

# THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD- CHRISTMAS EVE

## CHRISTMAS EVE LITANY AND PROCESSIONAL HYMN

*The service will begin from the sanctuary entryway*

Minister: Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you;

**Congregation: He is Christ the Lord.**

M: Let us worship Christ, the Word who became flesh.

**C: Amen and hallelujah!**

M: For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. (Isaiah 9:6-7)

**C: (sung) Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King;  
Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!"  
Joyful, all you nations rise, Join the triumph of the skies;  
With th' angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"  
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!" (CW 61)**

M: Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel—which means, "God with us." Shout aloud and sing for joy, for great is the Holy One of Israel among you. (Isaiah 7:14, 12:6, Matthew 1:23)

**C: (sung) Christ, by highest heav'n adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord,  
Late in time behold him come, Offspring of a virgin's womb.  
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see, Hail th' incarnate Deity!  
Pleased as man with us to dwell, Jesus, our Immanuel!  
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!" (CW 61)**

M: But for you who revere my name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings. To all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God – children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God. (Malachi 4:2, John 1:12-13)

**C: (sung) Hail, the heav’nly 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 we no more may die,  
Born to raise us from the earth, Born to give us second birth.  
Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King!” (CW 61)**

*Please stand*

## **INVOCATION**

M: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C: Amen.**

## **CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION**

M: On this holy night of festive joy we remember our deep spiritual need, which compelled the Father to send His Son. Because of our sins, we need the Savior, the One promised by God. We are sinful flesh born of sinful flesh. Out of our sinful hearts come evil thoughts, words and actions.

**C: I confess my personal sins against you, the holy God. I have sinned in what I have done and in what I have left undone. I deserve the full force of your wrath. I am deeply sorry for my sins.**

M: Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy for all the people. “Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you.” The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay always did what is right and never left anything undone. He bore the full force of God’s wrath on the cross instead of us. He shed his holy blood to cover all your sins. He rose from the dead because God has declared you “not guilty” of sin. You have peace with God through your Lord Jesus. As a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C: Glory to God in the highest!**

*Please be seated*

**HYMN**

**From Heaven Above to Earth I Come| CW 38 vs. 3-4,8,13**

**3 “This is the Christ, our God most high, Who hears your sad and bitter cry;  
He will himself your Savior be From all your sins to set you free.”**

**4 “He will on you the gifts bestow Prepared by God for all below,  
That in his kingdom, bright and fair, You may with us his glory share.”**

**8 Welcome to earth, O noble Guest, Through whom the sinful world is blest!  
You came to share my misery That you might share your joy with me.**

**13 Ah, dearest Jesus, holy Child, Prepare a bed, soft, undefiled  
Within my heart, made clean and new, A quiet chamber kept for you.**



The portion of the service presented by the children is taken from *A “Sola” Christmas* – *A Children’s Christmas Service Focusing on the “Solas” of the Reformation* by Matthew Manthe

**Recitation Grades 5-8**

“‘The days are coming,’ declares the LORD, ‘when I will fulfill the good promise I made to the people of Israel and Judah. In those days and at that time I will make a righteous Branch sprout from David’s line; he will do what is just and right in the land. In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. This is the name by which it will be called: The LORD Our Righteous Savior.’” (Jeremiah 33:14-16)

## CHILDREN'S HYMN

## O Come, Emmanuel

### *Refrain*

*O come, O come, Emmanuel O come, O come, Emmanuel*

*O come, O come, Emmanuel O come, O come, Emmanuel*

The prophets told us long ago  
a star would come from Jacob.  
This child would be born in Bethlehem,  
and he would come to save us.

### *Refrain*

The angel said to Mary  
that she would have a Son.  
His name would be called Emmanuel,  
God's gift from heav'n sent down.

### *Refrain*

### **Narration**

Thousands of years after making the first promise of a Savior, God finally sent the Messiah. Listen again to those familiar words proclaiming Jesus' birth:

### **Recitation: Grades 3-4**

"In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) And everyone went to his own town to register.

So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child.

