

Christmas Eve – December 24, 2023 – 8:00 pm

St Andrew's Hespeler Presbyterian Church

Organist: Martin Bohl

Soloist: Jane Bennett

Prelude: The Shepherd's Christmas by B. Price

Welcome

Lighting the Christ Candle (Marsh Family)

Voice 1: The angels sing the glory of God in the highest heavens.

Voice 2: "Be not afraid, for I bring you good news of great joy for all people. To you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord... you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger. Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom God favors!" (Luke 2)

Voice 1: At Christmas, God speaks in signs. The baby in the manger is a sign of a new life and new governance shining in the world. Christ is born and the world is filled with the promise of hope, signs of peace, joy and the incarnation of God's love.

Voice 2: Holy are you, Source of all new life among us.

All: Jesus Christ is the light of the world.

Voice 2: We join with all creation in joyful praise.

All: We light this candle because God has been made flesh and dwells among us. (while lighting the Christ Candle)

Carol "Oh come, all ye faithful" vv. 1,2,5

1. Oh come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant;
oh come ye, oh come ye to Bethlehem.

Come and behold him, born the King of angels:
Oh come, let us adore him; oh come, let us adore
him;

oh come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

2. God of God, Light of light,
born unto Mary, the virgin blest,
very God, begotten, not created:

Oh come, let us adore him; oh come, let us adore
him;

oh come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

5. Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy
morning;

Jesus, to thee be glory given;

Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing:

Oh come, let us adore him; oh come, let us adore
him;

oh come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

Responsive Reading: Isaiah 9:2-7

L: 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.

**P: You have multiplied exultation; you have
increased its joy;**

L: they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest,
as people exult when dividing plunder.

**P: 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.**

L: For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all

the garments rolled in blood shall be
burned as fuel for the fire.

**P: For a child has been born for us, a son
given to us; authority rests upon his
shoulders,**

L: and he is named Wonderful Counselor,
Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of
Peace.

**P: Great will be his authority, and there shall
be endless peace for the throne of David
and his kingdom.**

L: He will establish and uphold it with justice
and with righteousness from this time
onward and forevermore.

P: The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

Scripture Reading: Luke 2:1-6

And it came to pass in those days, that
there went out a decree from Caesar
Augustus that all the world should be taxed.
(And this taxing was first made when
Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) And all went
to be taxed, every one into his own city.

And Joseph also went up from Galilee,
out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto
the city of David, which is called Bethlehem;
(because he was of the house and lineage of
David) To be taxed with Mary his espoused
wife, being great with child. And so it was,
that, while they were there, the days were
accomplished that she should be delivered.
And she brought forth her firstborn son, and
wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid
him in a manger; because there was no room
for them in the inn.

Carol: "Joy to the world"

1. Joy to the world! The Lord is come:
let earth receive its King; let every heart
prepare him room
and heaven and nature sing. And heaven
and nature sing.

And heaven, and heaven and nature sing.

2. Joy to the earth! The Saviour reigns:
let us our songs employ,
while fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains
repeat the sounding joy. Repeat the
sounding joy.

Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

3. No more let sins and sorrows grow, nor
thorns infest the ground;
he comes to make his blessings flow
far as the curse is found. Far as the curse is
found.

Far as, far as the curse is found.

4. He rules the world with truth and grace,
and makes the nations prove the glories of
his righteousness,
and wonders of his love. And wonders of his
love.

And wonders, and wonders of his love.

Reflection: Swaddling Clothes

Scripture Reading: Luke 2:8-20 (p.58)

And there were in the same country



shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

147 Angels we have heard on high

1. Angels we have heard on high,
sweetly singing o'er the plains,
and the mountains in reply
echoing their joyous strains.

Refrain: Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Gloria in excelsis Deo.

3. Come to Bethlehem and see
Christ whose birth the angels sing;
come, adore on bended knee,
Christ, the Lord, the newborn King. *Refrain*

Scripture Reading: Matthew 2:1-12

¹ In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, magi from the east came to Jerusalem, ² asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star in the east and have come to pay him homage." ³ When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him, ⁴ and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵ They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it has been written by the prophet:

⁶ 'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah, for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.' "

From our home to
yours, may you have a
Merry Christmas and a
Blessed New Year
filled with grace, peace
and hope.

⁷ Then Herod secretly called for the magi and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. ⁸ Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage." ⁹ When they had heard the king, they set out, and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen in the east, until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰ When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. ¹¹ On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

Offertory: Away in a Manger

Jane Bennett

Celebration of Communion

Prayers of the People and Lord's Prayer

Sharing the Light

Carol: "Silent night"

1. 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.

2. Silent night! Holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight:
glories stream from heaven afar,
heavenly hosts sing "Hallelujah,
Christ, the Saviour is born!
Christ, the Saviour is born!"

3. 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

Postlude: In Dulci Jubilo by F. Zachau

