

## A CHRIST CHURCH CHRISTMAS AT HOME

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Silent Night

*sung by Adam Peerless*

### OPENING HYMN 83

"O come, all ye faithful," vv. 1,3,6

Hymnal 83

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant;	Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;	Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above
Come and behold Him, Born the King of angels.	Glory to God, Glory in the highest.

Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, born this happy morning, Jesus, to thee be glory giv'n;  
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing.

*Refrain:* O come let us adore him (x2), O come let us adore him Christ, the Lord.

### WELCOME

### OPENING PRAYER

O God, you have caused this holy night to shine with the brightness of the true Light: Grant that we, who have known the mystery of that Light on earth, may also enjoy him perfectly in heaven; where with you and the Holy Spirit he lives and reigns, one God, in glory everlasting. Amen!

## THE WORD OF GOD

### READING

Isaiah 52:7-10

**H**ow beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger who announces peace,  
who brings good news, who announces salvation, who says to Zion, "Your God reigns."

Listen! Your sentinels lift up their voices, together they sing for joy; for in plain sight they see the return of the Lord to Zion. Break forth together into singing, you ruins of Jerusalem; for the Lord has comforted his people, he has redeemed Jerusalem. The Lord has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

*Reader:* Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people:

*Response:* Thanks be to God!

### THE GOSPEL

Luke 2:1-20

*Deacon:* The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.

*Response:* Glory to you, Lord Christ!

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.

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!'

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.

*Deacon:* The Gospel of the Lord.

*Response:* Praise to you, Lord Christ!

## A CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

### Scene 1: An Angel Visits Mary

#### CAROL

O little town of Bethlehem, vv. 1-2

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.

How silently, how silently, the wondrous Gift is given!  
So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of his heaven.  
No ear may hear his coming, but in this world of sin,  
where meek souls will receive him, still the dear Christ enters in.

### Scene 2: Joseph and Mary Go to Bethlehem; Jesus is Born

#### CAROL

Away in a manger vv. 1,3

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,  
The little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head.  
The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,  
The little Lord Jesus, asleep on the hay.

Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask you to stay  
Close by me forever, and love me, I pray.  
Bless all the dear children in your tender care,  
And fit us for heaven, to live with you there.

### Scene 3: Angels Appear To Shepherds

#### CAROL

Angels we have heard on high, vv. 1,3

Angels we have heard on high,  
Sweetly singing through the night.  
And the mountains in reply,  
Echoing their brave delight.

Come to Bethlehem and see  
Him whose birth the angels sing;  
Come, adore on bended knee  
Christ the Lord, the newborn King.

*Refrain:* Glo-ria, in excelsis Deo! Glo-ria, in excelsis Deo!

### Scene 4: Visitors from Afar

#### CAROL

The first Nowell, vv. 1, 3

The first Nowell the angel did say  
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;  
In fields where they lay, keeping their sheep,  
In a cold winter's night that was so deep.

And by the light of that same star  
three wise men came from country far;  
to seek for a king was their intent,  
and to follow the star wherever it went.

*Refrain:* Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, born is the King of Israel.

#### CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

"Nothing Can Keep God Away" The Rev. Dr. Kate Heichler

#### PRAYERS

*During the silence after each petition, please add your own prayers aloud or not.  
Please respond to Jesus, God-with-us with Hear our prayer.*

O Holy child of Bethlehem, we thank you for all the blessings you have poured upon us, for the gifts we give and receive this season, for worshipping you as a family gathered in your Name; for Christmas pageants and music, for warmth and love, and all other blessings we name now in silence or aloud... Above all, we thank you for your gift to us of yourself, Lord Jesus.

Jesus, God-with-us **Hear our prayer**

O Holy child of Bethlehem, we pray for the church gathered in your name all over the world tonight. Bring us unity, humility, peace. Bless our bishops Michael, Mariann and Chilton; our clergy Kate and Joan. Send your Spirit upon us and make of us the Body of Christ that you desire the world to know: vibrant and vulnerable; winsome and wise, discerning and decisive.

Jesus, God-with-us **Hear our prayer**

O Holy child of Bethlehem, we pray for this world into which you were born and for which you died; for the divisions which wound it; the disease laying waste to its people; the waste which scars its lands and seas. Grant us your peace and a desire for peace, especially in those places we name now, in silence or aloud...

