



St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church

Christmas Eve

December 24, 2024

6950 Ward Road, North Tonawanda, NY 14120

www.stjohnnt.com, (716) 693-9677

✠ CHRISTMAS EVE HYMN SING & SPECIAL MUSIC ✠

WELCOME AND GREETING

PRE-SERVICE MUSIC & HYMN SING

Congregation sings following musical introductions.

“ON CHRISTMAS NIGHT ALL CHRISTIANS SING”

HANDBELLS

ORGAN Musical Introduction

Sussex Carol

Jacob Weber

CONGREGATION

LSB 377



1 On Christ-mas night all Chris - tians sing To hear the news the
 2 Then why should men on earth be so sad, Since our Re - deem - er
 3 When sin de - parts be - fore His grace, Then life and health come
 4 All out of dark-ness we have light, Which made the an - gels



an - gels bring, On Christ - mas night all Chris - tians sing To
 made us glad, Then why should men on earth be so sad, Since
 in its place, When sin de - parts be - fore His grace, Then
 sing this night, All out of dark-ness we have light, Which



hear the news the an - gels bring, News of great joy, news of great
 our Re - deem - er made us glad, When from our sin He set us
 life and health come in its place; An - gels and men with joy may
 made the an - gels sing this night: “Glo - ry to God and peace to



mirth, News of our mer - ci - ful King's birth.
 free, All for to gain our lib - er - ty?
 sing, All for to see the new - born King,
 men Now and for - ev - er - more. A - men.”

Text and tune: English

Text and tune: Public domain



“IT CAME UPON THE MIDNIGHT CLEAR”

John Benke
Jacob Weber

HANDBELLS

ORGAN Musical Introduction

LSB 359

CONGREGATION



1 It came up-on the mid-night clear, That glo-rious song of old,
2 Still through the clo-ven skies they come With peace-ful wings un-furled,
3 All you, be-neath your heav-y load, By care and guilt bent low,
4 For lo, the days have come to pass By proph-ets seen of old,



From an-gels bend-ing near the earth To touch their harps of gold:
And still their heav'n-ly mu-sic floats O'er all the wea-ry world.
Who toil a-long a drea-ry way With pain-ful steps and slow:
When down in-to the cir-cling years Came Christ as was fore-told.



“Peace on the earth, good-will to all, From heav'n's all-gra-cious king.”
A-bove its sad and low-ly plains They bend on hov-'ring wing,
Look up, for gold-en is the hour, Come swift-ly on the wing,
His word of peace shall to the earth God's an-cient prom-ise bring,



The world in sol-emn still-ness lay To hear the an-gels sing.
And ev-er o'er its ba-bel sounds The bless-ed an-gels sing.
The Prince was born to bring you peace; Of Him the an-gels sing.
And all who take this gift will hear The song the an-gels sing.

Text: Edmund H. Sears, 1810–76, alt.
Tune: Richard S. Willis, 1819–1900
Text and tune: Public domain

“O COME LITTLE CHILDREN”

Michael Burkardt

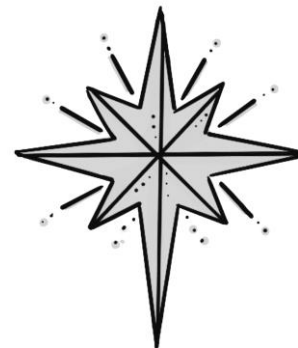
HANDBELLS WITH FLUTE

ORGAN Musical Introduction

LSB 195

CONGREGATION

- Oh, come, little children, oh, come, one and all,
To Bethlehem's stable, in Bethlehem's stall,
And see with rejoicing this glorious sight
Our Father in heaven has sent us this night.**
- Oh, see in the manger, in hallowed light
A star throws its beam on this holiest sight.
In clean swaddling clothes lies the heavenly Child,
More lovely than angels, this Baby so mild.**
- Oh, there lies the Christ Child, on hay and on straw;
The shepherds are kneeling before Him with awe.
And Mary and Joseph smile on Him with love,
While angels are singing sweet songs from above.**



Text: Johann A.P. Schulz
Text: Public domain

✠ CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP ✠

RANDOM RING

Handbells

INVOCATION

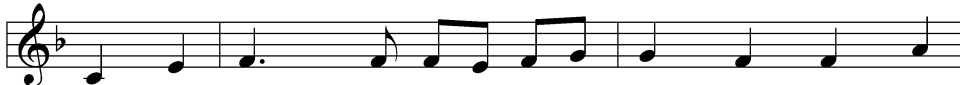
Isaiah 9:2; Galatians 4:4-5

- P** In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
C Amen.
P The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;
C those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined.
P “When the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman,
C born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

HYMN: “ONCE IN ROYAL DAVID’S CITY”

