



Service of Worship December 22, 2024 9:30am
Fourth Sunday of Advent

Gathering

SONG TO GATHER

“Wexford Carol”

Traditional

Praise Team

*Good people all, this Christmas time, Consider well and bear in mind
what our good God for us has done, in sending His beloved Son.
With Mary holy we should pray to God with love this Christmas Day;
in Bethlehem upon the morn there was a blest Messiah born.*

*The night before that happy tide, the noble virgin and her guide
were long time seeking up and down to find a lodging in the town.
But mark how all things came to pass: from every door repelled, alas!
As long foretold, their refuge all was but a humble oxen stall.*

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Karen Wright

LIGHT FOR THE JOURNEY

(Sung)

The Hussey Family

**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.**

(Spoken)

The journey continues, and this candle will help light our way.

We are on our way to more love.

So many are in need of grace, in need of loving acceptance.

We are a people who can bring Good News.

Stories of generosity are markers and signs that
goodness is the nature of God.

God's light goes before us, we are not alone.

Holy and Living God, we pray for hearts and minds
to open wide to merciful acts in your name.

Too often, we clench our fists in fear that what we have
will not be enough for us.

Give us the humility to make more room.

Call us to a "generosity of grace."

Call us to be generous—not to a fault—but to a future
where all have a place and a home where they are deeply loved.

We pray this in the name of your Son,
Jesus, the Christ, your Love Incarnate. **Amen.**

Let this be a marker of assurance that we are moving in a faithful direction:

God is with us every step of our way toward the Love of Bethlehem.

Jesus is being born into our lives even now.

The Spirit is transforming us in this place.

(Sung)

**Once in royal David's city stood a lowly cattle shed,
where a mother laid her baby in a manger for his bed:
Mary was that mother mild; Jesus Christ, her little child.**

SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

ONE: May the peace of Christ be with you.

ALL: And also with you and all others!

*SONG OF PEACE

"Once in Royal David's City"

vs. 2, 3, 4

Once in Royal David's City

1 Once in ro - yal Da - vid's_ ci - ty stood a low - ly cat - tle_

2 He came down to earth_ from_ hea - ven who is God and Lord_ of_

3 Je - sus is our chil - dhood's pat - tern, day by day like us_ he_

4 And our eyes at last_ shall_ see him, through his own re - deem - ing_

shed, where a mo - ther laid_ her_ ba - by in a

all, and his shel - ter was_ a_ sta - ble, and his

grew; he was lit - tle, weak, and_ help - less, tears and

love; for that child, so dear_ and_ gen - tle, is our

man - ger for_ his_ bed: Ma - ry was that mo - ther

cra - dle was_ a_ stall: with the poor and meek and

smiles like us_ he_ knew: and he feels for all our

Lord in heaven a - bove: and he leads his chil - dren

mild, Je - sus Christ her lit - tle_ child.

low - ly lived on earth, our Sa - vior_ ho - ly.

sad - ness, and he shares in all_ our_ glad - ness.

on_ to the place where he_ has_ gone.

Text: Cecil F. Alexander (1818-1895)
Tune: Henry J. Gauntlett (1805-1876)



87 87 77
IRBY
www.hymnary.org/text/once_in_royal_dauids_city_stood_a_lowly

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A TIME WITH THE CHILDREN

(Children ages 4 through 1st grade may go to Awakening to Worship, our child-friendly worship time. Greeters at the back of the Sanctuary will go with children to Room 12 downstairs where parents may pick up their children following worship. Our Nursery welcomes young children and our ushers can assist families to the nursery located in the children's wing. Worship bags are available for children who stay in worship.)

