

## WE GATHER IN GOD'S NAME

### Prelude

### Welcome and Announcements

### \*Call to Worship

One: Come, let us worship the King, born to us this night!

**All: We have come to hear the Christmas story anew!**

One: Come, let the story fall fresh upon your ears and your heart this night.

**All: Lord, open our ears and our hearts for a word from you.**

### \*Gathering Music #133 "O Come All Ye Faithful"

*Adeste Fideles*

*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.*

*Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation;*

*O sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!*

*Glory to God, all glory in the highest;*

### Lighting the Advent Candle

Ann Weems "Unexpected"

**All: Even now we simply do not expect to find a deity in a stable.**

One: Somehow the setting is all wrong:

the swaddling clothes too plain,

the manger too common for the likes of a Savior,

the straw inelegant,

the animals, reeking and noisy,

the whole scene too ordinary for our taste.

And the baby!

**All: Whoever expected a baby?**

One: Whoever expected the Advent of God in a helpless child?

Had the Messiah arrived in the blazing light of the glory

of a legion of angels wielding golden swords,

the whole world could have been conquered for Christ

right then and there

and we in the church—to say nothing of the world!—

wouldn't have so much trouble today.

**All: Even now we simply do not expect to face the world armed with love.**

One: Tonight, we rejoice that the wait is over, the Prince of Peace has come to our hearts, our church, our communities and our world once more!

He does not come as we expect him to, but he comes as we need him to:

bringing a reign of peace to all of creation. On this Christmas Eve, we

light the Christ candle for the Prince of Peace, that humble baby who

makes peace not only possible, but a reality.

**All: We are not ready, O Christ. We have found our waiting time filled with too many distractions, too many demands. But whether we are ready or not, still you come, Prince of Peace, bursting through our walls of division with the laughter of a child, making us one human family. We rejoice that you, Holy Child, have the final word, and that that word is and will always be: "peace." Amen.**

## WE PROCLAIM GOD'S WORD

*The ornament you selected as you entered symbolizes your part in the story:*

*Staff - SHEPHERD- "Wow!"*

*Wings - ANGEL -"Alleluia!"*

*Star - WISE ONE - "Look! A Star!"*

**A is for Angel.**

**B is for Bethlehem.**

**C is for Census.**

**D is for Donkey.**

**E is for Exhausted.**

**Hymn #121** "O Little Town of Bethlehem" v. 1, 2

*St. Louis*

*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.*

*For Christ is born of Mary, and gathered all above,*

*While mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wondering love.*

*O morning stars together, proclaim the holy birth,*

*And praises sing to God the king, and peace to all on earth!*

**F is for Family.**

*Luke 2:6-8*

**Pew Bible, NT, Page 58**

**G is for the Good News.**

*Luke 2:10-14*

**Pew Bible, NT, Page 58**

**Hymn #119** "Hark the Herald Angels Sing" v. 1

*Mendelssohn*

*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 angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"*

*Hark the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king!"*

**H is for Hope.**

**I is for Imagine.**

**J is for Joy.**

**Hymn #134** "Joy to the World" v. 1, 4

*Antioch*

*Joy to the world! The Lord has come.*

*Let earth receive her King!*

*Let every heart prepare Him room,*

*And heaven and nature sing. And heaven and nature sing,*

*And heaven, and heaven and nature sing.*

*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*

**K is for King.**

**L is for Lost, and also for Love.**

**M is for Manger.**

**Hymn #114** "Away in the Manger" v. 1, 3

*Cradle Song*

*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.*

*Be near me Lord Jesus I ask you to stay*

*Close by me forever, and love me, I pray.*

*Bless all the dear children in your tender care,*

*And fit us for heaven, to live with you there.*

**N is for Noel.**

**Christmas Meditation**

Rev. Karen Ware Jackson

## WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

**\*Hymn of Response #128** "Infant Holy, Infant Lowly"

*W. Zlobie Lezy*

*Infant holy, infant lowly, for his bed a cattle stall;*

*oxen lowing, little knowing, Christ the babe is Lord of all.*

*Swift are winging angels singing, noels ringing, tidings bringing:*

*Christ the babe is Lord of all.*

*Flocks were sleeping, shepherds keeping vigil till the morning new.*

*Saw the glory, heard the story, tidings of a gospel true.*

*Thus rejoicing, free from sorrow, praises voicing, greet the morrow:*

*Christ the babe was born for you.*

**O is for Offering.**

**Presentation of Gifts, Tithes, and Offerings**

**\*Doxology #113** "Angels We Have Heard on High"

*Gloria*

*Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o'er the plains,*

*And the mountains in reply, echoing their joyous strains.*

*Gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, in excelsis Deo!*

**\*Prayer of Dedication and Confession.**

**God of Grace and Glory, we thank you for sending your Son to love**

**us. We offer these gifts and our lives to you. We thank you for the**

**greatest gift of all – the gift of your son Jesus Christ, who came to earth**

**as a sign of your love for us.**

**Child of Bethlehem, be born in us today: forgive us, heal us, make us**

**new; then we will join the angels in singing your praises this night and all**

**the days to come. Amen.**

**P is for Peace and Peace be with you.**

**Q is for Quiet.**

Hymn # 124 “Still, Still, Still”

*Still, Still, Still*

*Still, still, still, he sleeps this night so chill.  
The Virgin's tender arms enfolding,  
Warm and safe the Child are holding.  
Still, still, still, he sleeps this night so chill*

**R is for Revealed.**

**S is for Star.**

**T is for Table.**

**U is for Unity.**

**SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER**

May the Child of Bethlehem be born in you.

