



# Gloria in Excelsis!

Christmas Eve

2022



# A Candlelight Service of Lessons and Carols with Holy Communion

The Eve of the Nativity: Christmas Eve 2022  
8:30 p.m.

\* stand as you are able

## The Entrance

**Voluntary**

*Ave Maria*

*Giulio Caccini-Vladimir Vavilov  
arranged, Matthew McMahan*

**Words of Welcome**

Rev. Tully M. Fletcher IV and Rev. Emily Wilmesherr

**Lighting of the Christ Candle**

Hikie III, Hikie IV, Mary Ann, and Chet Allen

**All: Love is a flame that burns in our heart, Jesus has come and will never  
depart.**

*The Christ Candle is lit.*

**When God is a child, there's joy in our song.**

**The last shall be first and the weak shall be strong.**

**And none shall be afraid.**

*Scripture Reading and Prayer*

**\*Processional Carol** (*All*)

*O Come, All Ye Faithful*

*ADESTE FIDELIS*  
*arranged, David Willcocks*

1. **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!**  
*(Refrain) O come, let us adore Him,*  
*O come, let us adore Him,*  
*O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!*
2. **God of God,**  
**Light of light,**  
**Lo! He abhors not the virgin's womb;**  
**Very God,**  
**Begotten, not created.**  
*(Refrain)*
3. **Sing, choirs of angels,**  
**Sing in exultation,**  
**Sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above;**  
**Glory to God**  
**In the highest:**  
*(Refrain)*
4. **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)*

*[John Francis Wade, translated,  
Frederick Oakeley]*

**\*Bidding Prayer and Our Lord's Prayer**

Rev. Emily Wilmesherr

**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 debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.**

# The Lessons and Carols

## The First Lesson

Luke 1:5-9;11-17

*The birth of John the Baptist is foretold.*

Reader: Reverend Vernon Gramling

## Carol (choir)

*The Prophecy of Zechariah*

*Kenneth Lowenberg*

Now the time came, and Elizabeth bore a son, and he was named John. Then his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit, and spoke this prophecy: “And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways, to give knowledge of salvation to his people by the forgiveness of their sins. By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us, to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.” The child grew and became strong in spirit, and he was in the wilderness until the day he appeared publicly to Israel.

*[text: Luke 1:57,60,63b,67,76-79]*

## The Second Lesson

Isaiah 9:2-7

*Christ's birth and kingdom are foretold by Isaiah.*

Reader: Anne Fassoux

## Carol (choir)

*Climb to the Top of the Highest Mountain*

*Carolyn Jennings*

Climb to the top of the highest mountain,  
Joyous tidings proclaim to the world,  
Lift up your voice, shout the good news:  
Behold, your Lord comes to you.

He who made the stars in the heaven,  
He who fashioned the earth and the sea,  
From time eternal he was God,  
The Alpha and Omega: Behold your Lord!

He will feed his flock like a shepherd,  
He will carry the lambs in his arms,  
He will ever keep them safe from harm.  
Behold, your Lord comes to you.

He will come in power and glory,  
He will rule with mercy and truth,  
Hope of all the nations,  
The Light of the world.

He will love the little children,  
He will hold them in his arms.  
Love him and trust him as a child.  
Behold, your Lord comes to you.

*[Carolyn Jennings, adapted from Isaiah 40]*

**The Third Lesson**

Luke 1:26-35,38

*The angel Gabriel salutes the Blessed Virgin Mary.*

Reader: Ron Warren

**Carol (choir)**

*Mary's Magnificat*

*Andrew Carter*

Softly a light is stealing  
Sweetly a maiden sings,  
Ever wakeful, ever wistful.  
Watching faithfully, thankfully,  
Tenderly her King of kings.

Mary her song to Jesus  
Softly, serenely sings:  
"I will love you, I will serve you,  
May my lullaby glorify,  
Magnify my King of kings."

