



Christmas Eve

Story, Music, Wine, Bread

St. John's Episcopal Church

December 24, 2022

Powell, WY

Welcome

We are so happy you are with us. Please add your voice and heart to the service. Help others find a place near you and greet the person next to you as we prepare to worship together. Please stand and sit as you are comfortable.

Ministers

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| Altar Guild | Jane Woods |
| Sound | Steve Nickles |
| Greeters | Susan McEvoy Diana Anderson |
| Worship Leader | Laura Greathouse |
| Musicians | Devin Matthews Josey Nickles Tom and Kathy Walker |
| Readers | Dylan McEvoy Augusta Larsen Natalie Dillivan Charlie Larsen Grant Dillivan |
| Intercessor | Charlotte Patrick |
| Presider | Megan Nickles |
| Communion Servers | Barb Morales Jim Morales |
| Communion Bread | Susan McEvoy |

Christmastide

The season of Christmas begins on December 24 at sunset, the beginning of the day in the Hebrew tradition. This is why churches generally have evening or midnight services for Christmas Eve. Christmas itself lasts **twelve days**.

Twelve Days of Christmas – yep, that is what the song is about. Amazon.com and other giant retailers have encouraged an erroneous assumption that the Twelve Days end on Christmas Day and must therefore begin on December 14. Not so. The Twelve Days do not come before Christmas day, they begin *on* Christmas Day, and end on January 5.

During the Middle Ages, Christmastide was a time of continuous feasting and merriment, which climaxed on the **Twelfth Night** with major festivities. These were not subdued, sacred events. They were hugely raucous and full of drinking and mischief-making.

Indeed, Shakespeare’s popular comedy *Twelfth Night or What You Will* was written for such a celebration. For more juicy tidbits about this play and its relationship to Christmastide see: <https://www.bard.org/news/what-the-heck-is-a-twelfth-night/>

Back to the song. You may have seen the popular theory that’s made the internet rounds that the lyrics to “The 12 Days of Christmas” are coded references to Christianity. It posits that the song was written to help Christians learn and pass on the tenets of their faith while avoiding persecution. Again, not so. Check out what Snopes has to say: <https://www.snopes.com/fact-check/twelve-days-christmas/>

Christmastide is twelve days in which to celebrate, perhaps more reflectively than in ages past, the great gift of God that comes to us in the sweet, beguiling form of an infant. May you relish these days of astonishment with food, music, and joyous merriment.

Epiphanytide

The coming of the Magi is celebrated on the Feast of the Epiphany, January 6, every year. That is why you won’t hear anything about the Three Kings during this service. This year, the season of Epiphany lasts seven Sundays until Lent begins.

Prelude "O Holy Night," Rafael Scarfullery, arr.

Welcome

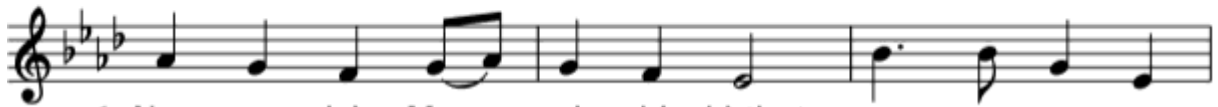
Hymn



1. An - gels, from the realms of glo - ry, Wing your flight o'er
2. Shep-herds, in the fields a - bid - ing, Watch-ing o'er your
3. Sag - es, leave your con - tem-pla-tions, Bright-er vi - sions
4. Saints be - fore the al - tar bend-ing, Watch - ing long in
5. All cre - a - tion, join in prais-ing God, the Fa - ther,



1. all the earth; Ye who sang cre - a - tion's sto - ry,
2. flocks by night, God on earth is now re - sid - ing;
3. beam a - far; Seek the great De - sire of Na - tions,
4. hope and fear, Sud - den - ly the Lord, de - scend - ing,
5. Spir - it, Son, Ev - er - more your voic - es rais - ing,



1. Now pro - claim Mes - si - ah's birth:
2. Yon - der shines the in - fant light:
3. Ye have seen his na - tal star: } Come and wor - ship,
4. In his tem - ple shall ap - pear: }
5. To the e - ter - nal Three - in - One: }



1-5. come and wor - ship, Wor - ship Christ, the new - born King.

Text: 87 87 87; verses 1-3, James Montgomery, 1771-1854; verse 4, *Christmas Box*, 1825; verse 5, *Salisbury Hymn Book*, 1857. Music: Henry T. Smart, 1813-1879.

Gather

Living God, on this holy night we gather—
to sing with angels, rejoicing in your work;
to wait with Joseph, trusting in your promise;
to sit with Mary, cradling your love,
to stand with shepherds, amazed at your glory,
May the good news of this night inspire us
to tell the world of our great joy:
for to us is born a Savior,
the Messiah, the Lord.
Glory and praise to you forever!
Amen.

THE STORY

Part 1

Music “In the Bleak Midwinter,” text: Christina Georgina Rossetti.

Part 2

Music “The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came,” Translator: S. Baring-Gould,

Part 3

Music “Magnificat,” Todd Agnew/Christy Knockels.

Part 4

Music

We stand to sing

1. Once in roy - al Da - vid's cit - y stood a
2. He came down to earth from heav - en who is
3. Je - sus is our child - hood's pat - tern, day by
4. And our eyes at last shall see him, through his

low - ly cat - tle shed, where a moth - er laid her
God and Lord of all, and his shel - ter was a
day like us he grew; he was lit - tle, weak and
own re - deem - ing love, for that child so dear and

ba - by in a man - ger for his bed, Mar - y was that
sta - ble, and his cra - dle was a stall; with the poor, op -
help - less, tears and smiles like us he knew; and he feels for
gen - tle is our Lord in heav'n a - bove; and he leads his

moth - er mild, Je - sus Christ her lit - tle child.
pressed, and low - ly, lived on earth our Sav - ior ho - ly.
all our sad - ness, and he shares in all our glad - ness.
chil - dren on to the place where he is gone.

