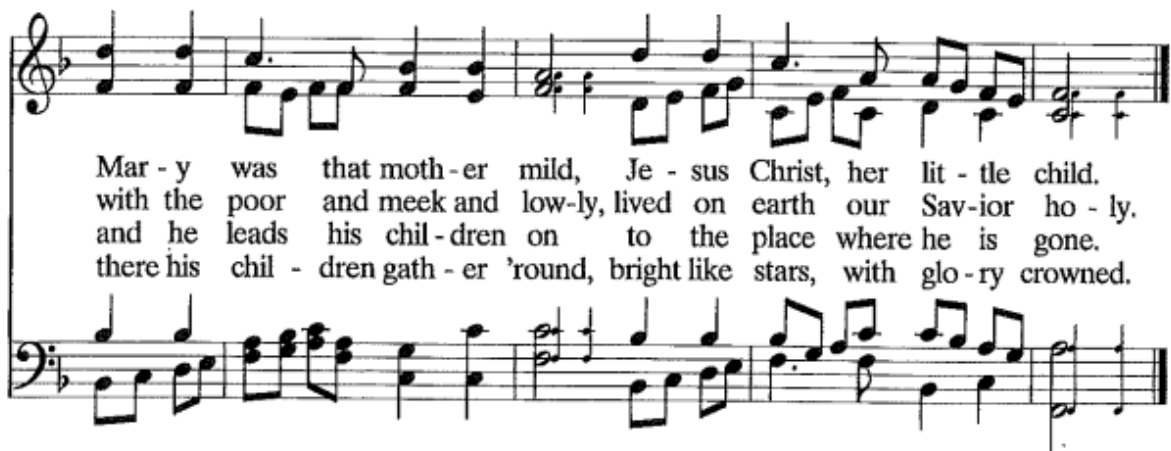
## Once in Royal David's City



1 Once in roy - al Da - vid's cit - y stood a low - ly cat - tle shed,  
 2 He came down to earth from heav-en who is God and Lord of all,  
 3 And our eyes at last shall see him, through his own re - deem - ing love;  
 4 Not in that poor low - ly sta - ble, with the ox - en stand - ing by,



where a moth - er laid her ba - by in a man - ger for his bed;  
 and his shel - ter was a sta - ble, and his cra - dle was a stall;  
 for that child so dear and gen - tle is our Lord in heav'n a - bove;  
 we shall see him; but in heav - en, set at God's right hand on high;



Mar - y was that moth - er mild, Je - sus Christ, her lit - tle child.  
 with the poor and meek and low - ly, lived on earth our Sav - ior ho - ly.  
 and he leads his chil - dren on to the place where he is gone.  
 there his chil - dren gath - er 'round, bright like stars, with glo - ry crowned.

