



Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship

Service of the Word and Sacrament

December 24, 2021

4:30 p.m.

Please SILENCE ALL Personal Electronic Devices Before Worship.

We Gather as God’s People

Welcome to our worship service. Take a moment to quiet yourself as we prepare ourselves for worship.

(We will remain seated through the service and during the carols.)

Welcome and Preparation for Worship

Welcome to Oakland-Cambridge Presbyterian Church! In this space, we invite you to bring all of who you are - your identity, your beliefs, your doubts, your questions, and your story wherever you are on your journey in life. Our prayer is that together we will experience God’s presence.

The PreludePiano Medley for Christmas

The Christmas Welcome

The Carol *PH* # 41“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!**

Refrain:

**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!**

Refrain

The Call to Worship [Responsive] Rev. Scott Marrese-Wheeler

One: The peace of God be with you.

***Many:* And also with you.**

One: When we wait in the night in the hush that only stars can hold as they bend towards the coming of the light; when we wait in the night laboring with anticipation of what midnight shall bring; when we wait in the night listening to the cadence of minutes beat in rhythm with the birth of hope;

***Many:* may we hold our collective breaths with the angelic host as they clutch their restless alleluias,**

One: for God is on the way:

***Many:* the mother is laboring, the father pacing, the stable readying, the word is waiting, the light is sliding and the promise is breaking through.**

One: When we wait in the longing for midnight in expectation of Good News may we choose to wait together and find we have moved to the edge of our seats.

***Many:* for in such anticipation it is the only place for the Word to be born among us.**

The Carol *PH* # 28 ““Good Christian Friends, Rejoice”

**Good Christian friends, rejoice With heart, and soul, and voice;
Give ye heed to what we say: Jesus Christ is born today;
Ox and ass before Him bow, And He is in the manger now.
Christ is born today! Christ is born today!**

**Good Christian friends, rejoice With heart, and soul, and voice;
Now ye need not fear the grave: Jesus Christ was born to save!
Calls you one and calls you all To gain the everlasting hall.
Christ was born to save! Christ was born to save!**

The Scripture **Isaiah 9:2, 6-7**

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. For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

The Lighting of the Christ Candle

One: Our time to wait is over. Christmas is here. Our days of preparation are completed. What has not been done will now have to be left undone. We have witnessed to this very hour, this very night, and we hope that the world has heard the good news which we have spoken. We have decided to “Let it be,” to do things God’s way rather than our own, and to follow the vulnerable baby born in a manger. Our circle of Advent candles is lit; now tonight we light the center candle, reminding us that Christ is the Light of the world, the center of our lives, the shining beacon of hope and peace for all the world. Christ is born anew! Hallelujah!

The Christmas Prayer

One: Thank you, Scandalous God, For giving yourself to the world, Not in the powerful and extraordinary, But in weakness and the familiar: In a baby; in bread and wine.

***Many:* Thank you for offering, at journey’s end, a new beginning; For setting, in the poverty of a stable, The richest jewel of your love; For revealing, in a particular place, Your light for all nations.**

One: Thank you For bringing us to Bethlehem, House of Bread, Where the empty are filled, And the filled are emptied;

***Many:* Where the poor find riches, And the rich recognize their poverty; Where all who kneel and hold out their hands are unstintingly fed. Amen.**

The Special Music Sam Marrese-Wheeler

The Story of Christ's Birth "Joseph's Story" – Matthew 1:18-25

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: "Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means, "God is with us." When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

The Carol *PH* # 44 "O Little Town of Bethlehem"

**O little town of Bethlehem, How still we see thee lie! Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by. Yet in thy dark streets shineth The everlasting light;
The hopes and fears of all the years Are met in thee tonight.**

The Story of Christ's Birth "Mary's Story" – Luke 2:1-7

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

The Carol *PH* # 53 "What Child Is This?"

**What Child is this, who, laid to rest, On Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet While shepherds watch are keeping?**

Refrain:

**This, this is Christ the King, Whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
Haste, haste to bring Him laud, the Babe, the Son of Mary!**

The Story of Christ's Birth "The Angel's Visit" – Luke 2:8-14

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see--I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and 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 heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

The Carol *PH* # 22 “Angels, from the Realms of Glory”
Angels, from the realms of glory, Wing your flight o’er all the earth;
Ye, who sang creation’s story Now proclaim Messiah’s birth:
Come and worship, come and worship, Worship Christ, the newborn King!

The Story of Christ’s Birth “The Shepherds’ Visit” – Luke 2:15-20

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

The Christmas Reflection Rev. Scott Marrese-Wheeler

The Christmas Affirmation [Responsive]

One: Let the Love that shaped earth and heaven

Many: dwell within us this Christmas.

One: Let the Love that created humanity

Many: dwell within us this Christmas.

One: Let the Love that overcomes suffering and hatred

Many: dwell within us this Christmas.

One: Let the Love that causes us to rejoice with loved ones

Many: dwell within us this Christmas.

One: Let the Love that forgives and renews

Many: dwell within us this Christmas.

One: Let the Love that brings reconciliation after separation

Many: dwell within us this Christmas.

One: Let the Love that brings the blessing of peace

Many: dwell within us this Christmas.

One: And may we share that peace

Many: with all people near and far. Amen.