My soul doth magnify the LORD:  
And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior.  
*[Andrew Carter, Luke 1]*

**The Fourth Lesson**

Luke 2:1-7

*St. Luke tells of the birth of Jesus.*

Reader: Jan Bedol

**Carol (choir)**

*Bethlehem Carol*

*Shawn Charton*

Do you sleep, Bethlehem? Do you sleep through the night while the Savior is born? Do you sleep while the star with its tail so bright sheds its rays o'er the manger as a guiding light? Sleep, Bethlehem, sleep. As you sleep, Bethlehem, do you dream of peace? Do you dream of his birth? Do you dream of the shepherds as they watch their sheep? Do you dream of good tidings that the angels speak? Dream, Bethlehem, dream. Go to sleep, baby Jesus, Go to sleep, little Lamb, and God rest you well. You will be our salvation and the Son of Man: You will free God's creation from the bonds of sin. Sleep, Bethlehem. Dream, little Lamb. Sleep, Jesus, sleep.

*[Shawn E. Sharton]*

**Carol (All)**

*Once in Royal David's City*

*IRBY*

*arranged, David Willcocks*

*(Congregation will stand and sing stanzas 3 & 4)*

- 1. **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.**
- 2. **He came down to earth from heaven  
Who is God and LORD of all,  
And his shelter was a stable,  
And his cradle was a stall;  
With the poor, and mean, and lowly,  
Lived on earth, our Savior holy.**

- \*3. **And our eyes at last shall see Him  
Through His own redeeming love,  
For that child, so dear and gentle  
Is our Lord in heav'n above;  
And He leads His children on  
To the place where He is gone.**
- \*4. **Not in that poor lowly stable,  
With the oxen standing by,  
We shall see Him, but in heaven,  
Set at God's right hand on high;  
When like stars His children crowned  
All in white shall wait around.**

*[C. F. Alexander]*

**The Fifth Lesson**

Matthew 1:18-23

*St. Matthew tells of the birth of Jesus.*

Reader: Dudley Larus

**Carol (choir)**

*Away in a Manger*

*CRADLE SONG  
arranged, Mack Wilberg*

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.

The cattle are lowing  
the Baby awakes,  
But little Lord Jesus,  
no crying He makes.  
I love Thee, Lord Jesus,  
look down from the sky,  
And stay by my cradle  
'til morning is nigh.

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

*[Stanzas 1 and 2, "Little Children's Book for Schools and Families";  
stanza 3, "Gabriel's Vineyard Songs"]*

**The Sixth Lesson**

Luke 2:8-16

*The shepherds go to the manger.*

Reader: Reverend Tully M. Fletcher IV

**Carol (choir)**

*What is This Lovely Fragrance?*

*Old French carol  
arranged, Healey Willan*

What is this lovely fragrance wafting  
Like to the scents of flowers in spring!  
Shepherds, O tell us, whence such beauty,  
Hear you not heavenly caroling?

What is this light so fair, so tender  
Breaking upon our wandering eyes?  
Never the Morning Star so radiant  
Followed its course o'er eastern skies.

Shepherds, O haste with eager footsteps,  
Seek the Savior, born today.  
Low at His feet we lay our treasure,  
Heart's adoration, love for aye.

*[French poem, translated by YSOBEL]*

**The Seventh Lesson**

John 1:1-14

*St. John unfolds the great mystery of the Incarnation.*

Reader: Reverend Emily Wilmesherr

**Carol** (choir)

*Arise, Your Light Has Come!*

*David Danner*

*(incorporating the tune WACHET AUF, composed by Philipp Nicolai)*

Awake, my spirit, awake, lute and harp;  
I will awake at the dawn of day.  
I will confess You, O Lord among the nations.  
I will raise a psalm to You, for Your love,  
Your love is wide as the heavens,  
And Your truth reaches to the skies!

Wake, awake, for night is flying,  
The watchmen on the heights are crying;  
Awake, Jerusalem at last.  
Midnight hears the welcome voices,  
And at the thrilling cry rejoices:  
“Come forth, you maidens! Night is past.

The bridegroom comes, Awake;  
Your lamps with gladness take!” *Alleluia!*  
Prepare yourselves to meet the Lord,  
Whose light has stirred the waiting guard.

Now let all the heavens adore You,  
And saints and angels sing before You.  
The harps and cymbals all unite.  
Of one pearl each shining portal,  
Where, dwelling with the choir immortal  
We gather round Your dazzling light.

No eye has seen, nor ear  
Has yet been trained to hear.  
What joy is ours!  
Crescendos rise;  
Your halls resound:  
Hosannas blend in cosmic sound.

