



Shine God's Light

As disciples of Christ, we share and rejoice
in the warmth of God's love and light by
teaching the holy word,
servng Christ's community, and
growing together in faith.



December 24, 2023 — 10:00pm
Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

December 24, 2023 — 10:00 p.m.

*The * indicates points in the service where you are invited to stand, if that is comfortable for you. If it is better for you to remain seated, feel free to do so.*

*All are invited to join in speaking when **Bolded** words appear.*

You are invited to join in the responses and sing the hymns.

Gathering

Prelude

*O Little Town of Bethlehem
God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen
Lo, How a Rose E're Blooming
Infant Holy, Infant Lowly*
Margaret Sheneman, flute and piano

Richard Ellsasser
Lani Smith
Albin C. Whitmore
Lani Smith

Call to Worship

One: There is room for you here. If you're weary and worn, or hopeful and patient.

All: If you're tired and lost, or wrapped up in hope.

One: If you're new to this place, or have been here before.

All: Come in, come in. There is room for you here.

One: The angels are singing,

All: "Be not afraid."

One: The angels are singing,

All: "Good news and great joy!"

One: So come in, come in!

All: There is room for all of us here.

Lighting the Christ Candle

The Fellin Family

Opening Prayer (in unison)

Loving Christ, scripture tells us that you were born in a stable because there was no room in the inn. There was no room in the inn for a woman in need, no room in the inn for an innocent baby. Forgive us. We should have learned our lesson by now, but just as others turned their backs on you, we continue to turn our backs on one another. Teach us how to make room for one another. Teach us how to make room for you. Carve out space in our hearts to love as you love, for we do not want to build hostility here. We want to build your promised day. Guide us forward. With hope and honesty we pray, Amen.

Assurance of Forgiveness

One: So repeat these words of hope after me:

One: Unto us a child is born.

All: Unto us a child is born.

One: Unto us grace is given.

All: Unto us grace is given.

One: May this good news change the very fabric of our lives.

All: Christ has made room for all of us. Amen.

*Carol

O Come, All Ye Faithful

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant; O come ye; O come ye to Bethlehem! Come and behold him, born the King of angels! O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him; O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

Sing, choirs of angels; sing in exultation; sing, all ye citizens of heaven above! Glory to God, all glory in the highest! O come, let us adore him; O come, let us adore him; O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

Yea, Lord we greet Thee, born this happy morning; Jesus to Thee be all glory given; word of the Father, now in flesh appearing! O come, let us adore him; O come, let us adore him; O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

Welcome and a Christmas Reading

Christmas Carol

Paul Laurence Dunbar

Lessons and Carols

Scripture:

Isaiah 9:2-7

Emily Burghardt

Solo

Gesu Bambino

Pietro A. Yon

When blossoms flowered 'mid the snows upon a winter night was born the Child, the Christmas Rose, the King of Love and Light. The angels sang, the shepherds sang, the grateful earth rejoiced and at his blessed birth the stars their exultation voiced. O come let us adore him, Christ the Lord. Again the heart with rapture glows to greet the holy night that gave the world its Christmas Rose, its King of Love and Light. Let every voice acclaim his name, the grateful chorus swell, from paradise to earth He came that we with him might dwell.

Sally Bethmann, soprano

Scripture:

Luke 2:1-7

Zoe Lincoln

Duet

Bethlehem, O Bethlehem

Robert Lau

Bethlehem, O Bethlehem, your star above is bright. Little town of David's line, this is your holy night. O Bethlehem, O Bethlehem, you cradle God's own Son. Little town of David's line, you hold the Promised One. God chooses you to be the place He shines his mortal light. The hopes and fears of all the years are met in you tonight. Bethlehem, O Bethlehem, so quiet and so still. Little Town of David's line, your manger is God's will. O God with us, Emmanuel, our Savior and our King Now all of heaven does rejoice as herald angels sing.

Sally Bethmann, soprano and Ian Bethmann, baritone

Scripture:

Luke 2:8-14

Frankie Lentine

Solo

Angels We Have Heard on High
Margaret Sheneman, flute

Lani Smith

Scripture:

Luke 2:15-20

Rev. Amy E. S. Lincoln

Duet

The Light Shines On!

Craig Courtney

The light came from the angels, who sang the news to earth; so lonely shepherds gathered they told of Jesus' birth. In Jesus Christ God placed his light; it shone upon that holy night and from that humble stable door his light shines on us evermore. The light made wise men follow and on their journey bring those precious gifts to Jesus, so fitting for a king. In Jesus Christ God placed his light; it shone upon that holy night and from that humble stable door his light shines on forevermore. The light shines from the Savior from birth to Calvary. His coming in that manger brought light for all to see.