The Special Music Sam Marrese-Wheeler

The Celebration of God’s Light

The Scripture John 1:1-5

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

The Carol PH # 60 (Please stand)..... “Silent Night”
(For our candle lighting ceremony, we invite you to switch on the battery-operated candle you received. On the bottom of the candle is a little black switch. Flip the switch to the other side. This will light up your candle. Once our candles are lit up, we will stand together and join in singing, “Silent Night”. After we are finished singing and receive the Christmas Blessing, you may turn off your candle. We invite you to take your candle with you and to light it up as a part of your Christmas gathering.)

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.

The Christmas Response

One: Mysterious God, confounding our expectations, meeting us where we least expect to find you

Many: Stay with us now.

One: Child of the manger, healing our pain, sharing our weakness

Many: Stay with us now.

One: Source of life, birth of God within our own experience

Many: Stay with us now.

One: Stay with us in our frailty, stay with us on our journey,

Many: Walk beside us, live with us, lead us to glory, lead us home.

The Carol PH # 40 “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.

The Christmas Blessing

One: We go out into this Christmas Eve night in the peace of Jesus Christ. May his peace that lightens the soul with faith, lifts the spirit with hope and leavens the world with love, be yours tonight and always. And the blessing of God, Creator, Child, and Spirit, go with you, and remain with you now and always.

Many: Amen.

Postlude Postlude on “Joy to the World” arr. Gerald Peterson



If you wish to share a special offering, offering plates are placed at the entrance to the Sanctuary. **About Our Christmas Eve Special Offering:** The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) reflects God’s gift to us, through the Christmas Joy Offering. With generous gifts from people like you, the money is used to support church ministers and other church workers who have retired and are need of financial help, whether due to declining health or a catastrophic event, such as the December tornados. It also supports new leaders called by God for our Church and world through leadership development programs for people of color and education at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. The generosity of Presbyterians means a brighter future and enhanced opportunities to use their talents and skills to serve God, the Church and the world for years to come.

The liturgy this evening is from: ~ in Prayers for Christmas, posted on the Christian Aid website: <http://www.christianaid.org.uk/>

Oakland-Cambridge Presbyterian Church is committed to using language in such a way that all members of the community of faith may recognize themselves to be included, addressed, and equally cherished before God. Seeking to bear witness to the whole world, the church struggles to use language which is faithful to the biblical truth and which neither purposefully nor inadvertently excludes people because of gender, color, or other circumstance in life. (Book of Order, W-1.2006)

- WELCOME to all who are visiting with us tonight! MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL!
- Our musician today is Marian Korth.
- Thank you to Sam Marrese-Wheeler for our special music today.
- Pastor Scott is on vacation from December 25 – January 2.
- **Please pick up your 2022 Offering Envelopes, now available in Fellowship Hall. If we’ve missed your name, please notify the office.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS —

- If you would like to be added to the mailing list for our newsletter, *The Good News*, please send either your email (preferred) or snail mail address to the church office. (Our addresses are listed on the last page of the bulletin.)

- Help us save “pig points.” For us to receive a rebate, please turn in your receipts from the Cambridge Piggly Wiggly in one of three ways: **1.** Place them in the brown bag in the narthex. **2.** Cheryl Stitz will do a porch pickup of any receipts that you may have. Call her at 608-695-1838 to make arrangements. **3.** Receipts can also be mailed to the church office. All funds received are used for mission projects.

WORSHIP SERVICES UPDATE:

1ST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS DAY, DECEMBER 26 WORSHIP

AT 10 AM —In-person worship continues this Sunday in the sanctuary with Guest Pastor Tim McNurlen. The Dane County Mask Mandate has been extended to Tuesday, February

1. Until then, masks are required of all people who enter the building



UPDATE!

The food pantry is currently seeking donations of: Coffee, Oatmeal/Cream of Wheat, Laundry detergent, Toothpaste, Body wash, Dog and cat food

Monetary donations are always greatly appreciated!

For more information on how you can make a difference this holiday season, or to volunteer at the food pantry, please email: foodpantry@cambridge.k12.wi.us or call Kerry at (608)423-8142.

The Cambridge Food Pantry website can be found at <https://cambridgecap.net/programs/nutrition/food-pantry/>

Thank you for your continued support of your Cambridge neighbors!

PLEASE HOLD THESE MEMBERS AND FRIENDS IN PRAYER THIS WEEK —

Jan & Nancy Kristiansen
Jack & Jenine Spack

The families of Ken Bilstad, Doreen Drennan, and other families who are grieving the loss of loved ones.

If you would like to be added to our weekly prayer list, please leave word in the church office or contact the pastor. Permission to be included in this publicly posted list has been obtained from those listed or their families.

Church Schedule

Worship Service: 10:00 a.m. Sunday

Communion: First Sunday of each month

Pastoral Office Hours: Generally 9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m. Wednesday or by appointment

Business Office Hours: 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Monday – Thursday

(Church hours are approved by Session and posted on church entry doors.)

Telephone/Fax: 608-423-3001

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Visit us on Facebook: Oakland-Cambridge Presbyterian Church

SESSION (Meets the second Sunday of each month.)

Class of 2022: Joe Leto, Mike Stitz

Class of 2023: Randy Johnson

Class of 2024: Mare Stewart, Mark Touhey

CHURCH STAFF

Music—

Accompanists: Karen Brunk, Marian Korth, Angie Williams

Business Manager: Ruth Poole

Pastor: Pastor Scott Marrese-Wheeler: (608) 417-0231 cell;

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Follow Rev. Scott on Twitter: @2revsScott