Arise, O Jerusalem!  
Arise, clothed in light!  
Your light has come,  
And the glory of God upon your hearts will shine.  
*Alleluia!*

*[David Danner, Philipp Nicolai]*

**Ritual of Friendship/Presentation of the Offering**

Rev. Wilmesherr

*(Please sign and pass the Ritual of Friendship Register at this time so that we might know your concerns, and keep you informed about the life and ministry of this community of faith.)*

*Deacons’ Fund Offering—On communion occasions we collect an offering for a fund available to help members of our church family in times of financial crisis. Envelopes are available in the pew pockets or scan the QR Code to give online.*





# The Sacrament of Holy Communion

## The Invitation to the Lord's Table

Rev. Fletcher

## Prayer of Thanksgiving

Rev. Wilmesherr

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

**People: We lift them up unto the Lord.**

Pastor: Let us give thanks to God, for God is gracious.

**People: It is right to give thanks, for God's love is everlasting.**

Pastor: All honor and praise and glory be to God.

**People: The Lord's name be praised forever.**

## Breaking the Bread and Pouring the Cup

Rev. Fletcher and Rev. Wilmesherr

## \*The Communion of the People

*(Exit your pew to the right. The ushers will direct you, if you wish, to the front of the church where you may take the elements of communion, and return to your pew from the opposite side.  
In an effort to make Communion safe and available to all, the bread served is free of gluten, dairy, tree nuts, peanuts, soy, corn, and casein. Eggs are used.)*

## Communion Carols (All)

*What Child is This?*

*GREENSLEEVES*

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <p>1. <b>What Child is this, Who laid to rest,<br/>On Mary's lap is sleeping?<br/>Whom angels greet with anthems sweet<br/>While shepherds watch are keeping?<br/>(Refrain)</b></p> | <p>2. <b>Why lies he in such mean estate<br/>Where ox and ass are feeding?<br/>Good Christians fear, for sinners here<br/>The silent word is pleading.<br/>(Refrain)</b></p> |
|---|--|

*(Refrain): This, this is Christ the King,  
Whom shepherds guard and angels sing;  
Haste, haste to bring Him laud,  
The Babe, the Son of Mary.*

*[William Chatterton Dix]*

1. **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,  
On a cold winter's night that was so deep:  
(Refrain): *Nowell, nowell, nowell, nowell:*  
*Born is the King of Israel.***
  
2. **They looked up and saw a star,  
Shining in the east beyond them far;  
And to the earth it gave great light,  
And so it continued both day and night.  
(Refrain)**
  
3. **Then let us all with one accord  
Sing praises to our Heav'nly Lord,  
That hath made heav'n and earth of naught,  
And with His blood our lives hath bought:  
(Refrain)**

*[English carol, 17<sup>th</sup> century]*

**Carol (Choir)**

*A Christmas Blessing*

*Philip Stopford*

May the joy of the angels, the gladness of the shepherds, the worship of the wise men, and the peace of the Christ Child be yours this Christmas. May Christ, who, by His incarnation gathered into one, all things earthly, all things heavenly, fill you with joy and peace. And the blessing of God the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit be with you and remain with you always. *Amen.*

*[Book of Common Prayer, Church of Ireland]*

## The Service of Light

### Passing the Light of Christ

Rev. Fletcher

In the fullness of time, at the turning point of the ages, the darkness of the night was shattered by the glory of angels proclaiming the birth of the long-awaited Christ of God. “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among all with whom God is pleased.”

When the child born that night had begun his saving ministry, he declared, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.” And he says to us, “You are the light of the world. Let your light so shine before others, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.”

The light of Christ shines in the darkness—and the darkness shall never put it out!

*(Following the choral introduction, sung in German, the congregation will join in singing all four stanzas. We will light our candles from the flame of the Christ Candle, **taking care to not tilt your lit candle, only tilting your unlit candle for lighting.** Carefully raise and lower your lit candle as the Pastor’s candles are raised and lowered, and extinguish your candle following the unison prayer.)*

