



"Sure, Charlie Brown, I can tell you what Christmas is all about." — Linus Van Pelt

Prelude to Worship

Lighting of the Advent Candles

Call to Worship

This is a night of deep mystery — **a night when heaven comes to earth.**
This is a night of great love — **a night when a child is born for us.**
This is a night of incredible joy — **a night when angels sing to shepherds.**

Glory to God in the highest! Peace to all on earth. Incarnate One, Light of the World, Prince of Peace, draw close to us we pray. In the darkness of this night, open our eyes to love anew. Open our hearts to wonder at your love, that we may reflect your glory. **O come let us adore him, Christ the Lord.**

*Hymn #133 ***O Come All Ye Faithful***

*Scripture Reading *John 1, selected verses*

Gathering Prayer

**O Living Word, O Wisdom from heaven,
We rejoice and we are glad on this 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. Amen.**

Hymn #121 ***O Little Town of Bethlehem***

Welcome and Congregational Greeting

Prayers of the People

Musical Offering

Affirmation of Faith *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.

Hymn #115 ***Away in a Manger***

Scripture Reading *Luke 2:1-20*

Sermon *The Liturgy of Linus Van Pelt*

Musical Offering

Sharing the Communion Meal

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 for us
to give thanks and praise ...**

Sharing the Light of Christ

Hymn #122

Silent Night, Holy Night

Benediction



A Linus Liturgy

"I guess you were right, Linus. I shouldn't have picked this little tree," said Charlie Brown. "Everything I do turns into a disaster. I guess I don't really know what Christmas is all about. Isn't there anyone who knows what Christmas is all about?"

"Sure, Charlie Brown, I can tell you what Christmas is all about," said Linus. [Linus walks to center stage.]

"Lights, please."



“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.”

[Linus quoted the King James Version of Luke 2. Verses 15-20 are also included here.]

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.

A Prayer to Pray

O Christ, the prophets foretold your coming, the poor longed to see you. The heavens celebrated your birth; the shepherds and all the faithful down through the ages repeated the song of the angels. Your church praises you in every human language, for we have seen your salvation. Son of God, you humbled yourself and became a servant, raising us up to share in your glory. We were in darkness and you have given us light and strength, peace and joy. Lead us according to your loving will; make us a people who follow you in holiness. Give us glad and generous hearts, and produce in us abundant fruit, through the power of your Spirit. Amen.