



SOTC Worship
December 24, 2020
Christmas Eve

————— GATHERING —————

PRELUDE

WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP

This year, we dreamed of world peace.
We dreamed of deep breaths and restful sleep.
We dreamed of love that lasts and suffering that passes.
We dreamed of doors open wide and a cure to disease.
We dreamed, because to dream is to hope, and to hope is to imagine
And to imagine is to wonder, and to wonder is to believe.
So tonight, make room in your being to dream yet again,
of a world without fear, and a God who draws near.
For it is almost Christmas.
And love is almost here.

GATHERING SONG

IT CAME UPON THE MIDNIGHT CLEAR

HYMN 282 (vs. 1, 3, 4)



1 It came up - on the mid - night clear, that glo - rious song of old,
2 Still through the clo - ven skies they come with peace - ful wings un - furled,
3 And you, be - neath life's crush - ing load, whose forms are bend - ing low,
4 For lo! The days are has - t'ning on, by proph - ets seen of old,



from an - gels bend - ing near the earth to touch their harps of gold:
and still their heav'n - ly mu - sic floats o'er all the wea - ry world.
who toil a - long the climb - ing way with pain - ful steps and slow:
when with the ev - er - cir - cling years shall come the time fore - told,



“Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heav’n’s all - gra - cious king.”
A - bove its sad and low - ly plains they bend on hov - ’ring wing,
look now, for glad and gold - en hours come swift - ly on the wing;
when peace shall o - ver all the earth its an - cient splen - dors fling,



The world in sol - emn still - ness lay to hear the an - gels sing.
and ev - er o’er its ba - bel sounds the bless - ed an - gels sing.
oh, rest be - side the wea - ry road and hear the an - gels sing!
and all the world give back the song which now the an - gels sing.

LIGHTING OF ADVENT CANDLES

A: In the beginning, God dreamed of a beautiful world.

B: In Egypt, the Israelites dreamed of freedom.

A: In the wilderness, the people dreamed of safety.

B: In Jerusalem, the people dreamed of a Messiah.

A: In Bethlehem, the shepherds and Wise Men dreamed of a new beginning.

B: Then, several years later, Jesus was born among us as Emmanuel, and there in Mary’s arms, we saw
with our own eyes that dreams really do come true.

A: In Jesus, the sick were healed.

B: In Jesus, the poor had food.

A: In Jesus, the forgotten and ignored were seen.

B: In Jesus, the children were welcomed.

A and B: In Jesus, love came to *live* among us.

C: And ever since, the world has never been the same.

A: So tonight, we are those who dream.

B: Tonight, we dream the same dreams of our ancestors before us.

A and B: Tonight, we dream of justice and mercy, of love and kindness, of peace and hope.

C: Tonight, we dream of a God that draws near to us out of unfailing love.

Pastor Aleese and congregation invited to light all candles on wreath

PA: May these candles that we light tonight be a reminder that there will be a day when every dream
will be fulfilled.

C: And until then, we will be those who dream.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

FIRST READING: ISAIAH 9:2-7

²The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—
on them light has shined.
³You have multiplied the nation,
you have increased its joy;
they rejoice before you
as with joy at the harvest,
as people exult when dividing plunder.
⁴For the yoke of their burden,
and the bar across their shoulders,
the rod of their oppressor,
you have broken as on the day of Midian.
⁵For all the boots of the tramping warriors
and all the garments rolled in blood
shall be burned as fuel for the fire.
⁶For 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.
⁷His 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.

PSALM: PSALM 98

¹O sing to the LORD a new song,
for he has done marvelous things.
**His right hand and his holy arm
have gotten him victory.**
²The LORD has made known his victory;
he has revealed his vindication in the sight of the nations.
³He 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.**
⁴Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth;

break forth into joyous song and sing praises.

⁵Sing praises to the LORD with the lyre,

with the lyre and the sound of melody.

⁶With trumpets and the sound of the horn

make a joyful noise before the King, the LORD.

⁷Let the sea roar, and all that fills it;

the world and those who live in it.

⁸**Let the floods clap their hands;**

let the hills sing together for joy

⁹**at the presence of the LORD, for he is coming**

to judge the earth.

He will judge the world with righteousness,

and the peoples with equity.

Word of God, Word of life

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL: LUKE 2:1-20

The Holy Gospel according to Luke, the second chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴Joseph 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. ⁵He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷And 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.