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Part 5

Music "Away in the Manger," attributed: Martin Luther.

Prayers

God of steadfast love,
we thank you in this joyful Christmastide
for all the blessings we enjoy:
the shelter of home and the comfort of family and friends;
the company of the faithful with whom we celebrate Christ's coming;
and for your love, which shines as a light in the darkness.
For these and many other blessings besides,
we offer our thanks and praise.

God of mercy,
in this holy season, there are people in need of your tender mercies:
we pray for those who are ill and for those who are recovering;
for those whose sadness is made heavier
by memories of Christmases past or by some present pain.

We pray for those who do not have enough:
enough food, enough money, enough companionship, enough hope.
Because there is not yet peace on earth, we pray for those in harm's way.
Protect them from war, violence, and cruel oppression.
For these and many other needs, we offer our intercessions .

God of hope,
through long ages, you have given to your people dreams
and a vision of the time when there will be no more war,
no more pain or sorrow, no more death.
We pray this day for the time to be fulfilled,
when we will be reconciled to one another, to all creation, to you.

Fill us with hope as we wait upon your coming realm.
Give us the will to work for justice and peace
and the courage to follow you into every place.
We thank you for dreamers and visionaries
who respond with imagination and joy
to what you are doing in the church and in the world.
We entrust ourselves and those we love to your care.
In Christ's name we pray.
Amen.

The Peace

The peace of Christ be always with you.

And also with you.

We may greet one another in the name of God.

Invitation to the Offertory

Rejoice! For I bring good news and great joy to all people:
today is born to you a Savior, Jesus Christ the Lord.

Music

“Wexford Carol,” trad.

Eucharist

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord, our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

In every time and in every place,
it is right that we should give you thanks and honor,
for you shelter your people from age to age.

You came to us as a brother and a friend,
in a likeness we could recognize as one of our own,
showing us the face of the Most High God.

Through the centuries,
your witnesses have taught and proclaimed your Word,
giving shape to the truth
that your promises are sure
and your presence everlasting.

In communion with all the saints,
with angels and shepherds,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Holy, Holy, Holy


The musical score is written on six staves in a 3/4 time signature with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The lyrics are: Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly, Lord, God of pow - er and might, heav - en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

Music: *Do This in Memory of Me*, David Haas, © 2003, GIA Publications, Inc.


Holy God, author of time,
one among us, breath of our bodies,
you are as close to us as skin and infinite as stars.
You came to us as Jesus of Nazareth,
child born in a cave, a carpenter and a rabbi,
who on the night he was betrayed,
took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying,
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying,
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people
for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Acclamation




Christ has died, Christ is ris - en.




Christ will come, Christ will come a - gain.

Text: ICEL, © 1973
Music: *Do This in Memory of Me*, David Haas, © 2003, GIA Publications, Inc.

Bless us with your presence,
and let your Holy Spirit infuse our hearts and minds with joy
so that we may live to praise you, O God,
holy Trinity, now and forever.



A - men, A - men, Al - le - lu - ia!



A - men, A - men!

Music: *Do This in Memory of Me*, David Haas, © 2003, GIA Publications, Inc.

Lord's Prayer

As our Savior taught us, we now pray.
Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your Name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial,
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and for ever.
Amen.

Breaking of the Bread

The leader breaks the consecrated bread.

Alleluia! He is born.

Christ the Lord is born this day.

The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us
full of grace and truth.

Invitation to Communion

The Gifts of God for the People of God.

Communion Music

“Sweet Little Jesus Boy/Come Children See Him/What child is this?” medley arr. Tom Walker.

Prayer of Thanks

We stand.

Let us pray.

God our Father,

in this night you have made known to us again

the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ:

confirm our faith

and fix our eyes on him

until the day dawns

and Christ the Morning Star

rises in our hearts.

To him be glory

both now and for ever.

Amen.

Hymn



1. Joy to the world! the Lord is come; Let earth re -
2. Joy to the world! the Sav - ior reigns; Let us our
3. He rules the world with truth and grace, And makes the



1. ceive her King; Let ev - ery heart pre - pare him
2. songs em - ploy; While fields and floods, rocks, hills and
3. na - tions prove The glo - ries of his right - eous -



1. room, And heav'n and na - ture sing, And heav'n and na - ture
2. plains Re - peat the sound - ing joy, Re - peat the sound - ing
3. ness, And won - ders of his love, And won - ders of his



1. sing, And heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.
2. joy, Re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
3. love, And won - ders, won - ders of his love.

Text: CM with repeats; based on Psalm 98; Isaac Watts, 1674–1748, alt. Music: T. Hawkes' *Collection of Tunes*, 1833; George Frideric Handel, 1685–1759; adapt. by Lowell Mason, 1792–1872, alt.

Blessing

The Lord look upon you with favor
and give you peace.
And may the blessing of God,
Parent, Child and Spirit,
be with you this night
and forever. **Amen.**

Sending

Go now, glorifying and praising God
for all you have heard and seen.
We go in peace to love and serve,
in the name of Christ. **Amen. Alleluia!**

Postlude

“Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas,” Ralph Blane /Hugh Martin.