

GENESIS

~ Christmas Eve Services ~

*She gave birth to
her firstborn, a son.*



Luke 2:7

Lighting Of The Advent Wreath

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The **circle of the wreath** reminds us of God Himself, His eternity and endless mercy, which has no beginning or end. The **green of the wreath** speaks of the hope that we have in God, the hope of newness, of renewal, of eternal life. **Candles** symbolize the light of God coming into the world through the birth of His son. The **four outer candles** represent the period of waiting during the four Sundays of Advent, which themselves symbolize the four centuries

The **colors of the candles** vary with different traditions, but there are usually three purple or blue candles, corresponding to the sanctuary colors of Advent, and one pink or rose candle. One of the purple candles is lighted the first Sunday of Advent, a Scripture is read, a short devotional or reading is given, and a prayer offered. On subsequent Sundays, previous candles are relighted with an additional one lighted. The pink candle is usually lighted on the third Sunday of Advent. However, different churches or traditions light the pink candle on different Sundays depending on the symbolism used.

The **light of the candles** itself becomes an important symbol of the season. The light reminds us that Jesus is the light of the world that comes into the darkness of our lives to bring newness, life, and hope. It also reminds us that we are called to be a light to the world as we reflect the light of God's grace to others (Isa 42:6). The progression in the lighting of the candles symbolizes the various aspects of our waiting experience. As the candles are lighted over the four week period, it also symbolizes the darkness of fear and hopelessness receding and the shadows of sin falling away as more and more light is shed into the world. The flame of each new candle reminds the worshippers that something is happening, and that more is yet to come. Finally, the light that has come into the world is plainly visible as the Christ candle is lighted at Christmas, and worshippers rejoice over the fact that the promise

The **first candle** is traditionally the candle of **Expectation** or **Hope** (or in some traditions, Prophecy). This draws attention to the anticipation of the coming of a Messiah that weaves its way like a golden thread through Old Testament history. As God's people were abused by power hungry kings, led astray by self-centered prophets, and lulled into apathy by half-hearted religious leaders, there arose a longing among some for God to raise up a new king who could show them how to be God's people. They yearned for a return of God's dynamic presence in their midst.

And so, God revealed to some of the prophets that indeed He would not leave His people without a true Shepherd. While they expected a new earthly king, their expectations fell far short of God's revelation of Himself in Christ. And yet, the world is not yet fully redeemed. So, we again with expectation, with hope, await God's new work in history, the second Advent, in which He will again reveal Himself to the world. And we understand in a profound sense that the best, the highest of our expectations will fall far short of what our Lord's Second Advent will reveal!

The **remaining three candles** of Advent may be associated with different aspects of the Advent story in different churches, or even in different years. Usually they are organized around characters or themes as a way to unfold the story and direct attention to the celebrations and worship in the season. So, the sequence for the remaining three Sundays might be Bethlehem, Shepherds, Angels. Or Peace, Love, Joy. Or John the Baptist, the Magi, Mary. Or the Annunciation, Proclamation, Fulfillment. Whatever sequence is used, the Scripture readings, prayers, lighting of the candles, the participation of worshipers in the service, all are geared to telling the story of redemption through God's grace in the Incarnation.