### Carol (All)

### *Silent Night, Holy Night*

### *STILLE NACHT*

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|--|---|
| <p>1. <b>Silent night, holy night!</b><br/>All is calm, all is bright,<br/>Round yon virgin, mother and child!<br/>Holy Infant, so tender and mild,<br/>Sleep in heavenly peace,<br/>Sleep in heavenly peace.</p>    | <p>3. <b>Silent night, holy night!</b><br/>Son of God, love’s pure light.<br/>Radiant beams from Thy holy face,<br/>With the dawn of redeeming grace,<br/>Jesus, Lord at Thy birth,<br/>Jesus, Lord at Thy birth.</p> |
| <p>2. <b>Silent night, holy night!</b><br/>Shepherds quake at the sight,<br/>Glories stream from heaven afar,<br/>Heavenly hosts sing, “Alleluia:<br/>Christ the Savior is born,<br/>Christ the Savior is born.”</p> | <p>4. <b>Silent night, holy night!</b><br/>Wondrous star, lend thy light;<br/>With the angles let us sing<br/>Alleluia to our King;<br/>Christ the Savior is born,<br/>Christ the Savior is born.</p>                 |

*[Joseph Mohr]*

### Prayer for Christmastide (*in unison*)

Rev. Fletcher

**O Great God: as you came in the stillness of night, enter our lives this night. Overcome our darkness with the light of Christ’s presence, so that we may clearly see the way to walk, the truth to speak, and the life to live for Him. Give us, O God, such love and wonder, that with shepherds, angels and pilgrims unknown, we may come to adore the Holy Child, the promised King; and with our gifts worship Him, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.**

# The Departing

**\*Processional Carol** (*All*) *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*

*MENDELSSOHN*

1. **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 th' angelic host proclaim,  
Christ is born in Bethlehem.  
Hark! the herald-angels sing  
Glory to the newborn King.**
2. **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 Diety!  
Pleased as God with us to dwell,  
Jesus, our Emmanuel.  
Hark! the herald-angels sing  
Glory to the newborn King.**
3. **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 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.**

*[Charles Wesley]*

**\*Blessing and Benediction**

Rev. Fletcher and Rev. Wilmesherr

**Organ Voluntary**

*In Dulci Jubilo (BWV 729)  
(In Sweetest Joy)*

*J. S. Bach*



## **Memorial Flowers**

The flowers in the sanctuary today are given to the glory of God  
in loving memory of

*Charlie Orth*

by

Elizabeth Orth & his family

## Gifts of Music

*The Prophecy of Zechariah*, composed by Kenneth Lowenberg  
is given to the Glory of God  
and in honor of  
*Charles Darnell*  
by  
Cheryl Darnell



*Away in a Manger*, arranged by Mack Wilberg  
is given to the Glory of God  
and in loving memory of  
*Steve and Doris Ortlip*  
by  
Dona Drake Cucich



*Arise, Your Light Has Come*, composed by David Danner  
is given to the Glory of God  
in loving memory of  
*Gene M. Drake*  
by  
Dona Drake Cucich

*A Christmas Blessing*, composed by Philip Stopford  
is given to the Glory of God  
and in honor of  
*Angela Brown*  
by  
Michael Brown

**Participants in tonight's service:**

Rev. Tully M. Fletcher IV, *Associate Pastor for Youth & Congregational Transformation*  
Rev. Emily Wilmesherr, *Associate Pastor for Inter-generational & Caring Ministries*

*Readers:*

Rev. Vernon Gramling, *Parish Associate*  
Anne Fassoux, *Elder, Chair-elect, Engage Team*  
Ron Warren, *President of DPC Chancel Choir*  
Jan Bedol, *Elder, Chair, Engage Team*  
Dudley Larus, *Elder, Clerk of Session*  
Rev. Tully Fletcher, *Associate Pastor*  
Rev. Emily Wilmesherr, *Associate Pastor*

*Musicians:*

The Chancel Choir of Decatur Presbyterian Church  
Matthew McMahan, *Choirmaster and Organist*  
Ginny Corradino, *soprano*

Jodi Allen, *trumpet*  
Jeff Harper, *trumpet*  
Thomas Peacock, *trombone*  
Robert Coulter, *bass trombone*  
Barbara Cook, *oboe*  
Lollie Newsome, *flute*

*Cover Photo by Les Cook*



Our Mission Statement  
*The Mission of the Decatur Presbyterian Church community  
is to share Jesus Christ's love for the world.*

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DPC's Bicentennial Goal  
*Every child of God – belonging, engaging, being transformed*

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The Church Staff

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