**And in your heart as well.**

Children of God, lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the One who came to us that first Christmas morning.**

People of God, give thanks to the One who is always with us.

**O come, O come, Emmanuel, to feed us at your Table.**

When you were weary of chaos as your companion, Everlasting God, you whispered to the Word who sang Creation's song: mountains sprang to attention, rivers and oceans splashed your feet, and the dust from the Carpenter's table was gathered up and shaped in your image. The Spirit breathed life into us, that we might dance with you forever. Therefore, we join with the heavenly chorus of Bethlehem's skies, and all those who sing of your steadfast love, in every time and place:

**Holy are you, Mighty God, and blessed is the One who comes in your name, our Lord and Savior, your Gift to all the world.**

You would not keep the Word to yourself, but sent him to tell us of your hopes for us. You did not cling to the Prince of Peace, but poured him out to end our enmity and violence with one another. You could not hold your Heart in your hands, but allowed him to be broken on the tree of Calvary that we might be made whole forever. As we gather at your Table, send your Spirit upon the bread and the cup, and upon us, your children. As you sent Jesus to be born of Mary, may we bear the burdens of others; as you became One with us in the Child, may we live at peace with all people; as you have brought us out of the shadows of our sin, may we carry the Light of the world to all who live in the darkness of oppression and injustice.

**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.**

**Words of Institution**

**Communion of the People**

*You are invited to come forward, take a piece of bread and dip it into the juice, then partake of the Body of Christ and the Cup of the New Covenant.*

**Prayer After Communion**

**Emmanuel, God with us, you have put your life into our hands. Now we put our lives into yours. Take us, renew and remake us. What we have been is past; what we shall be, through you, still awaits us. Lead us on. Take us with you. Amen.**

**V is for Vulnerable.**

**W is for Wonder.**

**X is for Christ.**

**Y is for You.**

**Z is for Zeal.**

**\*Closing Hymn #122 “Silent Night”**

*Stille Nacht*

*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.  
Heavenly 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.*

*Silent night, holy night, wondrous star, lend thy light;  
With the angels let us sing:  
Alleluia to our King.  
Christ the Savior is born. Christ the Savior is born.*

**WE GO IN GOD'S NAME**

**\*Charge and Benediction**

**\*Postlude**

*\* Please rise in body or spirit*

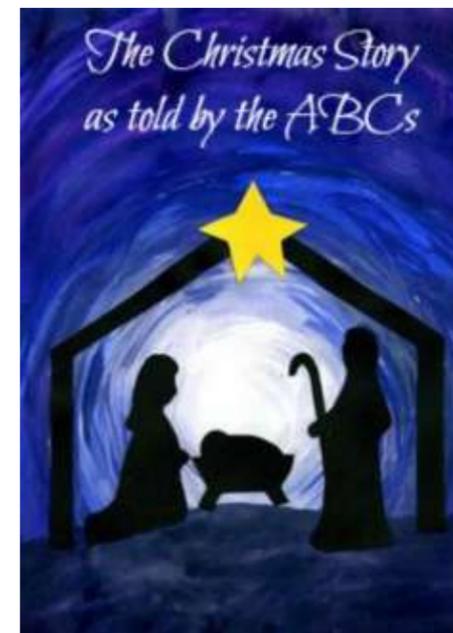
**Bulletin Acknowledgements**

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Tonight's service is adapted by Rev. Lorrin Radzik from *The ABCs of Christmas: A Worship Service*, by Rev. Erin Klassen of the Young Clergy Women Project.  
The Communion liturgy and Prayer of Confession are adapted from Rev. Thom Shuman of Lectionary Liturgies.

**Church Staff**

Rev. Karen Ware Jackson, Pastor  
Rev. Jim Rissmiller, Parish Associate  
Stephanie Lindley, Music Director  
Beverly Lucas, Office Administrator  
Michelle Watkins, Childcare Provider

**WELCOME TO FAITH PRESBYTERIAN**



*“The ABCs of Christmas”*

**We embrace inter-generational worship and welcome the giggles, questions, tears, and even shouts that enliven our oh-so-orderly service.** We do have a **professionally staffed nursery** available for babies and toddlers, but we encourage our youngest members to learn with and from us throughout the worship service.

There is a **“PrayGround”** available for children and adults at the front of the sanctuary. Feel free to join our young people in their interactive worship activities! **These experiences are great for active learners of all ages, and our children and their parents appreciate your engagement and support.**

We want to be a true family of faith and that means celebrating the gifts, questions, and talents of each of our members from young in age to young at heart!

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December 24<sup>th</sup>, 2015

4:30 P.M.

Christmas Eve

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