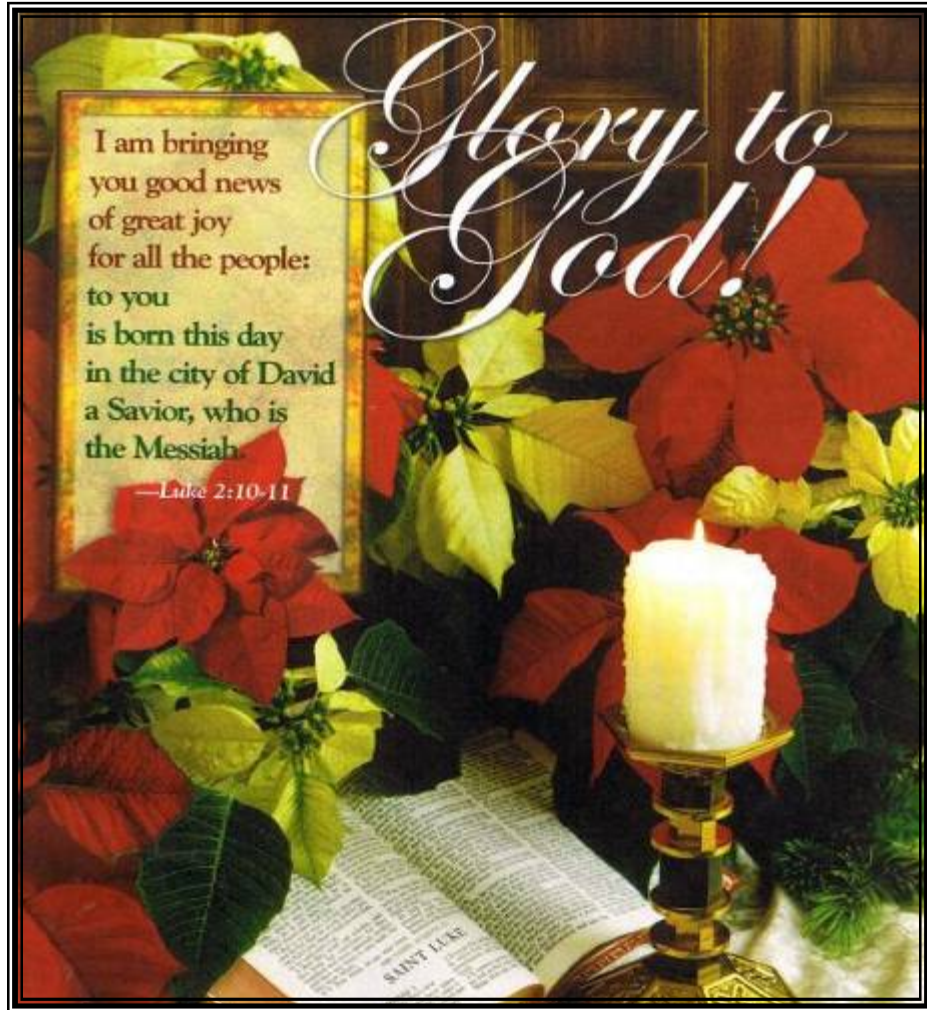
The **third candle**, usually for the Third Sunday of Advent, is traditionally Pink or Rose, and symbolizes **Joy** at the soon Advent of the Christ. Sometimes the colors of the sanctuary and vestments are also changed to Rose for this Sunday. However, as noted above, increasingly in many churches, the pink Advent candle is used on the fourth Sunday to mark the joy at the impending Nativity of Jesus.

Whatever sequence is adopted for these Sundays, the theme of Joy can still be the focus for the pink candle. For example, when using the third Sunday to commemorate the visit of the Magi the focus can be on the Joy of worshipping the new found King. Or the Shepherds as the symbol for the third Sunday brings to mind the joy of the proclamation made to them in the fields, and the adoration expressed as they knelt before the Child at the manger. If used on the fourth Sunday of Advent, it can symbolize the Joy in fulfilled hope.

The **center candle** is white and is called the **Christ Candle**. It is traditionally lighted on Christmas Eve or Day. However, since many Protestant churches do not have services on those days, many light it on the Sunday preceding Christmas, with all five candles continuing to be lighted in services through Epiphany (Jan 6). The **central location of the Christ Candle** reminds us that the incarnation is the heart of the season, giving light to the world.

9:30 AM Christmas Eve Day





PRELUDE: “How Great Our Joy”

CALL TO WORSHIP: “Emmanuel, Emmanuel” No. 204

THE HYMN OF PRAISE: “Angels We Have Heard On High” No.238

The Collect:

Leader: Joy has come to our world! The Savior is born!

