



*Family  
Christmas Eve  
Service*

*December 24, 2023 5pm*

**December 24, 2023 — 5pm**  
**Christmas Eve Family Worship Service**

*We Gather to Worship*

**PRELUDE**

**“Carol of the Bells”**

by M. Leontovich

Linda Dover, organist

arr. Mark Hayes

*This carol, otherwise known as, Ukrainian carol, is one of my favorites.  
I taught it to many of my students during thirty-six years of elementary music teaching.  
I perform it in honor and remembrance of all the Ukrainian children and families who,  
despite war, continue to sing this song tonight as they – and we – celebrate Christ’s birth.*

**“The Wexford Carol”**

Traditional English Carol

arr. Mark Hayes

**WELCOME**

Rev. Karen Wright

**\*CALL TO WORSHIP**

ONE: All God’s people – boys and girls, women, men:

**ALL: Come and worship!**

ONE: Shepherds, Magi, saints, and angels:

**ALL: Come and worship! Come and worship!**

ONE: Glory to God in the highest!

**ALL: Alleluia! Amen!**

**\*HYMN 133, Stanzas 1 & 3**

**“O Come, All Ye Faithful”**

ADESTE FIDELES

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant;  
O come ye; O come ye to Bethlehem!  
Come, and behold him, born the King of angels!  
O come, let us adore him; O come, let us adore him;  
O come, let us adore him, Christ, the Lord!

Sing, choirs of angels; sing in exultation;  
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!  
Glory to God, all glory in the highest!  
O come, let us adore him; O come, let us adore him;  
O come, let us adore him, Christ, the Lord!

## LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

Jake, Hilary, James, Evelyn, and Abigail Schmidt

One: Let us pray together:

**All: Holy God, we rejoice in your presence! The birth of your holy child is your answer to our unrest, our confusion, and our sorrow. Tonight, we live in Hope, we pray for Peace, we share your Love, as we are filled with your Joy. Now, let us be your Hope, your Peace, your Love, and your Joy in this world.**

## SONG OF WONDER

“What Was It Like”

Music by Carol Huffman Dickerson

Joy! Singers (4s-1<sup>st</sup> graders)

Words by Terry D. Taylor

Emily Hussey & Hilary Schmidt, co-directors

Rowan Cabe, Brody Frye, Henry Frye, Charlotte Hearn, Nathan Hearn,  
Sophia Hearn, Aidan Hussey, Evie Schmidt, Bristol Sellers, & Magnolia Sellers

*What was it like on that night inside the cattle shed?*

*What was it like on that night around the manger bed?*

*Was it quiet? Was it loud? Were they alone? Was there a crowd?*

*Did people help? Did Mary smile at heaven's Holy Child?*

*What was it like on that night inside the cattle shed?*

*What was it like on that night around the manger bed?*

## *We Hear the Story*

## THE WORD

“A Children’s Nativity”

## PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Rev. Karen Wright

**Luke 2:1–7**

**Mary and Joseph Go to Bethlehem**

**HYMN 121, Stanza 1**

“O Little Town of Bethlehem”

ST. LOUIS

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.

**Luke 2:8-14**

**The Angels Appear to the Shepherds**

**HYMN 119, Stanza 1**

**“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”**

MENDELSSOHN

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 host proclaim, “Christ is born in Bethlehem!”  
Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn king!”

**Luke 2:15-16**

**The Shepherds Go to Bethlehem**

**SONG OF THE MANGER**

**“Asleep on the Hay”**

Original Words & Music

*(Based on “Away in a Manger” – Music by James R. Murray)* by Glenn Eernisse

Celebration! Choir (2<sup>nd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> graders) – Pam Kelly, director

Lara Schesser, assistant director – Linda Dover, accompanist

Helen Blankers, Melo Golston-Circo, Nini Golston-Circo, Xander Circo, Abel Frye,

Kamden Frye, Mallory Hearn, Liam Hussey, James Schmidt, & Max Soule

*This song partners the Traditional carol, “Away in a Manger”*

*with new words and melody written by Glenn Eernisse:*

*Jesus, asleep in a manger of hay; Jesus, our Savior was born on this day.*

*Shepherds who came to see God’s promised Son knelt there in wonder at what God had done.*

