



COME,
LET US
adore
HIM

Christmas Eve 2024

A Reflection Before the Service

The “guns of August” boomed in 1914 and threw Europe into war. In November Pope Benedict XV called for a cease-fire on Christmas Day. The response on both sides was, “Impossible.” The German High Command told their troops, “to let their hearts beat to God during the coming season, and to keep their fists on the enemy.” This is a military expression of the classic split between spirit and flesh, a split that the feast of Christmas struggles to overcome. However, the generals were not heard and on sundown of Christmas Eve the firing stopped. Troops on both sides came out of the trenches. They sang carols and exchanged gifts. On Christmas Day they ate together and played soccer games. As evening fell, they embraced one another and said goodbye. Christmas was over. The next day was war as usual. It was a one-time event; it never happened again. A young English soldier wrote home that the Germans were friendly, “jolly good fellows.” At the end of his letter he stated simply the conundrum of that Christmas truce: “Both sides have started firing and are enemies again. Strange it all seems, doesn’t it?”

- John Shea, *Starlight*

Prelude

Welcome and Announcements

Call to Worship

Beloved in Christ, at this Christmastide let it be our duty and delight to hear again the message of the angels, and in heart and mind to go to Bethlehem and see this thing which is come to pass, and the Babe lying in a manger.

Therefore let us read and mark in Holy Scripture the story of the loving purposes of God who, from before the first days of our disobedience, had prepared this glorious Redemption brought us by this Holy Child.

But first, let us pray for the needs of the whole world; for peace on earth and goodwill among all His people; for unity and brotherhood within the Church He came to build, and especially in this our congregation.

And because this would rejoice His heart, let us remember, in His name, the poor and helpless, the cold, the hungry, and the oppressed; the sick and those who mourn, the lonely and the unloved, the elderly and the little children; all those who do not know the Lord Jesus, or who do not love Him, or who by sin have grieved His heart of love.

Lastly, let us remember before God all those who rejoice with us, but upon another shore, and in a greater light, that multitude which no man can number, whose hope was in the Word made flesh, and with whom in the Lord Jesus we are one for evermore.

As we come to offer these prayers and praises before the Throne of Heaven, let us pause in **silence**.

Of the Father's Love Begotten

Prudentius, 4th cent

Congregation (seated)

Of the Father's love begotten ere the worlds began to be,
He is Alpha and Omega; He the source, the ending He,
of the things that are, that have been, and that future years shall see
evermore and evermore!

O that birth forever blessed, when the virgin, full of grace,
by the Holy Ghost conceiving, bore the Savior of our race;
and the Babe, the world's Redeemer, first revealed His sacred face,
evermore and evermore!

This is He whom heav'n-taught singers sang of old with one accord,
Whom the Scriptures of the prophets promised in their faithful word
Now He shines, the long-expected; let creation praise its Lord,
evermore and evermore!

O ye heights of heav'n adore Him, angel hosts, His praises sing,
pow'rs, dominions, bow before Him, and extol our God and King;
let no tongue on earth be silent, ev'ry voice in concert ring
evermore and evermore!

Christ, to Thee and God the Father, and O Holy Ghost to Thee
Hymn, and chant and high thanksgiving, and eternal praises be.
Honor, glory and dominion and eternal victory
evermore and evermore!

First Lesson

Genesis 3 (NLT)

When the cool evening breezes were blowing, the man and his wife heard the Lord God walking about in the garden. So they hid from the Lord God among the trees. Then the Lord God called to the man, "Where are you?" He replied, "I heard You walking in the garden, so I hid. I was afraid because I was naked." "Who told you that you were naked?" the Lord God asked. "Have you eaten from the tree whose fruit I commanded you not to eat?" The man replied, "It was the woman You gave me who gave me the fruit, and I ate it." Then the Lord God asked the woman, "What have you done?" "The serpent deceived me," she replied. "That's why I ate it."

