

RESPONSE TO THE WORD

† Hymn

"Silent Night, Holy Night"

UMH No. 239

Prayers for the Church and the world

THANKSGIVING AND COMMUNION

Prayer of Confession

Almighty God, who sent a star to guide the magi to the holy child Jesus: we confess that we have not followed the light of your word. We have not searched for signs of your love in the world, or trusted good news to be good. We have failed to praise your Son's birth, and refused his peace on earth. We have expected little, and hoped for less. Forgive our doubt, and renew in us all fine desires, so we may watch and wait and once more hear the glad story of our Savior, Jesus Christ the Lord. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon and Peace

words of comfort are spoken by the minister

Presentation of God's tithes and our offerings

Offertory

† Doxology

(to the tune of O Come, O Come, Emmanuel)

Praise God from whom all blessings flow:
Praise God all creatures here below;
Praise God above, ye heavenly host,
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

The Great Thanksgiving

Sharing the bread and the cup

MUSICAL OFFERING DURING COMMUNION *"Silent Night/O, Holy Night"*

Prayer following Communion

SENDING FORTH

† Hymn

"Hark! the Herald Angels Sing"

† Benediction

† Postlude

†The congregation is invited to stand, as you are able.

What can I give Him, poor as I am? If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;
If I were a Wise Man, I would do my part; Yet what I can I give Him: give my heart.

--by Gustav Holst (1874–1934)

UMH No. 9

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"JOSEPH SON OF DAVID, DO NOT BE AFRAID TO TAKE MARY HOME AS YOUR WIFE, BECAUSE WHAT IS CONCEIVED IN HER IS FROM THE HOLY SPIRIT. SHE WILL GIVE BIRTH TO A SON, AND YOU ARE TO GIVE HIM THE NAME JESUS, BECAUSE HE WILL SAVE HIS PEOPLE FROM THEIR SINS."

A PAINTING BY GAETANO GANDOLFI, CA. 1790.
COURTESY OF VANDERBILT DIVINITY SCHOOL

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Christmas Eve Service of Worship 4:00 PM

A Service Word and Table

Christmas Eve

December 24, 2025

Christmastide (named after the principal celebration of the “Christ Mass”) is the twelve-day festival during which Christians celebrate the birth of the Christ child in Bethlehem over 2000 years ago. This vulnerable infant, long awaited and yet still a surprise, is the incarnation of God on earth. As we share gifts with our friends and families this season, we seek to capture the joy and wonder of the original gift of Christmas: Jesus Christ, coming into a broken world to dwell among us as the Son of God, our Savior.

GATHERING AND PRAISE

Ringing the Church bell

Welcome

Prelude

“*Still, Still, Still*”

Leslie Orlofsky

† Call to Worship

from the Cokesbury Hymnal

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 Savior, which is Christ the Lord.

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

For he that is mighty has done to me great things; and holy is his name.

In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

And the light shines in darkness; and the darkness does not overcome it.

For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, has shined in our hearts.

To give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

And of his fullness have we all received, and grace for grace.

For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

Blessed be the name of the Lord forever and ever.

Praise to the Father, and to the only Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Amen!

† Opening Prayer

O God, who has caused this holy night to shine with the illumination of true Light: we beseech thee, that as we have known the mystery of that Light upon earth, so may we also perfectly enjoy him in heaven; where with you and the Holy Spirit he lives and reigns, one God in glory everlasting. **Amen.**

Lighting of the Christmas Candle

Advent. Arrival. Appearance. Return. With Christmas, hope, anticipation, joy, and wholeness find their place in the coming of Jesus. It is in this time of arrival that we encounter a reading from the Book of Isaiah.

Isaiah 9:2-7

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. You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. For 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. For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. 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 righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

This is the word of God for the people of God,

Thanks be to God.

Light the first, second, third, and fourth candles

How perfect it is that God would send a child to lead us. The voice of God was heard in the cries of a baby, and that sound reminds us that God cared for us enough to be with us, to save us from the powers of death and destruction, and end our journey in darkness. We light this candle knowing that Jesus is born, and Love has come to earth.

Light the Christmas candle

† Hymn

“*O Come, All Ye Faithful*” (verses 1-4)

UMH No. 234

PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

Psalter Lesson

Psalm 80:1-7 (Pew Bible p. 540, OT)

Manuela Seymour

Children’s Lesson

Matthew 1:18-25 (Pew Bible p. 1, NT)

Sermon

“*Jesus’s Family Tree*”

Kevin Seymour