

CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP • 9pm

Jackson Community Church

Lessons, Carols & Candlelight • December 24, 2025

WE ARE A COMMUNITY CHURCH. OUR FRIENDS, NEIGHBORS AND MEMBERS
COME FROM MANY PLACES AND MULTIPLE TRADITIONS.

EVERYONE IS WELCOME TO FIND A SPIRITUAL SANCTUARY HERE.

PRELUDE

Elizabeth Roth

— RECEIVING the LIGHT —

CAROL*

O COME, ALL YE FAITHFUL *Sharon Novak*

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.

LORD’S PRAYER: Eternal Spirit, Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver, Source of all that is and that shall be, Father and Mother of us all, Loving God, in whom is heaven: The hallowing of your name echo through the universe! The way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the world! Your heavenly will be done by all created beings! Your commonwealth of peace and freedom sustain our hope and come on earth. With the bread we need for today, feed us. In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us. In times of temptation and test, strengthen us. From trials too great to endure, spare us. From the grip of all that is evil, free us. For you reign in the glory of the power that is love, now and for ever. *Amen.*

MEDITATION

Born a Question

Rev. Gail Doktor

LIGHT of HOPE



Reader: Two Gospels tell the story of Christ’s birth. *In the Gospel of Luke, Mary received a heavenly visitor. The angel Gabriel visited her in Nazareth. Though*

she was engaged to Joseph, the angel told her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. You will bear a son and name him Jesus.” Perplexed, Mary asked, “How can this be?” The angel said, “The Holy Spirit, the power of the Most High, will come upon you; therefore the child will be holy. He will be called Son of God. For nothing will be impossible with God.” Mary replied, “Here am I, God’s servant. Let it be according to God’s will.”

CAROL*

IT CAME UPON

A MIDNIGHT CLEAR

Sharon Novak

It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old,

From angels bending near the earth,

to touch their harps of gold:

Peace on the earth, good will to men,

from heav’n’s all gracious King:

The world in solemn stillness lay, to hear the angels sing.

Reader: *The Gospel of Matthew began the story of the nativity from Joseph’s perspective. Mary was engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. Joseph, a righteous man unwilling to disgrace her, planned to dismiss her quietly. Then an angel appeared in his dream, saying, “Joseph, take Mary as your wife, for the child is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people.” Joseph woke, made a choice, married the young pregnant woman, and promised to love and protect Mary and the child.*

People: *Will we say YES to God’s presence?*

ALL: *Tonight we kindle the light of hope.*

SOLO

CHRISTMAS LULLABY

Becca Gottlieb

— *The candle of HOPE is lit.* —

LIGHT of PEACE



Reader: *Both Matthew and Luke tell us that Jesus was born in Bethlehem. Luke's gospel starts the journey to Bethlehem with familiar words:* In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. Joseph went to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went with Mary, who was expecting a child.

CAROL* O LITTLE TOWN *Sharon Novak*

*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.*

*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;
O come to us, abide in us, our Lord Emmanuel.*

Reader: *The gospel of Luke continues:* While in Bethlehem, the time came for Mary 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 room for them in the inn.

People: *Will we follow the Way of peace in our homes, relationships, communities, and world?*

ALL: **Tonight we cradle the light of peace.**

CAROL AWAY IN THE MANGER *Sharon Novak*

*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 candle of PEACE is lit.* —

LIGHT of JOY



Reader: *Each book tells us about different visitors to the Holy Family. The gospel of Luke recounts:* In that 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.

CAROL THE FIRST NOWELL *Sharon Novak*

*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.*

Reader: 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.” Suddenly there was a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God.

CAROL* HARK THE HERALD ANGELS *Sharon Novak*

*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 hosts proclaim,
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"*

Refrain: *Hark! the herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn King!"*

Reader: *Luke tells us,* The shepherds went to Bethlehem. They found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. They shared what the angels had told them. They opened their hearts to the experience and presence of the Messiah. Meanwhile, Mary treasured their words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen.

People: *Despite division, darkness, will we seek and share joy?*

ALL: **Tonight we cultivate the light of joy.**

CAROL*

ANGELS WE HAVE

HEARD ON HIGH

Sharon Novak

*Angels we have heard on high, Sweetly singing o'er the plains
And the mountains in reply; echo back their joyous strains.
Gloria in excelsis Deo, Gloria in excelsis Deo.*

— *The candle of JOY is lit.* —



LIGHT of LOVE

Reader: *Wise ones, sometimes called kings or magi, traveled long and far to attend the holy family in the nativity story as told by Matthew. He writes:* In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, “*Where is the child? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.*”

When King Herod heard their questions, he was frightened. He believed the child was a threat to his throne. He plotted to find the child and be rid of him. So he summoned local experts to learn more. Then Herod sent for the wise ones, and directed them to Bethlehem. “*Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.*”

PIANO & SOLO

WHAT CHILD IS THIS?

Gia Osborne

Reader: *Luke continues:* The wise ones set out. Ahead of them went the star that they had seen at its rising. It stopped over the place where the child was.

They were overwhelmed with joy. Entering the house, they saw the child with Mary; and knelt down and paid him homage. They offered him treasures of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

Afterward, the wise ones were warned in a dream not to return to Herod. Instead they left for their own country by another road. Though their treasure chests were emptied, they carried new gifts.

People: *Will we also go home by a different path, transformed by the story of Holy Love?*

ALL: **Tonight we carry the light of love.**

— *The candle of LOVE is lit.* —



LIGHT of CHRIST

SOLO & HARP

Elizabeth Roth

Reader: Matthew and Lukes’ gospels led us on a journey to hope, peace, joy, and love. *Now let us hear a third narrative from the gospel of John, who tells us the story of light itself:* In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

*People: Will we honor the holy light within each other
and the whole of God's creation?*

ALL: Tonight we light the candle of Christ and
receive the gift of its promise: we are claimed by
Christ as brothers and sisters, children of light.

— *The candle of CHRIST is lit.* —

CAROL*

GO TELL IT

ON THE MOUNTAIN *Sharon Novak*

Refrain: *Go tell it on the mountain,
Over the hills and ev'rywhere;*

Go tell it on the mountain, That Jesus Christ is born.

*While shepherds kept their watching, O'er silent flocks by night,
Behold, throughout the heavens, There shone a holy light.*

Refrain: *Go tell it on the mountain,
Over the hills and ev'rywhere;*

Go tell it on the mountain, That Jesus Christ is born.

— **OFFERTORY** —

OFFERING with MUSIC

Elizabeth Roth

CAROL*

JOY TO THE WORLD

Sharon Novak

*Joy to the world! The Lord is come; Let earth receive her King;
Let every 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 Savior reigns; Let men 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.*



— **PASSING the CHRIST LIGHT** —

NOTE: PLEASE BE SEATED. The ushers take light from the Christ
Light and then light candles of people seated near the aisle, who
then pass the light while all sing *Silent Night*. Remain seated and
repeat verses until all candles are lit. You may hold your light high
as the lights dim in the sanctuary.

CAROL

SILENT NIGHT, HOLY NIGHT *Elizabeth Roth*

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 Thy holy face, With the dawn of
redeeming grace, Jesus, Lord at Thy birth,
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.*

CLOSING

NOTE: Please remain quiet for a moment while you extinguish
your candle. Then the Sanctuary lights will come back on.
You may return your candles to the baskets by the doors.

BENEDICTION

Rev. Gail Doktor

POSTLUDE

Elizabeth Roth