Then the Lord God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, you are cursed more than all animals, domestic and wild. You will crawl on your belly, groveling in the dust as long as you live. And I will cause hostility between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring. He will strike your head, and you will strike His heel." Then he said to the woman, "I will sharpen the pain of your pregnancy, and in pain you will give birth." And you will desire to control

your husband, but he will rule over you.” And to the man he said, “Since you listened to your wife and ate from the tree whose fruit I commanded you not to eat, the ground is cursed because of you. All your life you will struggle to scratch a living from it. It will grow thorns and thistles for you, though you will eat of its grains. By the sweat of your brow will you have food to eat until you return to the ground from which you were made. For you were made from dust, and to dust you will return.”

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord

People: **Thanks be to God!**

Hark the Herald Angels Sing

Wesley

Congregation (standing)

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 angelic hosts proclaim: "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
Hark! the herald angels sing: "Glory to the newborn King!"

Christ, by highest heav'n adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord.
Now in time behold Him come, offspring of the Virgin's womb:
veiled in flesh the Godhead see; hail th'incarnate Deity,
Pleased, as man, with men to dwell, Jesus, our Immanuel.
Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

Hail the heav'n-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all He brings, ris'n with healing in His wings.
Mild He lays His glory by, born that man no more may die;
born to raise the sons of earth; born to give them second birth.
Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

Come, Desire of nations, come! Fix in us Thy humble home.
Rise, the woman's Conqu'ring Seed, bruise in us the serpent's head;
Adam's likeness now efface; stamp Thine image in its place.
Second Adam from above, reinstate us in Thy love.
Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

Then the angel of the Lord called again to Abraham from heaven. "This is what the Lord says: Because you have obeyed Me and have not withheld even your son, your only son, I swear by My own Name that I will certainly bless you. I will multiply your descendants beyond number, like the stars in the sky and the sand on the seashore. Your descendants will conquer the cities of their enemies. And through your descendants all the nations of the earth will be blessed—all because you have obeyed Me."

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord

People: Thanks be to God!

O Come, O Come Emmanuel

Neale

Congregation (seated)

O come, O come, Emmanuel and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here, until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, Thou Rod of Jesse, free thine own from Satan's tyranny;
from depths of hell Thy people save, and give them vict'ry o'er the grave.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, Thou Day-spring from on high, and cheer us by Thy drawing nigh;
disperse the gloomy clouds of night, and death's dark shadows put to flight.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel. **(Repeat)**

Third Lesson

Isaiah 7 and 9

The Lord himself will give you the sign. Look! The virgin will conceive a child! She will give birth to a Son and will call Him Immanuel (which means 'God is with us'). The people who walk in darkness will see a great light. For those who live in a land of deep darkness, a light will shine. For a Child is born to us, a Son is given to us. The government will rest on His shoulders. And He will be called: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. His government and its peace will never end. He will rule with fairness and justice from the throne of His ancestor David for all eternity. The passionate commitment of the Lord of Heaven's Armies will make this happen!

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord

People: Thanks be to God!

Congregation (standing)

Come, Thou long-expected Jesus, born to set Thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us, let us find our rest in Thee.
Israel's Strength and Consolation, Hope of all the earth Thou art,
Dear Desire of ev'ry nation, Joy of ev'ry longing heart.

Joy to those who long to see Thee, Dayspring from on high, appear;
come, Thou promised Rod of Jesse, of Thy birth we long to hear!
O'er the hills the angels singing news, glad tidings of a birth:
"Go to Him, Your praises bringing; Christ the Lord has come to earth."

Come to earth to taste our sadness, He whose glory knew no end;
by His life He brings us gladness, our Redeemer, Shepherd, Friend.
Leaving riches without number, born within a cattle stall;
this the Everlasting Wonder, Christ was born the Lord of all.

Born Thy people to deliver, born a Child and yet a King,
born to reign in us forever, now Thy gracious kingdom bring.
By Thine own eternal Spirit, rule in all our hearts alone;
by Thine all-sufficient merit, raise us to Thy glorious throne.