⁸In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." ¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

¹⁴"Glory to God in the highest heaven,

and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

¹⁵When 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." ¹⁶So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

The Gospel of our Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**



1 An - gels we have heard on high, sweet - ly sing - ing o'er the plains,
 2 Shep-herds, why this ju - bi - lee? Why your joy - ous strains pro - long?
 3 Come to Beth - le - hem and see him whose birth the an - gels sing;

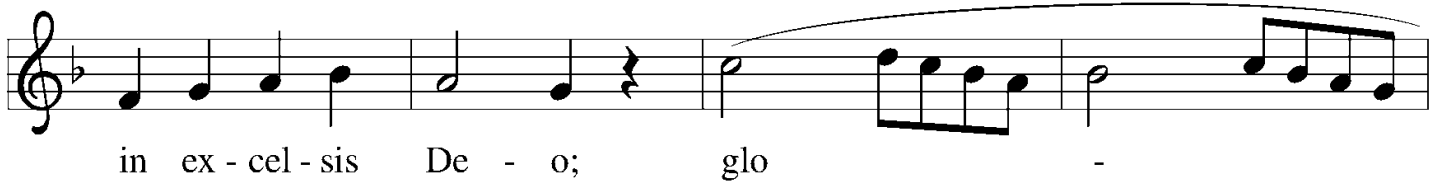


and the moun-tains in re - ply, ech - o - ing their joy - ous strains.
 What the glad - some tid - ings be which in - spire your heav'n - ly song?
 come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ the Lord, the new - born king.

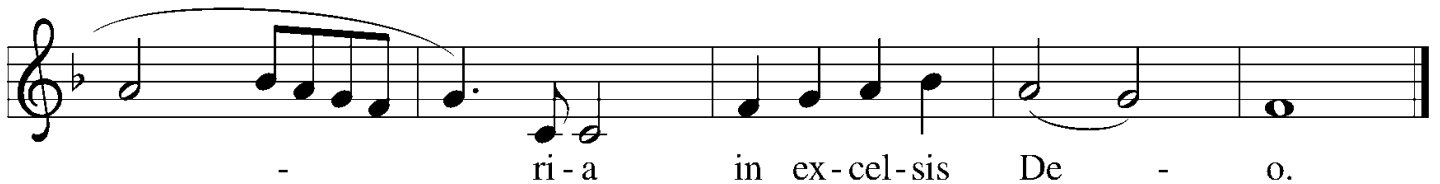
Refrain



Glo - ri - a



in ex - cel - sis De - o; glo -



- ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Response to "Lord in your mercy" is "hear our prayer." If you would like to add a prayer petition, email it to Pastor Aleese at pastor@shepherdofthecross.org

MEAL

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us:

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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and forever. Amen.

COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION

Congregation is invited to share communion elements with those in their family, saying "The body of Christ, given for you," and "the blood of Christ, shed for you." If you are worshipping on your own, hear the words proclaimed by Pastor Aleese as God's Word of promise is spoken to you. All are welcome to share in God's feast that makes us one.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

SENDING

SENDING SONG

SILENT NIGHT

HYMN 281



Stil - le Nacht, hei - li - ge Nacht! Al - les schläft,
 1 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! All is calm,
 2 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Shep - herds quake
 3 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Son of God,



ein - sam wacht nur das trau - te, hoch - hei - li - ge Paar.
 all is bright round yon vir - gin moth - er and child.
 at the sight; glo - ries stream from heav - en a - far,
 love's pure light ra - diant beams from your ho - ly face,



Hold - er Kna - be im lok - ki - gen Haar, schlaf in himm - li - scher
 Ho - ly In - fant, so ten - der and mild, sleep in heav - en - ly
 heav'n - ly hosts . . . sing, al - le - lu - ia! Christ, the Sav - ior, is
 with the dawn of re - deem - ing grace, Je - sus, Lord, at your



Ruh, schlaf in himm - li - scher Ruh.
 peace, sleep in heav - en - ly peace.
 born! Christ, the Sav - ior, is born!
 birth, Je - sus, Lord, at your birth.

BLESSING

People of God,

May the Word that Mary brought to birth carry you into new and abundant life.

May the Word that Joseph cradled in his arms enfold you with love and strength.

May the Word that angels proclaimed in song bring harmony to our world.

And the blessing of almighty God, the Father, the +Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SHARING OF THE PEACE

Go in peace. Share the gift of Jesus. **Thanks be to God.**

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Rev. Elizabeth Rawlings, Rev. Collete Broady Grund, Disrupt Worship Project
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