While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn". (Luke 2:1-7)

### **Narration**

Matthew, the author of the first book of the Bible's New Testament, records the angel's instructions to Joseph concerning Mary's child:

### **Recitation Grades 5-8**

"You are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."  
(Matthew 1:21)

### **Narration**

We have no part in saving ourselves. The Bible tells us we are saved through Christ alone. So we give God alone all the glory in thankfulness for sending his Son to save us. Yes, today we see a humble baby in a manger; but the apostle Paul reminds us in his letter to the Philippians of Jesus' honored place:

### **Recitation Grades 5-8**

God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.  
(Philippians 2:9-11)

### **Narration**

The angels gave us a good example when they praised God after telling the shepherds the news of Jesus' birth.

### **Recitation Grades 1-2**

And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

### **Recitation all children**

Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests."  
(Luke 2:8-14)

1 Angels we have heard on high,  
Sweetly singing o'er the plains,  
And the mountains in reply,  
Echoing their joyous strains.

*Refrain:*

Gloria in excelsis Deo; Gloria in excelsis Deo.

2 Shepherds, why this jubilee?  
Why your joyous strains prolong?  
What the gladsome tidings be  
Which inspire your heav'nly song?

*Refrain*

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

*Refrain*



**MEDITATION AND SCRIPTURE LESSON**  
**“God has kept His Word”**

*Micah 5:2-5*  
*(pew Bible page1445)*

**HYMN**

**O Little Town of Bethlehem|65**

**1 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.**

**2 For Christ is born of Mary, And, gathered all above,  
While mortals sleep, The angels keep Their watch of wond’ring love.  
O morning stars, together Proclaim the holy birth,  
And praises sing To God the King And peace to all the earth.**

**3 How silently, how silently The wondrous gift is giv’n!  
So God imparts To human hearts The blessings of his heav’n.  
No ear may hear his coming, But in this world of sin  
Where meek souls will Receive him still, The dear Christ enters in.**

**4 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;  
Oh, come to us, Abide with us, Our Lord Immanuel!**



MEDITATION AND SCRIPTURE LESSON

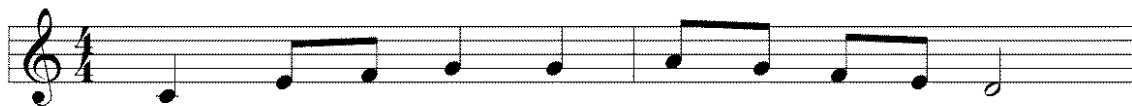
*"God's saving Grace changes Us"*

*Titus 2:11-14*

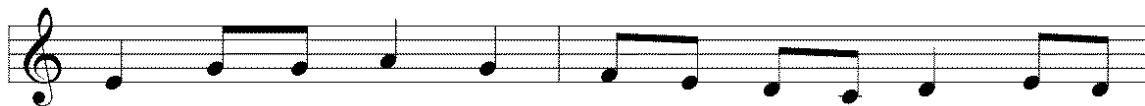
*(pew Bible page1853)*

HYMN

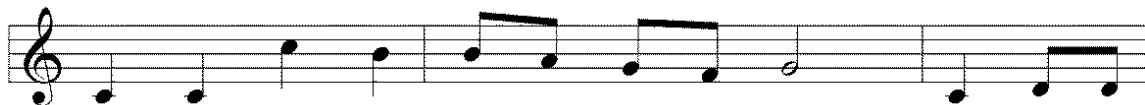
Peace Came to Earth|707



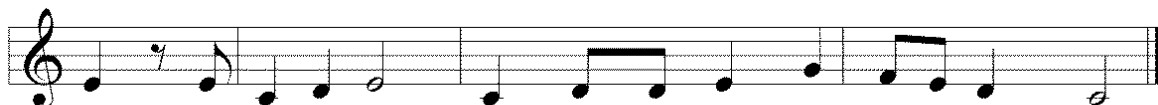
1 Peace came to earth at last that cho - sen night  
 2 And who could be the same for hav - ing held  
 3 You show the Fa - ther none has ev - er seen,  
 4 How else could I have known you, O my God!



When an - gels clove the sky with song and light And  
 The in - fant in their arms and lat - er felt The  
 In flesh and blood you bore our griefs and pain, In  
 How else could I have loved you, O my God! How



God em - bod - ied love and sheathed his might— Who could but  
 wound-ed hands and side, all doubts dis - pelled— Who could but  
 bread and wine you vis - it us a - gain— Who could but  
 else could I em - brace you, O my God! Who could but



gasp: Im - man - u - el! Who could but sing: Im - man - u - el!  
 sigh: Im - man - u - el! Who could but shout: Im - man - u - el!  
 see: Im - man - u - el! Who could but thrill: Im - man - u - el!  
 pray: Im - man - u - el! Who could but praise: Im - man - u - el!