Fourth Lesson

Luke 1

In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a village in Galilee, to a virgin named Mary. She was engaged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of King David. Gabriel appeared to her and said, "Greetings, favored woman! The Lord is with you!" Confused and disturbed, Mary tried to think what the angel could mean. "Don't be afraid, Mary," the angel told her, "for you have found favor with God! You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will name Him Jesus. He will be very great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give Him the throne of His ancestor David. And He will reign over Israel forever; His Kingdom will never end!" Mary asked the angel, "But how can this happen? I am a virgin." The angel replied, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the baby to be born will be holy, and He will be called the Son of God. What's more, your relative Elizabeth has become pregnant in her old age!

People used to say she was barren, but she has conceived a son and is now in her sixth month. For the word of God will never fail.” Mary responded, “I am the Lord’s servant. May everything you have said about me come true.” And then the angel left her.

Reader: The Gospel of the Lord

People: Praise be to You, O Christ!

Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence

Moultrie

Congregation (standing)

Let all mortal flesh keep silence, and with fear and trembling stand;
Ponder nothing earthly-minded, for with blessing in His hand,
Christ our God to earth descendeth, our full homage to demand.

King of kings, yet born of Mary, as of old on earth He stood,
Lord of lords, in human vesture, in the body and the blood,
He will give to all the faithful, His own self for heav’nly food.

Rank on rank the host of heaven spreads its wings on the way,
As the Light of light descendeth from the realms of endless day,
That the powers of hell may vanish as the darkness clears away.

At His feet the six-winged seraph; cherubim, with sleepless eye,
Veil their faces to the presence, as with ceaseless voice they cry,
“Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Lord Most High!” **(Repeat)**

Fifth Lesson

Luke 2

At that time the Roman emperor, Augustus, decreed that a census should be taken throughout the Roman Empire. (This was the first census taken when Quirinius was governor of Syria.) All returned to their own ancestral towns to register for this census. And because Joseph was a descendant of King David, he had to go to Bethlehem in Judea, David’s ancient home. He traveled there from the village of Nazareth in Galilee. He took with him Mary, to whom he was engaged, who was now expecting a child. And while they were there, the time came for her baby to be born. She gave birth to her firstborn son. She wrapped Him snugly in strips of cloth and laid Him in a manger, because there was no lodging available for them.

Reader: The Gospel of the Lord

People: Praise be to You, O Christ!

O Bethlehem, how still you lie.
Above your dreamless sleep silent stars go by.
O Bethlehem, how dark the night.
Within your shadowed streets shines the Everlasting Light, the Light.

O Bethlehem, how silently He came.
Greatest gift from heav'n, without wealth or fame.
O Bethlehem, how great your hope and fear.
Lay to rest your wearied past,
Your Promised One is near. He is near.

O Bethlehem, the Heavens shone bright!
In a field not far away, shepherds witnessed the sight.
O Bethlehem, how the angels sing!
O hear them proclaim the birth of the King of kings.

O Bethlehem, He's come to us.
O Bethlehem, He abides with us.
O Bethlehem, hear the angels tell,
how the Great I Am has become Emmanuel. O Bethlehem.

Sixth Lesson**Luke 2**

In the same region there were some shepherds staying out in the fields and keeping watch over their flock at night. And an angel of the Lord suddenly stood near them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them; and they were terribly frightened. And so the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people; for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, Who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." And suddenly there appeared with the angel a multitude of the heavenly army of angels praising God and saying,

*"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among people
with whom He is pleased."*

When the angels had departed from them into heaven, the shepherds began saying to one another, "Let's go straight to Bethlehem, then, and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." And they came in a hurry and found their way to Mary and Joseph, and the baby as He lay in the manger. When they had seen Him, they made known the statement which had been told them about this Child. And all who heard it were amazed about the things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary treasured all these things, pondering them in her heart. And the shepherds went back, glorifying and praising God for all that they had heard and seen, just as had been told them.

Reader: The Gospel of the Lord

People: **Praise be to You, O Christ!**

Away in a Manger

I James

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

The cattle are lowing, the Baby awakes,
The dawn of salvation beginning to break.
I love Thee, Lord Jesus, O gift from above,
The King of the heavens forever with us.

