

First St. John Lutheran Church

2471 Seaman Street - Toledo, Ohio 43605
Phone: 419-691-7222 - www.firststjohn.com
Rev. Jerald K. Rayl, Pastor

December 24, 2020

Christmas Eve

ORDER OF WORSHIP—(7:00 pm Live Stream)

Prelude by Dr. Anthony Pattin, FSJ Organist/Pianist

Ringing of the Bell

Gathering Song *“Joy to the World”*

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.

Joy to the earth, the Savor 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

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.

Invocation

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the
fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: **And also with you.**

Lighting the Christmas Candle

P: The four candles have now been lit. The four weeks of Advent
preparation have passed. This evening we light the center candle
on the wreath. The light it gives reminds us of the One who is the
True Light of the World, Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: **For unto us is born in the city of David a Savior who is Christ
the Lord.**

P: Jesus Christ is the Light of the world.

C: **The light no darkness can overcome.**

P: Stay with us Lord, for it is evening,

C: **and the day is almost over.**

*With every Christmas
we dream again,
we hope again,
we give thanks again...
for You, Lord Jesus.*

*And she brought forth her firstborn son,
and wrapped him in swaddling clothes,
and laid him in a manger;
because there was no room
for them in the inn.*

LUKE 2:7

P: Let your light scatter the darkness,

C: and illumine your church.

P: Tonight is the night of the Son's in-breaking! Come to his light!
Receive his light into your hearts! Celebrate his light and so live
forever in his glory! Rise, shine, for your light has come.

C: Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Praise Song "Light of the World (Sing Hallelujah)" Praise Team
(arr. By A. Bergthold & Team)

The Prayer of the Day

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Let us pray. Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with
the brightness of the true Light. Grant that here on earth we may
walk in the light of Jesus' presence and in the last day wake to the
brightness of his glory; 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.

Special Music "O Holy Night"
Bell Solo, Cheri Sergent

Children's Message Pastor Rayl

Hymn "Away in a Manger"

Away in a manger, no crib for his 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 you, Lord Jesus; look down from the sky
And stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.

The Christmas Gospel in Word and Song

Scripture Readings Isaiah 9:2, 6-7 & Luke 1:26-38

Special Music "Bethlehem" Music by John Rowley
Sung by Bill Hamilton, John Rowley,
Annette Slater, & Toni Wilbarger

Scripture Readings Philippians 2:5-11 & Luke 2:1-7

Special Music "What Child Is This" (traditional English folk melody)
Annette Slater & Toni Wilbarger

Scripture Readings Colossians 1:15-20 & Luke 2:8-14

Praise Song "Midnight Clear (Love Song)" (arr. C. Tomlin & team)
Praise Team

Special Music "Angels We Have Heard on High"
Bell Solo, Cheri Sergent

Scripture Readings Micah 5:2-5 & Luke 2:15-20

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

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 angelic hosts proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king!"

Christ, by highest heav'n adorned, Christ, the everlasting Lord,
Late in time behold him come, offspring of a virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the God-head see! Hail, incarnate deity!
Pleased as man with us to dwell, Jesus, or Emmanuel!
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king!"

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 each child of earth, born to give us second birth.
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king!"

Christmas Message Pastor Jerald K. Rayl

Message Hymn

O Come All Ye Faithful

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!

The highest, most holy, light of light eternal,
born of a virgin, a mortal he comes;
Son of the Father now in flesh appearing!
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

The Offering

Musical Offertory “*Fantasy on Christmas Carols*” arr. by APP
Dr. Anthony Pattin

Intercessory Prayer (Each petition concludes with the following:)

P: Hear us good Lord.

C: Your mercy is great.

The Lord’s Prayer

P: Remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**C: 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 trespasses,

as we forgive those who trespass against us;

And lead us not into temptation,

but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power,

and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

P: Let us pray. Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true light. Grant that here on earth we may walk in the light of Jesus’ presence and in the last day wake to the brightness of his glory; 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.

Hymn *Silent Night, Holy Night*

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, heav’nly 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 your holy face, with the dawn of
redeeming grace, Jesus, Lord, at your birth, Jesus, Lord at your birth.

Christmas Benediction

P: May you be filled with the wonder of Mary, the obedience of Joseph, the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds, the determination of the magi, and the peace of the Christ child.
Almighty God, Father, (+) Son, and Holy Spirit bless you now and forever.

C: Amen.

Dismissal

P: Go in peace, Christ is with you.

C: Thanks be to God.

Postlude

“*In Dulci Jubilo*”

arr. Sanborn
Dr. Anthony Pattin

***We joyfully greet our members, loved ones and visitors on this
Christmas Eve! We remember with awe and gratitude how God
shone His light into our darkness on that first Christmas.
May we share with others the light that shines
from our Lord Jesus Christ.***

A RECORDING OF THE SERVICE: The worship service has been recorded. It will be available on the church website (www.firststjohn.com) in time to be viewed at 11:00 pm. It will remain posted throughout the Christmas season.

READER

Bob Haar

SOUND BOARD

Mark Ackerman

2021 OFFERING ENVELOPES are available by calling the church office.

POINSETTIA PICK UP: The poinsettias will remain for worship on Sunday, December 27th. They can be picked up after church that day or by calling the church office next week and arranging a pick up time.

YEAR-END CONTRIBUTIONS: If you would like to mail a contribution and have it be included in your 2020 financial statement, please mail it soon. If it's postmarked by December 31st, we can still add it to your 2020 statement. If you'd like to drop it off yourself, just call Toni in the church office during regular office hours and she will meet you at one of the Educational Building doors. Thank you.

A Christmas Prayer

Dear Jesus,

Thank you for the gift of your loving presence. Help me in this season of love never to turn away from you through indifference to my neighbors in need. Give me the grace to welcome you in every helpless child or adult who is outcast, poor, forgotten, or afraid — giving freely with a heart full of love.

May I be a light for everyone I meet, a guiding star to illuminate the way that leads us all home to you, our saving hope.

Amen.

December 24, 2020

CHRISTMAS EVE

God Delivers

This is the holy night in which God delivers. God follows through on the promises made through the ancient prophets. God provides our deliverance from sin and death and everything that makes our life so dreary and so dreadful. God drops off at our doorstep the very gift that saves.

"Do not be afraid;" the angel said, "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." From the rich depths of God's own heart, God sends a package to us corporately (as a human race) and personally (to each whose heart is open)--a Deliverer who is God's chosen one and yes, the Lord.

But did God have to use such ordinary brown paper when God sent to us the Savior? And did God have to set him down so silently that night? Couldn't God have wrapped him in the royal robes of majesty instead and made some serious noise about it? Even parcel delivery services trumpet their advantages. This is the most important delivery of all time. We wait for a Savior. What God gives is, at first appearance, underwhelming: first a baby to be wrapped in swaddling and then a bleeding, dying man hanging just as naked on the cross. What kind of deliverance is that?

Yet this is the way it had to be to deliver us from what really ails us. Jesus had to crawl into human skin to take on our sin and death. And, Jesus *chose* this path, out of love. Yes, he looks so plain and ordinary. But, sometimes the plain and ordinary are the gifts we need the most.

Christ is born! God delivers! And angels provide the fanfare, at least to the humble shepherds.