Introduction composed by John Benke; LSB 376



1 Once in roy - al Da - vid's cit - y Stood a
2 He came down to earth from heav - en, Who is
3 For He is our child - hood's pat - tern, Day by
4 And our eyes at last shall see Him, Through His
5 Not in that poor, low - ly sta - ble With the



low - ly cat - tle shed, Where a moth - er laid her
God and Lord of all, And His shel - ter was a
day like us He grew; He was lit - tle, weak, and
own re - deem - ing love; For that child so dear and
ox - en stand - ing by Shall we see Him, but in



ba - by In a man - ger for His bed: Mar - y
sta - ble, And His cra - dle was a stall; With the
help - less, Tears and smiles like us He knew; And He
gen - tle Is our Lord in heav'n a - bove; And He
heav - en, Set at God's right hand on high. Then like



was that moth - er mild, Je - sus Christ her lit - tle child.
poor and mean and low - ly Lived on earth our Sav - ior ho - ly.
feels for all our sad - ness, And He shares in all our glad - ness.
leads His chil - dren on To the place where He is gone.
stars His chil - dren, crowned, All in white, His praise will sound!

Text: Cecil F. Alexander, 1818–95, alt.

Tune: Henry J. Gauntlett, 1805–76

Text and tune: Public domain

CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS

- P** Let us confess our sins to God and ask his forgiveness for the sake of Jesus Christ,
C **Mighty God, on this day of celebration, we confess our sin to You. We are by nature sinful. Without Your help, we are powerless to overcome it. We confess our impatience with You and with others, our seeking after worldly passions, and our self-indulgent ways of life. By our sin, we have hurt others, ourselves, and You. We plead with You to forgive our sins for the sake of Christ and to transform our broken lives.**
P The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light, and the light shines on them. The grace of God has appeared through the birth of our Savior Jesus Christ, bringing salvation to all people. I, a called and ordained servant of Christ, by His authority, forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
C Amen. Glory to the newborn King!

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P Let us pray

C O God, You make this most holy night to shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that as we have known the mysteries of that Light on earth, we may also come to the fullness of His joys in heaven; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

CHOIR ANTHEM “It’s So Still In Bethlehem”

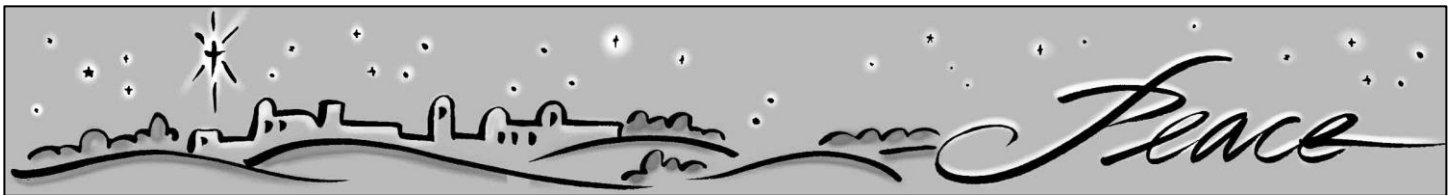
Ruth Elaine Schram

Still, still, still, one can hear the falling snow.
For all is hushed, the world is sleeping;
Holy star its vigil keeping.
Still, still, still, one can hear the falling snow.

Sleep, sleep, sleep, ‘tis the eve of our Savior’s birth.
The night is peaceful all around you; close your eyes,
let sleep surround you. Sleep, Sleep, sleep, ‘tis the eve
of our Savior’s birth.

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie;
Above they 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.

Still, still, still, it’s so still in Bethlehem.



OLD TESTAMENT READING

Isaiah 9:2-7

² The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness,
on them has light shined.
³ You have multiplied the nation;
you have increased its joy;
they rejoice before you
as with joy at the harvest,
as they are glad when they divide the spoil.
⁴ For the yoke of his burden,
and the staff for his shoulder,
the rod of his oppressor,
you have broken as on the day of Midian.
⁵ For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle
tumult

and every garment rolled in blood
will be burned as fuel for the fire.
⁶ For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given;
and the government shall be upon his shoulder,
and his name shall be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
⁷ Of the increase of his government and of peace
there will be no end,
on the throne of David and over his kingdom,
to establish it and to uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time forth and forevermore.
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

NEW TESTAMENT READING

Galatians 4:4-7

⁴ When the fullness of time had come, God sent forth
his Son, born of woman, born under the law, ⁵to
redeem those who were under the law, so that we
might receive adoption as sons. ⁶And because you are

sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts,
crying, “Abba! Father!” ⁷So you are no longer a slave,
but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL PROCESSIONAL

Tonight the reading of the Gospel will take place in the middle of the congregation. This is a reminder that God the Father sent His Son to us as Matthew 1:23 states "they shall call his name Immanuel (which means, *God with us*)".

Please stand on the 3rd stanza of the hymn as the cross comes down the aisle.