*The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.*

**Matthew 2:1–11**

**Magi from the East**

**\*HYMN 151, stanzas 1 & 5**

**“We Three Kings of Orient Are”**

KINGS OF ORIENT

We three kings of Orient are bearing gifts we traverse afar  
field and fountain, moor and mountain following yonder star.  
*O, star of wonder, star of light, star with royal beauty bright,  
westward leading, still proceeding guide us to thy perfect Light.*

Glorious now behold him arise, King and God and Sacrifice:  
Alleluia! Alleluia! Sounds through the earth and skies.  
*O, star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright,  
westward leading still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light.*

**CALL FOR THE OFFERING**

Rev. Karen Wright

**CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING**

**“O Holy Night”**

arr. Jason W. Krug

Andrew Alka, Elizabeth Bures, Lindsay Callender,  
and Kat Mason – *handbell quartet*

## OFFERTORY RESPONSE

Hymn 145, What Child is This

This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing.  
Haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the Son of Mary.

### *We Share the Light*

## \*CANDLELIGHT HYMN 122 “Silent Night, Holy Night!”

STILLE NACHT

Congregation & Christopher Callender, guitar

*(We will light one another's candles reminding us of the coming of the Light of the World.  
Please tip your unlit candle into the flame of your neighbor's candle.)*

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.

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.

## \*CHRISTMAS LITANY

Rev. Karen Wright

Leader: In the beginning and in the midst of darkness, God spoke.

**All: Let there be light.**

Leader: In the beginning was the Word. And the Word came and dwelt among us. And the Word was the light of all peoples.

**All: Let there be light.**

Leader: We light our candles, knowing that the One who is the source and promise of all light is the One whose birth we celebrate.

**All: Let there be light.**

Leader: We are here to seek a little light by which we can see, by which we can live, by which we can love.

**All: Let there be light.**

Leader: We light our candles in gratitude for the love and light that shine through the babe born in Bethlehem who became the redeemer of us all.

**All: Let there be light.**

Leader: May we be emboldened to share the love of God with a world longing for light and hope, purpose, and love. May our actions and generosity shine in a world under the shadow of despair.

**All: Let there be light.**

Leader: We join the chorus of those whose carols have echoed through the years — “O come to us, abide in us, our Lord, Emmanuel.”

**All: Let there be light.**

*(Please extinguish your candle)*

*We Carry the Light Into the World*

**\*RESPONSE 134, stanzas 1 & 4**

**“Joy to the World”**

ANTIOCH

Joy to the world! The Lord has come:  
Let earth receive her King. Let every heart prepare him room,  
And heaven and nature sing, and heaven and nature sing,  
And heaven, and heaven and nature sing.

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.

**\*CHARGE AND BENEDICTION**

**POSTLUDE**

**“Tidings of Joy”**  
Linda Dover, organist

by Alice Jordan

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## Participants in Tonight's Service

(Some cast member names may not have been available at time of printing.)

**Holy Family** - Ryan, Emily, and Finn Hussey

**Holy Family's midwife** - Jenna Soule

**Angels** - Kamden Frye, Magnolia Sellers, Evie Schmidt, Charlotte Hearn

**Narrators** - Caitlin Hussey, Liam Hussey, Aidan Hussey, Mallory Hearn, Abel Frye, Henry Frye

**King Herod** - Aidan Hussey

**The Magi** - Max Soule, Liam Hussey, James Schmidt

**Shepherds** - Andrew Frye and Michelle Gailliez-Frye

**Sheep** - Isaac Frye

**Set & Décor** - Cal Sweeten, Aaron Soule, Liz Chandler, Kathy Williams

**Tech Crew** – Nelson Townsend and Jason Turner

**Worship Moderator for our Facebook stream** – Kim Kruger

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PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

11100 College Boulevard ♦ Overland Park, KS 66210

Phone (913) 345-1256 ♦ [www.gcpc.org](http://www.gcpc.org)