

*Christmas Remembrances*  
*A Candlelight Service For Christmas Eve*  
*Sunday, December 24, 2023*  
*7 p.m.*

**We Enter God's Gates With Praise**  
**Welcome With Music and Images**

**Gathering Music:** *O Come O Come Emmanuel, Silent Night* Handbells

**Welcome**

**Lighting The Christ Candle**

One: To a people longing for hope and yearning for deliverance, the prophet Isaiah declared, "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...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.

**Many: We live as a people in the in-between who celebrate the arrival of the Light that shines in lost and broken places as we wait for the day when we will live in the fullness of God' kingdom.**

One: We light these candles as signs of our shocking hope, our just peace, our fierce joy, the love that transforms us, and Jesus Christ, our wondrous Light.

**Many: May the Light burning in our hearts guide us, comfort us, protect us, and tend us in all seasons and circumstances, reminding us that day and night, in the light and in the darkness God is with us.**

**All Singing: 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.**

**\*Opening Hymn:** *O Come All Ye Faithful* vs. 1,3,6 Red Hymnal 234

**Opening Prayer: Loving God, this is a holy night. We come longing to hear your story of new life and hope. Speak your words of truth and power. May the gift of your love be born anew among us. May the stillness of your peace wash over us. We are here, waiting for you, ready to receive your gift of love. Be with us now, as we come and adore the newborn child. Amen**

**Children's Time:** *He Is Born* Flute Duet

**First Lesson:** Isaiah 9: 2-7

**Psalter Lesson** (read responsively): Psalm 96 : 1-9 Red Hymnal 815

One: O sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the earth.

**Many: Sing to the Lord, bless God's name; proclaim God's salvation from day to day.**

One: Declare the Lord's glory among the nations, the Lord's glory among the nations, the Lord's marvelous works among all the peoples!

**Many: For great is the Lord and greatly to be praised, to be feared above all gods.**

One: For all the gods of the peoples are idols; but the Lord made the heavens.

**Many: Honor and majesty are before the Lord in whose sanctuary are strength and beauty.**

One: Ascribe to the Lord, O families of the peoples, ascribe to the Lord glory and strength!

**Many: Ascribe to the Lord the glory of his name! Bring an offering, and come into the courts of the Lord!**

One: Worship the Lord in holy splendor;

**Many: tremble before the Lord, all the earth!**

**Second Lesson:** Titus 2: 11-15

**\*Hymn of Preparation:** *Away In A Manger* Red Hymnal 217

**\*Gospel Lesson:** Luke 2: 1-20

**Sermon:** "Past Perfection"

**Gathering Of Joys and Concerns**

**Prayers of the People:**

One: Heavenly Father, on this silent night, we offer our prayers.

**Many: We pray for the blessings of your Spirit.**

One: We pray for all who are having a restless, noisy night.

**Many: Assure them and us of the forgiveness won for us by Jesus' suffering and death.**

One: We pray for all those who are fearful and afraid.

**Many: Give all the frightened the assurance that you care for them and are with them.**

One: We pray for all those who feel anxiety because of life's circumstances.

**Many: Give to them the healing of body and peace of mind. Bless all those who are caring for them. Bless all those who perform works of healing.**

One: We pray for all those in harm's way, particularly those who are persecuted for their faith.

**Many: Give to them a silent night in which they know peace and safety.**

One: Heavenly Father, we pray for all your people everywhere on this silent night and we now join our voices together praying the prayer God continues to teach us:

**Many: 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 trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever. Amen**

#### **We Give Thanks**

**Offertory Prayer:** Holy God, we are grateful for the incredible gift of Jesus. The love and joy shared by Jesus has touched and transformed our lives. We bring our gifts to you this night. We bring our gifts of money to continue your mission of peace. We bring our hearts as we adore you and continue to follow you. Amen

#### **Offertory**

**\*Doxology:** Red Hymnal 95  
**Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise him all creatures here below. Praise Him above ye heavenly host. Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen**

**Scripture Reflection:** John 1 (selected verses)

**\*Closing Hymn with Candlelight** *Silent Night* Red Hymnal 239

#### **Benediction and Taking The Light of Christ Into the World**

**Postlude:** *Silent Night*

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#### **Ministers Of Celebration**

Pastor: Linda Driver Ray  
Director of Music Ministry: Thomas Maloney  
Musicians: Sarah Mullen, Garrett Ray, Jonathan Ray, Janet Miller

*Thank you for sharing Christmas Eve with us. May you and your family have a blessed Christmas season and a Happy New Year.*