HYMN: "WHAT CHILD IS THIS"

Introduction composed by Paul Manz; LSB 370



1 What child is this, who, laid to rest, On Mar - y's lap is
2 Why lies He in such mean es - tate Where ox and ass are
3 So bring Him in - cense, gold, and myrrh; Come, peas - ant, king, to



sleep - ing? Whom an - gels greet with an - thems sweet While
feed - ing? Good Chris - tian, fear; for sin - ners here The
own Him. The King of kings sal - va - tion brings; Let



shep - herds watch are keep - ing? This, this is
si - lent Word is plead - ing. Nails, spear shall
lov - ing hearts en - throne Him. Raise, raise the



Christ the king, Whom shep - herds guard and an - gels sing;
pierce Him through, The cross be borne for me, for you;
song on high, The vir - gin sings her lul - la - by;



Haste, haste to bring Him laud, The babe, the son of Mar - y!
Hail, hail the Word made flesh, The babe, the son of Mar - y!
Joy, joy, for Christ is born, The babe, the son of Mar - y!

Text: William C. Dix, 1837-98

Tune: English, 16th cent.

Text and tune: Public domain



GOSPEL READING

Luke 2:1–20

¹In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³And all went to be registered, each to his own town. ⁴And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, ⁵to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. ⁶And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

⁸And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear. ¹⁰And the angel said to them, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy that will be for all the people. ¹¹For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹²And this will be a sign for you: you will find a

baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.” ¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

¹⁴“Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!”

¹⁵When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.”

¹⁶And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. ¹⁷And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. ¹⁸And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. ²⁰And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

P This is the Gospel of our Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ.

APOSTLES' CREED

C I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life † everlasting. Amen.

HYMN: “INFANT HOLY, INFANT LOWLY”

Introduction composed by Paul Manz; LSB 393



1 In - fant ho - ly, In - fant low - ly, For His bed a cat - tle stall;
2 Flocks were sleep - ing, Shep - herds keep - ing Vig - il till the morn - ing new



Ox - en low - ing, Lit - tle know - ing Christ the child is Lord of all.
Saw the glo - ry, Heard the sto - ry, Tid - ings of a Gos - pel true.



Swift - ly wing - ing, An - gels sing - ing, Bells are ring - ing, Tid - ings bring - ing:
Thus re - joic - ing, Free from sor - row, Prais - es voic - ing, Greet the mor - row:



Christ the child is Lord of all! Christ the child is Lord of all!
Christ the child was born for you! Christ the child was born for you!

Text: tr. Edith M.
G. Reed, 1885–
1933, alt.
Text and tune:
Polish
Text and tune:
Public domain

CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

P Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.

after each petition:

P Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

final petition:

P Into Your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Matthew 6:9-13

C 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; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

OFFERING

Handbells: O Holy Night with Silent Night

CANDLE LIGHTING CEREMONY

As the lit candle is brought down the aisle, tip ONLY the UNLIT candle; DO NOT tip the lighted candle, in order to avoid dripping wax. The lights will be turned off and we will join in singing AFTER all candles are lit.

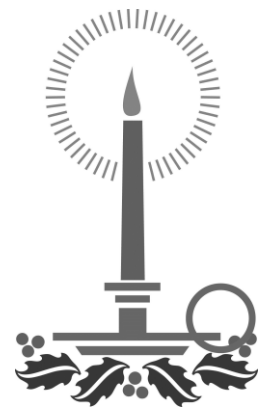
HYMN: "SILENT NIGHT, HOLY NIGHT"

LSB 363; 3rd stanza is sung a cappella



1 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! All is calm,
2 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Shep - herds quake
3 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Son of God,
all is bright Round yon vir - gin moth - er and child.
at the sight; Glo - ries stream from heav - en a - far,
love's pure light Ra - diant beams from Thy ho - ly face
Ho - ly In - fant, so ten - der and mild, Sleep in heav - en - ly
Heav'n - ly hosts sing, Al - le - lu - ia! Christ, the Sav - ior, is
With the dawn of re - deem - ing grace, Je - sus, Lord, at Thy
peace, Sleep in heav - en - ly peace.
born! Christ, the Sav - ior, is born!
birth, Je - sus, Lord, at Thy birth.

Text: Franz Joseph
Mohr, 1792–1848; tr.
John F. Young, 1820–85
Tune: Franz Xaver
Gruber, 1787–1863
Text and tune: Public
domain



BENEDICTION

P Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

C "Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!"

P The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God the Father and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C Amen.

You can now extinguish your candle and return them as you leave after our final hymn.



HYMN: “JOY TO THE WORLD”

*Introduction composed by Michael Burkhardt
LSB 387, Interlude between stanzas 3 and 4*



1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re - ceive her
 2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let men their songs em -
 3 No more let sins and sor - rows grow Nor thorns in - fest the
 4 He rules the world with truth and grace And makes the na - tions



King; Let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare Him
 ploy, While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and
 ground; He comes to make His bless - ings
 prove The glo - ries of His righ - teous -



room And heav'n and na - ture sing, And heav'n and na - ture
 plains Re - peat the sound - ing joy, Re - peat the sound - ing
 flow Far as the curse is found, Far as the curse is
 ness And won - ders of His love, And won - ders of His



sing, And heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.
 joy, Re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
 found, Far as, far as the curse is found.
 love, And won - ders, won - ders of His love.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748
 Tune: George Frideric Handel, 1685–1759, adapt.
 Text and tune: Public domain

POSTLUDE

Joy to the World

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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