

## *Order of Worship*

Christmas Eve, December 24, 2020

PRELUDE

K. Schoonenbeek

*Phantasy on ADESTE FIDELES*

CHRIST CANDLE LIGHTING

Isaiah 9:2, 6-7 (NKJV)

One: The people who walked in darkness have seen  
a great light;

**All: Those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, upon  
them a light has shined.**

One: For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the  
government will be upon His shoulder.

**All: And His name will be called: Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty  
God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.**

One: Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no  
end.

**All: He will be upon the throne of David and over His kingdom,  
to order it and establish it with judgment  
and justice.**

One: From that time forward, even forever.

**All: The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.**

MUSICAL RESPONSE “For Unto Us” from *Messiah*

Strings

SCRIPTURE

Luke 2:1-7

MESSAGE

*WHERE?*

Pastor Rebecca

In 2020 we all were counted (hopefully) in the census. These  
days we are counted where we currently live, but Jesus was born in a  
time when what mattered was where your ancestors were born.

Joseph obeyed the government’s order and faithfully brought his very  
pregnant fiancée with him to be counted as a couple in Bethlehem, the  
land of his ancestors.

The prophet Micah (5:2) foretold Bethlehem as the birthplace of the Messiah 700 years before Jesus was born. *“But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times.”* God faithfully uses every circumstance, even the small, odd, or difficult ones, to help us to come to the right place at the right time. We begin to realize we are all counted for eternity as citizens of heaven above.

HYMN 234     *O Come, All Ye Faithful*     ADESTE FIDELES

RESPONSIVE PRAYER

One: Eternal God, by the birth of Jesus Christ you gave yourself to the world.

**All: Grant that, being born in our hearts, he may save us from all of our sins.**

One: Restore within us the image and likeness of our Creator.

**All: To God be everlasting praise and glory, world without end. Amen.**

SCRIPTURE     Luke 2:8-14

MUSICAL RESPONSE     “Glory to God” from *Messiah*     Strings

MESSAGE     *WHAT?*     Pastor Rebecca

We often gloss over words that weigh more than our thoughts can easily carry. A word like “glory” seems equally thrilling and daunting. Deep inside we feel that God’s glory is beyond imagination or grasp. But God’s glorious presence was never meant to only be experienced by a select few throughout the timeline of history, nor reserved to be seen only after we die and enter the eternal glory of God’s heavenly presence. God was wrapped in strips of cloth and laid on a humble bed of hay in an animal feed trough. God came to live among us, setting aside the glory of heaven for our good on earth. The King of Glory has come, and the whole earth rejoices.

The Glory of God does more than lead people through a desert as a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. The Glory of God does more than fill a temple. The Glory of God combines both awe and terror as it simultaneously draws us closer and yet warns us that we are standing on holy ground. The Glory of God is both sacred and dangerous. It transforms all who experience God’s power to ultimately reflect the radiance of God’s peace. Glory to God and peace on earth!

HYMN 240 *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*

MENDELSSOHN

RESPONSIVE PRAYER

ONE: God, you said, “Let light shine out of darkness,”

**ALL: Holy Spirit, shine in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.**

ONE: We clothe ourselves with humility in our dealings with one another, for You “oppose the proud, but give grace to the humble.”

**ALL: Thank you, God, for calling us to share eternal glory in Christ who restores, supports, strengthens, and establishes us. Amen.**

SCRIPTURE

Luke 2:15-20

MESSAGE

*WHY?*

Pastor Rebecca

The “where” began in Bethlehem but spread throughout the world and is offered to every soul. The “what” started as a light shining in the darkness and as the fullness of God’s glory born in the vulnerability of a baby. The “why” was first asked as Mary treasured the words and wonder of everything she heard. Whether declared by heavenly angels or relayed by simple shepherds, the call to not be afraid but to hear good news of great joy because the Messiah has been born became a treasured promise.

Treasure symbolizes what we think is truly valuable. We determine what is worth taking up space in our homes, minds, calendars, and hearts. We are willing to sacrifice our “likes” in order to hold on to what we love. We take time to ponder and be amazed by the treasure that we know holds and even increases in value. The “Why?” turns our hearts to worship as we join the shepherds in glorifying and praising God.

RESPONSIVE PRAYER

One: Lord, now let your servant go in peace; Your Word has been fulfilled.

**All: My own eyes have seen the salvation which you have prepared in the presence of all people.**

One: Christ is the light revealing God to all nations.

**All: Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth! Amen!**

HYMN 239                      *Silent Night, Holy Night*                      STILLE NACHT

POSTLUDE:                      “Hallelujah” Chorus from *Messiah*                      Strings