Equipping

SONG TO REFLECT

“Breath of Heaven”

by Amy Grant

Praise Team

*I have travelled many moonless nights ~ Cold and weary with a baby inside
And I wonder what I've done ~ Holy Father, you have come
And chosen me now to carry your Son*

*I am waiting in a silent prayer ~ I am frightened by the load I bear
In a world as cold as stone ~ Must I walk this path alone?
Be with me now*

*Breath of Heaven ~ Hold me together ~ Be forever near me ~ Breath of Heaven
Breath of Heaven ~ Lighten my darkness ~ Pour over me your Holiness
For you are Holy ~ Breath of Heaven*

*Do you wonder as you watch my face? ~ If a wiser one should have had my place
But I offer all I am ~ For the mercy of your plan
Help me be strong ~ Help me be ~ Help me*

*Breath of Heaven ~ Hold me together ~ Be forever near me ~ Breath of Heaven
Breath of Heaven ~ Lighten my darkness ~ Pour over me your Holiness
For you are Holy ~ Breath of Heaven*

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Romans 13:8–11 (NRSVue)

Gay Lee Ludwig-Bonney

Owe no one anything, except to love one another, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. The commandments, “You shall not commit adultery; you shall not murder; you shall not steal; you shall not covet,” and any other commandment, are summed up in this word, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law. Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is already the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; the night is far gone; the day is near.

SONG TO REFLECT

“Joseph’s Lullaby”

by Mercy Me

*Go to sleep my Son ~ This manger for your bed
You have a long road before you ~ Rest your little head*

*Can you feel the weight of your glory? ~ Do you understand the price?
Or does the Father guard your heart for now ~ So you can sleep tonight?*

*Go to sleep my Son ~ Go and chase your dreams
This world can wait for one more moment ~ Go and sleep in peace
I believe the glory of Heaven ~ Is lying in my arms tonight
But Lord, I ask that he for just this moment ~ Simply be my child*

*Go to sleep my Son ~ Baby, close your eyes
Soon enough you'll save the day ~ But for now, dear Child of mine
Oh, my Jesus ~ Sleep tight*

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Luke 2:1–14 (NRSVue)

In those days a decree went out from Caesar 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 in the guest room.

Now in that same 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 God favors!”

Holy Wisdom, Holy Words

Thanks be to God!

SERMON

“Humble Beginnings”

Rev. Karen Wright

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Join in singing “Lead Me, Guide Me” before prayer concerns are raised, and again following the Lord’s Prayer.

*Oh, Rose of Bethlehem. How lovely, pure, and sweet.
Born to glorify the Father. Born to wear the thorns for me.
There's a Rose in Bethlehem with a beauty quite divine
Perfect in this world of sin on this silent, holy night.*

*Oh, Rose of Bethlehem. How lovely, pure and sweet.
Born to glorify the Father. Born to wear the thorns for me.*

DOXOLOGY

(Sung to the tune of "Away in a Manger")

**Praise God for these gifts that we offer today
and bless them for good in the world, this we pray.
Praise Jesus, the Christ-Child, our Hope and our Stay,
the Spirit, our Keeper, our Guide on the Way.**

Sending

CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

Rev. Karen Wright

(Sung)

**O holy child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray;
cast out our fear and draw us near; 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!**

*SONG TO SEND

"Light of the World"

by Lauren Daigle

Praise Team/All

*The world waits for a miracle ~ The heart longs for a little bit of hope
Oh come, oh come, Emmanuel
A child prays for peace on Earth ~ And she's calling out from a sea of hurt
Oh come, oh come, Emmanuel*

*And can you hear the angels singing
Glory to the light of the world (Repeat)
is here*

*The drought breaks with the tears of a mother ~ A baby's cry is the sound of love
Come down, come down, Emmanuel
He is the song for the suffering ~ He is Messiah, the Prince of Peace has come
He has come, Emmanuel*

Glory to the light of the world (Repeat)

*For all who wait ~ For all who hunger
For all who've prayed ~ For all who wonder
Behold your King ~ Behold Messiah
Emmanuel, Emmanuel
Glory to the light of the world (3X)*

*The world waits for the miracle ~ The heart longs for a little bit of hope
Oh come, oh come, Emmanuel*

**Stand in body or spirit*

GOD'S PEACE TO YOU

Songs of the season Swinging & Singing into Christmas

Praise Team

Carrie DeVries ~ director, vocals, and keys
Michelle Gailliez-Frye, Donna Goeckler, and Jami Howe ~ vocals
Darryl Prater ~ trumpet and vocals ~ Stephen Wing ~ guitar and vocals
Miles McDonald ~ acoustic bass
Jill Endaya-Allen ~ drum set and additional percussion

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