**MEDITATION AND SCRIPTURE LESSON**  
**“We ponder; We praise”**

**Luke 2:15-20**  
*(pew Bible page1591)*

**HYMN**

**What Child Is This|67**

**1** What child is this who, laid to rest,  
On Mary’s lap is sleeping?  
Whom angels greet With anthems sweet  
While shepherds watch are keeping?  
This, this is Christ the King,  
Whom shepherds guard and angels sing.  
Haste, haste to bring him laud,  
The babe, the Son of Mary!

**2** Why lies he in such mean estate  
Where oxen now are feeding?  
Good Christians, fear; For sinners here  
The silent Word is pleading.  
Nails, spear shall pierce him through;  
The cross he’ll bear for me, for you.  
Hail, hail the Word made flesh,  
The babe, the Son of Mary!

**3** So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh;  
Come, peasant, king, to own him.  
The King of kings Salvation brings;  
Let loving hearts enthrone him.  
Raise, raise the song on high;  
The virgin sings her lullaby.  
Joy, joy, for Christ is born,  
The babe, the Son of Mary!

**MEDITATION AND SCRIPTURE LESSON**  
**“We anticipate”**

**Revelation 21:1-7**  
*(pew Bible page1937)*

**HYMN**

**Joy to the World|62**

**1** Joy to the world, the Lord is come!  
Let earth receive her King;  
Let ev’ry 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.

**2 Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!  
Let all their songs employ,  
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains  
Repeat the sounding joy,  
Repeat the sounding joy,  
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.**

**3 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.**

**4 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.**

## **OFFERING**

*Our guests are not expected to participate in this offering. Peace members have committed themselves to supporting this ministry with their time, talents and treasure.*

*Please stand when presider indicates*

## **PRAYER FOR CHRISTMAS EVE**

**M:** Oh gracious and almighty Father, we praise you that you kept your ancient promises by sending your everlasting Son in human flesh.

**C:** **On this holy night, receive our thanks and devotion, our songs and prayers.**

**M:** You sent Jesus as a lowly child to demonstrate your concern for all, the weak and lonely, the troubled and frightened, the timid and helpless. No one is overlooked by your ever-seeking eyes. No one is excluded from your upholding arms. No one is denied the comfort and help of your outstretched hand.

**C: Bless us with a childlike faith in the divine assurance that you love and care for us always.**

M: You sent Jesus as the Savior of the world to deliver all from the curse of sin, the power of death, and the torment of hell. He took our place. He was born under the law to set us free. He became the innocent lamb of sacrifice. He came to die and rise again in order that we might live eternally. Firmly implant this good news in our hearts, and fill us with an eager desire to spread the Word concerning what we have heard tonight.

**C: May all who hear the message, in every nation under heaven, be amazed and believe what is told them about this child.**

M: You sent Jesus as the Light of the world to drive out all darkness that would rob us of the full life that you intend for us. May the “joy that will be for all people” be our joy. May the “peace on earth to all on whom his favor rests” be our peace. May the treasure that Mary pondered in her heart be our treasure.

**C: For today in the town of David, a Savior has been born to us. He is Christ, the Lord. Amen.**

## **HYMN**

## **The Lord's Prayer** (tune *Away in a Manger*)

**Our Father in heaven, all praise to your name!  
Your kingdom among us, your will done the same  
By mortals and angels. Come, Lord, reign alone;  
Oh, hear us and bless us from heaven's high throne.**

**The bread that we yearn for provide us each day;  
As we forgive others, our sins take away;  
In times of temptation, to lead us be near;  
From evil deliver your children most dear.**

**For yours is the kingdom; o'er all things you reign.  
And yours is the power; all things you maintain.  
To you be the glory, resounding again  
From all of creation, forever! Amen.**

M: Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true Light.  
Grant that as we have known on earth the wonder of that Light, we may also behold  
Him in all glory in the life to come; through your only Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who  
lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: **Amen.**

## **BLESSING**

M: The Lord bless you and keep you.  
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.  
The Lord look on you with favor and give you peace.

C: **Amen.**

*Please be seated*

## **CLOSING HYMN**

**Silent Night|60**

**1 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.**

**2 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!**

**3 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.**