Jesus, God-with-us **Hear our prayer**

O Holy child of Bethlehem, we pray for this nation and community, that we might be conformed to your image. Unite and strengthen us as a nation to serve those who need our help, and make us loving servants.

Jesus, God-with-us **Hear our prayer**

O Holy child of Bethlehem, we ask for your healing touch on all those whom we know who are suffering in body, mind or spirit. You came into this world this night as the most vulnerable of humans, a tiny infant in a place where you were barely protected from the elements, from disease, from tyrants. You came in our flesh to make us whole, in the body as well as in spirit, and we pray for your wholeness now, especially for... and all others whom we name before you, in silence or aloud. Jesus, God-with-us **Hear our prayer**

O Holy child of Bethlehem, we pray for those who have departed this world, and for the families who are experiencing their first Christmas without that loved one - for the families of and all those others whom we name now ....

Lord Jesus. Jesus, God-with-us **Hear our prayer**

#### PRAYER REFRAIN

O little town of Bethlehem, v 5

*All sing together:* O Holy child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray;  
Cast out our sin and enter in, be born in us today.  
We hear the Christmas angels the great, glad tidings tell.  
O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel.

#### THE PEACE

#### OFFERING SONG

Hark! the herald angels sing, vv 1,3

Hark! the herald angels sing glory to the newborn King!  
Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!  
Joyful, all ye nations, rise, join the triumph of the skies;  
with the angelic hosts proclaim Christ is born in Bethlehem!

**Refrain:** Hark! the herald angels sing, glory to the newborn King!

Mild he lays his glory by, born that we no more may die,  
born to raise us from the earth, born to give us second birth.  
Risen with healing in his wings, Light and life to all he brings,  
hail, the Sun of Righteousness! hail, the heaven-born Prince of Peace!

You can make your offering online at <https://christchurchlaplata.org/donate/>

Or text "CCLAPLATA" to 73256, and follow the prompts.

# THE HOLY FEAST

## THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

*The people are invited to participate praying the words in bold type.*

*Celebrant* The Lord be with you.

*People* **And also with you.**

*Celebrant* Lift up your hearts.

*People* **We lift them to the Lord.**

*Celebrant* Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

*People* **It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

We love to praise you, God of power and might, on this night above all, when the song of the angels still rings in our ears, the smell of the straw and the chatter of the shepherds surrounds us, when we remember the story we love to tell again and again. And through that song, sung by shepherds and angels and kings, another sound comes to us, piercing the night:

The cry of a newborn babe, the Lord of all Life come in humblest flesh.

In these last days you have come to us, taking on our broken image, entering our world as a helpless child, like the helpless children we had become. Like us, you were born weak, helpless, among strangers. And so also you died for us, helpless, weak, among strangers.

In taking on our form you transformed us and made us again your friends.

In taking on our life you transformed life, and made it rich with possibility.

In taking on our death, you transformed death, and set us free to love you forever.

On the night You were handed over to suffering and death, Lord Jesus Christ, you took bread; and when you had given thanks, you broke it, and gave it to your disciples, and said,

**"Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this to remember me."**

After supper, you took the cup of wine; and when you had given thanks, you gave it to them, and said, **"Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this to remember me."**

So we come to this table to be reunited with Christ. Send your Holy Spirit upon these gifts.

Let them be for us the Body and Blood of your Son, his life renewing our life.

**Let them be for us the Body and blood of your Son, life renewing our life.**

So fill us, we pray, with your Holy Spirit, that we might glorify you as your Body the church, and show forth your presence on earth here and now. All this we pray through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Through Him, and with Him, and in Him, all honor and glory are yours, Almighty God and Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever. **AMEN.**

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say:

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, for ever and ever. Amen

#### THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD

*Celebrant* See: the Body of Christ.  
Look around you: See, the body of Christ.

#### THE COMMUNION

*All are invited to partake of consecrated bread and wine at home table*

#### SONG AFTER COMMUNION

Silent Night

Hymnal 111

*Please hold up your candle to your camera as we mute ourselves and sing:*

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.

#### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Almighty God, we thank you for this feast we celebrate together tonight, for feeding us with your very self in these signs of your body and blood. Send us forth in love, we pray, to glorify you like the angels, to honor you like the kings, to rejoice like the shepherds, to sit in awe like Mary and Joseph at this miracle in a manger, and to go out and tell the world that Christ our Savior is born: Come, let us adore him, in whose name we pray. *Amen.*

#### BLESSING

## CLOSING HYMN

"Joy to the world!" vv. 1,2 & 4

Joy to the World! The Lord is come,  
Let earth receive her King;  
Let every heart prepare Him room,  
And heaven and nature sing (x2),  
And heaven and heaven and nature sing.

Joy to the world! The Savior reigns,  
Let all their songs employ;  
While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains  
Repeat the sounding joy (x2),  
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the nations prove,  
he glories of His righteousness, And wonders of His love (x2),  
And wonders, wonders of His love.

**DISMISSAL**     *Response:* Thanks be to God!

## WORSHIP AND MUSIC MINISTERS

Celebrant:	The Rev. Dr. Kate Heichler
Deacon:	The Rev. Joan Crittenden
Organist:	Eileen Peerless
Singers:	Michael Peerless, Alicia Cordelle
Piano and Singing:	Tim Illick
Guitar and Singing:	Kate Heichler

## PAGEANT PARTICIPANTS

Many thanks to Sheila Guttenberg for directing - and editing!  
and Janet Niemi for coordinating costumes.

And to our cast:

**Mary:** Hannah Albrittain  
**Joseph:** William Zabriskie  
**Gabriel:** Heidi Guttenberg  
**Baby Jesus:** Elliot Davis  
**Herod:** Chris Kamienski

**Angels:** Nikolette Blackwell, Antwanette Blackwell,  
Taylor Caldwell;  
**Shepherds:** Nathan Albrittain,  
Christopher Guttenberg, Adam Rybarczyk  
**Magi:** Jake and Ryan Kamienski, Tim Niemi

**COLLECTING COATS AND BLANKETS:** We now have a beautiful box to receive donations of blankets and coats, new and used. We are seeking a coordinator for this project, some signage, and will need some folks to assist with laundering the used items, and/or making donations to our Giving Fund to cover the cost of dry cleaning. We can also use help with distributing the goods. Please contact Deacon Joan if you'd like to be part of this ministry to keep people warm this winter.

**TIME TO PLEDGE FOR 2021!** Vestries are budgeting for 2021 - please participate in God's mission at Christ Church through pledging. Our Stewardship theme celebrates the distinctiveness we each bring to Christ Church, the diversity God delights in, and the wonderful flavor that results when we bring ourselves together, investing in God's mission through our church. Salads generally begin with greens! What percentage of your income can you pledge to enrich God's salad at Christ Church?

**TUTORING PUBLIC SCHOOLCHILDREN:** The havoc which Covid restrictions have wreaked on our educational systems has left many children at risk of failing this semester. Neal Bankenstein, who works with the most vulnerable children and families in the Charles County Public Schools, has suggested we launch a tutoring program to give kids some extra help. He and other administrators will refer children to us; we'll match them up with tutors who are comfortable with the needed subject matter, and we'll set up a time for tutoring to happen on Zoom. You can fill out a form to indicate your subjects and available times – find it on the “Giving to the World” page on our website, or in the Enews.

**GIVING FUND** – Please consider making a dedicated donation to the Giving Fund, from which Rev. Kate can offer help. Our policy is to help once, as we are able, and deal with repeat requests on a case-by-case basis. You can write a check or give online at the donate page on our website, [www.christchurchlaplata.org](http://www.christchurchlaplata.org), or text “CCLAPLATA” to 73256, and follow the prompts, designating Giving Fund. You now have the option to make pledge offerings or donations online, or by text.

**ONLINE GIVING** - You can text a donation - text "CCLAPLATA" to 73256, and follow the prompts. You can give to Open Plate or toward your pledge. A 2.6% fee is charged for credit or debit cards - you'll have the option to include that in your gift or not. Standard text message rates do apply. You can also give online - go to [www.christchurchlaplata.org](http://www.christchurchlaplata.org) and scroll down to the "Donate" link.