



CHRISTMAS EVE
December 24th, 2023

Gathering

Prelude “The Wexford Carol” arr. David Short

Welcome

Candle Lighting “Come, Child of Light” vs. 3

Leader: Out of God’s overflowing love and goodness, God made us for relationship with our Creator and with one another.

People: Restore us, O God.

Leader: God’s love permeates our lives and our world.

People: Restore us, O God.

Leader: Even when we fail to see it, God’s love is at work creating beauty, bringing peace, and nurturing seeds of trust.

People: Restore us, O God.

Leader: In God’s greatest act of love, God came to us in the form of a baby to be with us, teach us, and redeem us.

People: Restore us, O God, and awaken our souls to the transformative power of your love and presence.

Opening Hymn #143 “Angels, From the Realms of Glory” vs. 1,2,4

Reading “First Coming” by Madeleine L’Engle

He did not wait till the world was ready,
till men and nations were at peace.
He came when the Heavens were unsteady,
and prisoners cried out for release.

He did not wait for the perfect time.
He came when the need was deep and great.
He dined with sinners in all their grime,
turned water into wine.

He did not wait till hearts were pure.
In joy he came to a tarnished world of sin and doubt.
To a world like ours, of anguished shame
he came, and his Light would not go out.

He came to a world which did not mesh,
to heal its tangles, shield its scorn.
In the mystery of the Word made Flesh
the Maker of the stars was born.

We cannot wait till the world is sane
to raise our songs with joyful voice,
for to share our grief, to touch our pain,
He came with Love: Rejoice! Rejoice!

Call to Confession

Prayer of Confession

Almighty God, we confess that our hearts have not been open to all you reveal to us in the nativity of your Son. You sent Christ to be born as a helpless Child, yet we have not attended to suffering children. You chose humble Mary to be Christ's mother, yet we have not attended to the exploitation of women around the world. The holy family could find no room in Bethlehem but a stable, yet we have not attended to the needs of the homeless. Forgive our lack of attention, and free us for joyful compassion, that we may know Christ as we serve others.

Silent Confession

Assurance of Grace

Leader: Break forth into singing, for the mercy of God has redeemed you!

People: **We are restored to God and one another through the love and forgiveness of Christ. Glory in the highest!**

*Musical Response #113 "Angels We Have Heard On High" (*Refrain*)

*Passing of the Peace of Christ

Leader: May the peace of Christ be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Special Music "The Borning Day" by Fred Hellerman & Fran Minkoff

Lessons and Carols

Litany

Leader: We gather on this holy day

**People: To stand with shepherds, amazed at God's glory;
To sing with angels, rejoicing in God's gift;
To wait with Joseph, trusting in your promise;
To sit with Mary, cradling your love.**

Leader: May the good news of this day inspire us to tell the world of our great joy:

**People: For to us is born a Savior, Immanuel, God with us.
All glory and praise to God for the gift of Jesus Christ!**

Old Testament Lesson: Micah 5:2-5a

Carol #129 "Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming" vs 1

Old Testament Lesson: Isaiah 9:2, 6-7

Old Testament Lesson: Isaiah 11:1-9

Anthem "Jesu, Joy of Our Desiring" by J.S. Bach

New Testament Lesson: Luke 2:1-7

Carol #145 "What Child Is This" vs 1

New Testament Lesson: Luke 2:8-14

Anthem "Deo!" (Marching to Bethlehem) Zulu folksong
arr. by Patrick M. Liebergen

New Testament Lesson: Luke 2:15-20

Carol #147 "The First Nowell" vs. 1

Candle Lighting

Carol #122 "Silent Night" vs. 1, 3

Christmas Prayer “The Work of Christmas”

by Howard Thurman

**When the song of the angels is stilled,
when the star in the sky is gone,
when the kings and princes are home,
when the shepherds are back with their flocks,
the work of Christmas begins:
to find the lost,
to heal the broken,
to feed the hungry,
to release the prisoner,
to rebuild the nations,
to bring peace among the people,
to make music in the heart.**

*Closing Hymn #134 “Joy To the World” vs. 1, 2, 4

Benediction

Postlude

“Christmas Joy Medley”

arr. Gary Lanier

We welcome all who worship with us this day. May you experience God’s presence and find inspiration for your journey of faith. This morning the leaders in worship are:

Rev. Michelle Fincher, Pastor; **Heidi Thomas**, Music Director;
Judy Viccellio, guitar; **Emily Lewis**, violin; **David Short**, cello;
Ryan Beach, **Cathy Jaynes**, and **Diane Ritzdorf**, Liturgists;
Ruth M. Huff and **Katherine Huff**, Advent Candle Readers;
Ryan Hodel, Zoom Host





Calvary Presbyterian Church
3501 S. Colorado Blvd., Englewood, CO 80113
office.calvarypresdenver@gmail.com | 303-756-5042