Christmas Reflection

At the Intersection of Weary and Joyful

Rev. Amy E. S. Lincoln

*Affirmation of Faith (in unison)

We believe in a God who makes room for us — who opens the door, pulls up a seat, puts the kettle on, and says, "Tell me everything." We believe that God not only treats us this way but also makes room for our neighbors, for strangers, and for our enemies. Jesus modeled this kind of room-making love when he said, "Let the children come to me," and, "Let me wash your feet," so we try to follow suit. In a world of closed doors, we believe in saying, "There is room for you here."

Responding to God's Word

Offering and Christmas Joy Offering

We invite you to consider giving out of gratitude to God either as we pass the offering plate or by placing your offering in the wooden box hanging on the wall at each exit, scanning the QR code in your pew and/or giving online through the church website at www.flemingtonpres.org, or mailing a check to the church office at 10 East Main Street, Flemington, NJ 08822. We give thanks for your generosity, allowing our mission and ministry together to continue.

Christmas Prayer and Lord's Prayer (in unison)

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

Christ is the Light of the World

Sharing the Light of Christ

Rev. Amy Lincoln

Ushers will carry the flame lit from the Christ Candle to those sitting at the end of each pew. Each person will pass the flame from candle to candle, being careful to keep the lit candles upright. "O Holy Night" will be sung as the flame is passed. When all have received the light, we will stand for the Christmas Litany and sing "Silent Night."

*Christmas Litany

Leader: In the beginning and in the darkness, God spoke.

All: Let there be light.

Leader: In the beginning was the Word. And the Word came and dwelt among us. And the Word was the light of all peoples.

All: Let there be light.

Leader: We light our candles, knowing that the One who is the source and promise of all light is the One whose birth we celebrate.

All: Let there be light.

Leader: We are here to seek a little light by which we can see, by which we can live, by which we can love.

All: Let there be light.

Leader: We need to know that we are part of something greater than the flicker of our own little candles. We long to be assured that the light of Christ is with us in every moment.

All: Let there be light.

Leader: So, we light our candles in gratitude for the love and light that shine through the babe born in Bethlehem who became the Redeemer of us all.

All: Let there be light.

Leader: May we be so emboldened as to share the love of God with a world longing for light and hope, purpose, and love. May our actions and generosity shine in a world under the shadow of despair.

All: Let there be light.

Leader: We join the chorus of those whose carols have echoed through the years— "O come to us, abide in us, our Lord, Emmanuel."

All: Let there be light.

*Carol

Silent Night

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.

Silent night, holy night! Shepherds quake at the sight; glories stream from heaven afar, heavenly hosts sing "Alleluia: Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born!"

Silent night, holy night! Wondrous star, lend thy light; with the angels let us sing, Alleluia to our King! Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born.

(extinguish candles after singing the carol)

Depart in Peace

*Blessing and Benediction

*Carol

Joy to the World

Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her king; let every heart prepare him room; and heaven and nature sing, and heaven and nature sing, and heaven and heaven and nature sing.

Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns! Let all their songs employ; while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains; repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy, repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

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, wonders of his love.

Postlude

A Joyous Christmas Melody

Lani Smith

Christmas Joy Offering

Each year during the Advent and Christmas season, we turn our eyes to Bethlehem and celebrate the wondrous gift of Jesus Christ, our Savior. By giving to the Christmas Joy Offering, you honor this gift by providing assistance to current and retired church workers in their time of need and developing our future leaders at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. Please give generously.

Copyright Notice

Permission to podcast/stream the music in this service obtained from One License with license #A-729872. The hymns are from 'Glory to God' copyright © 2013 Westminster John Knox Press. The hymns are in the public domain. "The Light Shines On" © 1995 Belwin Mills, c/o Warner Bros. Publications. All rights reserved. "Bethlehem, O Bethlehem" © 2010 Hinshaw Music, Inc. All rights reserved. "God Rest Ye Merry, Gentleman" and "Angels We Have Heard on High" (Christmas Solos for Flute and Organ) © 1993 Lorenz Publishing Co. All rights reserved. "A Joyous Christmas Melody" (From Advent to Epiphany) © 2009 Lorenz Publishing Co., a division of the Lorenz Corporation. All rights reserved. "Lo, How a Rose E're Blooming" (Praise Ye, the Lord of Hosts) © 2000 H. W. Gray Company, copyright reassigned 2012 Beckenhorst Press, Inc. All rights reserved. "O Little Town of Bethlehem" (Christmas Carols for Organ) © 1967 Harold Flammer, Inc. "Infant Holy, Infant Lowly" (Christmas in the Air) © 2010 Lorenz Publishing Co., a division of the Lorenz Corporation. All rights reserved.

Parts of the liturgy were "Adapted from a prayer by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org."

Rev. Amy E. S. Lincoln, Pastor

Cindy Hall, Office Manager

Jennifer Miller, Youth Coordinator

Steve Lederach, audio/video engineer

J. Jay Smith, Director of Music/Organist

Margaret Sheneman, Director of Handbells

Marion Barry, Sexton

Flemington Presbyterian Church

10 East Main Street • Flemington, NJ 08822

www.flemingtonpres.org

(908) 782-3227