I worship You, Jesus, for all of my days,
The highest of praises be unto Your Name.
My God and my Savior, my King and my Friend
For Yours is the glory forever. Amen.

Seventh Lesson

2 Kings; Galatians

2nd Kings 11.12 Then he brought the king's son out and put the crown on him and gave him the testimony; and they made him king and anointed him, and they clapped their hands and said, "Long live the king!"¹³ When Athaliah heard the noise of the guard and of the people, she came to the people in the house of the LORD.¹⁴ She looked and behold, the king was standing by the pillar, according to the custom, with the captains and the trumpeters beside the king; and all the people of the

land rejoiced and blew trumpets. Then Athaliah tore her clothes and cried, "Treason! Treason!" ¹⁵ And Jehoiada the priest commanded the captains of hundreds who were appointed over the army and said to them, "Bring her out between the ranks, and whoever follows her put to death with the sword." For the priest said, "Let her not be put to death in the house of the LORD." ¹⁶ So they seized her, and when she arrived at the horses' entrance of the king's house, she was put to death there.

¹⁷ Then Jehoiada made a covenant between the LORD and the king and the people, that they would be the LORD'S people, also between the king and the people. ¹⁸ All the people of the land went to the house of Baal, and tore it down; his altars and his images they broke in pieces thoroughly, and killed Mattan the priest of Baal before the altars. And the priest appointed officers over the house of the LORD. ¹⁹ He took the captains of hundreds and the Carites and the guards and all the people of the land; and they brought the king down from the house of the LORD, and came by the way of the gate of the guards to the king's house. And he sat on the throne of the kings. ²⁰ So all the people of the land rejoiced and the city was quiet. For they had put Athaliah to death with the sword at the king's house.

²¹ Jehoash was seven years old when he became king.

Galatians 4.4 But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, ⁵ so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. ⁶ Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" ⁷ Therefore you are no longer a slave, but a son; and if a son, then an heir through God.

Reader: The Gospel of the Lord

People: Praise be to You, O Christ!

Meditation

T.J. Campo

"Sing to the Lord a New Song"

Congregation (standing)

Joy to the world! The Lord is come:
Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare him room,
And heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n and heav'n and nature sing.

No more let sins and sorrows grow,
Nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make His blessings flow
Far as the curse is found,
Far as the curse is found,
Far as, far as the curse is found,

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

During the Advent Season, we celebrate the coming of Christ by reflecting on His offices of Prophet, Priest, and King, and His estates of Humiliation and Exaltation.

As Prophet, He comes to explain God to a people lost in darkness. *"This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth in Galilee. A light of revelation to the Gentiles and the glory of Thy people Israel."*

As Priest, He comes to make sacrifice and pray for a people burdened by sin. *"He Himself bore the sins of many and intercedes for transgressors."*

As King, He comes to subdue us to Himself, to rule us and defend us against all evil. *"Behold your King is coming to you; He is just and endowed with salvation!"*

In His humiliation, He emptied Himself of all of the rights and privileges of His Godhood: *"Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bondservant and being made in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on the cross."*

Tonight, as we celebrate the Baby, born in lowliness and poverty, we also look forward to His return as Triumphant King. He will be exalted over all that is fallen and broken in the world and He will make all things new and right.

"And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, 'Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He shall dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be among them, and He shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there shall no longer be any death; there shall no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away.' And He who sits on the throne said, 'Behold, I am making all things new.'"

(Congregation seated)

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,
heav'nly hosts sing Alleluia!
Christ the Savior is born,
Christ the Savior is born!

(Congregation standing)

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!

Benediction



As you exit, please place your candles and holders
in the receptacles provided.

Merry Christmas!

We invite you to
join us for our
Sunday worship services
9:00 a.m. (Traditional)
or
11:15 a.m. (Contemporary)

or watch us livestream at
parkroadpres.org

Call the office (954.989.2655) or visit
ParkRoadPres.org for details.



St Andrews

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