



WORSHIP for the EVE of CHRISTMAS 2021

Prelude

Calista Koch, Harp

Lighting of the Christ Candle

Miles family

Call to Worship

God is here! Messiah has come!
We open our eyes to see him afresh.
We lift our hearts to worship him anew.
We have come to lift up the name of Jesus, our Brother and Savior.
We have come to shine all glory on God, who welcomes all.

**Welcome to our world, Jesus.
Bring your peace into our violence.
May our hungry souls be filled.
Word now breaking heaven's silence,**

Welcome to our world. Welcome to our world!

*Hymn #133

O Come All Ye Faithful

*Scripture Reading

Psalm 98

O sing to the Lord a new song, for God has done marvelous things. God's right hand and his holy arm have gotten victory. The Lord has made known his victory; God has revealed his vindication in the sight of the nations. God has remembered his steadfast love and faithfulness to the house of Israel. All the ends of the earth have seen the victory of our God.

Gathering Prayer

O Immanuel, O Wisdom from on high,
O Lord of might, branch of Jesse's tree,
O Key of David, O Bright and Morning Star, King of nations,

**We rejoice and are glad on this gracious Christmas eve,
for truly you have come, full of grace and truth.**

Even now, come into our hearts again.

Show us the path of your knowledge.

Comfort us in our deep mourning.

Save us from our stubborn sins.

Open wide the way to heaven.

Turn our darkness into light.

**End our sad divisions and
be our Prince of peace,**

so that every creature in heaven and on earth
will join in a chorus of praise and welcome,
and shout with joy to you, our Lord.

Amen.

Hymn #121

O Little Town of Bethlehem

Welcome and Congregational Greeting

Scripture Reading

Isaiah 9:2-7

The people who walk in darkness will see a great light. For those who live in a land of deep darkness, a light will shine. You will enlarge the nation, and its people will rejoice. They will rejoice before you as people rejoice at the harvest and like warriors dividing plunder. For you will break the yoke of slavery and lift the heavy burden from their shoulders. The boots of the warrior and the uniforms bloodstained by war will be fuel for the fire.

Prayers of the People on Papers from the People

Hymn #115

Away in a Manger

Scripture Reading

Luke 2:1-7, 15-20

While they were there, the time came for her baby to be born. She gave birth to her firstborn son. She wrapped him snugly in strips of cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no lodging available for them. But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart.

Sermon

Treasure all the pieces, and ponder them in your heart

Affirmation of Faith – 1998 Presbyterian Study Catechism

Question 32. What do we affirm when we say Jesus was "conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary"?

First, that being born of a woman, Jesus was truly a human being. Second, that our Lord's incarnation was a holy and mysterious event, brought about solely by free divine grace surpassing any human possibilities. Third, that from the very beginning of his life on earth, he was set apart by his unique origin for the sake of accomplishing our salvation.

Question 33. What is the significance of affirming that Jesus is truly God?

Only God can properly deserve worship. Only God can reveal to us who God is. And only God can save us from our sins. Being truly God, Jesus meets these conditions. He is the proper object of our worship, the self-revelation of God, and the Savior of the world.

Question 34. What is the significance of affirming that Jesus is also truly a human being?

Being truly human, Jesus entered fully into our fallen situation and overcame it from within. By his pure obedience, he lived a life of unbroken unity with God, even to the point of accepting a violent death. As sinners at war with grace, this is precisely the kind of life we fail to live. When we accept him by faith, he removes our disobedience and clothes us with his perfect righteousness.

Invitation to the Communion Meal

Prayer of Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise...

Lord's Prayer

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.

Sharing of the Bread and Cup

All who have been baptized in any Christian tradition are welcomed and encouraged to share in the communion meal. Come forward by the center aisle, receive the bread and a cup, then return by a side aisle. As you wait to come forward, or after you have been served, you are encouraged to pray for others and for the world.

Closing Unison Prayer

Dear God, we give you thanks that you have gathered us here, revealed to us your glory again, and fed us with your meal. Now send us out with good news for all: For unto us a child is born, Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.

Sharing the Light of Christ

Hymn #122

Silent Night, Holy 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! 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.**

**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!**

Benediction

Postlude

** Indicates congregation standing as able*



NORTHMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Our calling at Northminster Macon is to make disciples, to grow in faith together, and to serve others in Christ.

CONGREGATION: Ministers of the Good News

SESSION of Ruling Elders:

Kari Alderman, Emily Brown, Lynn Denny, Roland Hill
Jan Hirsh, Melissa McDougald, Charlotte Nolan, Sandra Ridgeway, Minor Vernon

RALPH HAWKINS, Pastor and Teaching Elder PAUL EVANS, Parish Associate
JENNIFER WHITEHEAD, Ministry Assistant
SANDRA SMITH, Music Director KAREN JONES, Clerk of Session

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