People: All Heaven and earth sing for joy. God has come to the people!

Leader: Let every heart be receptive to God’s gift of salvation in Jesus, His son.

People: May the Son of God, born in Bethlehem, be born in us today.

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON: Micah 5:2-5a

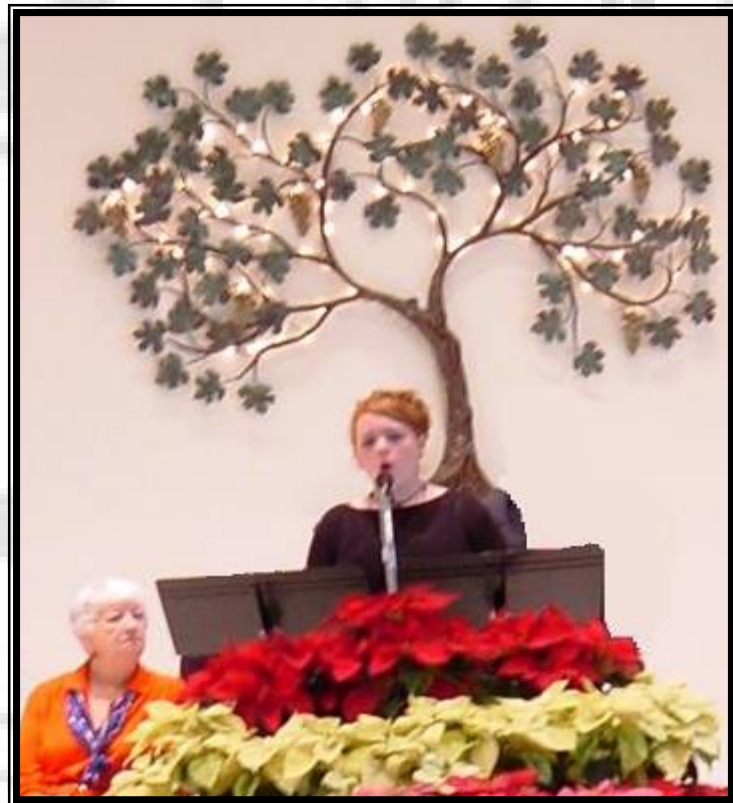
Leader: The grass withers and the flowers fade

People: But the word of our God will stand forever.

SPECIAL MUSIC:

“Grown Up Christmas List”

Soloist: Tiffany Garthous



THE PASTORAL PRAYER & THE LORD'S PRAYER

THE FEEDING OF THE LAMBS:

**“The Legend of The Candy Cane”
with Pastor Steven Skelley**



**A candy maker wanted to make
a candy that was a witness
to Christ.**

First he used hard candy because Christ is the rock of ages.

It was made white to signify the purity of Christ.

**The peppermint flavor is similar to hyssop, which was used
in the Old Testament for purification and sacrifice.**

**A red stripe was added, representing the blood
Christ shed for the sins of the world.**

**The three thinner stripes represent the stripes He
received on our behalf when the Roman soldiers whipped him.**

**This hard candy was formed to resemble the letter 'J', for Jesus,
or when turned upside down a shepherd's staff.**

**Jesus is the pure lamb of God who came as
a sacrifice for the sins of the world.**

OFFERTORY:

“Silent Night”

(Soloist: Steffy Skelley Accompanist: Steve Skelley)



THE DOXOLOGY:

THE HYMN: “Away In A Manger”

No. 217

“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”

No 240

GOSPEL LESSON: Luke 2:8-18

Leader: The word of God for the people of God!

People: Thanks be to God!

WITNESS TO THE WORD OF GOD:

“Memories of Joseph Ben Joseph”

Rev. Mark Whittaker



**THE HYMN OF
DEDICATION:**

“O Little Town of Bethlehem”

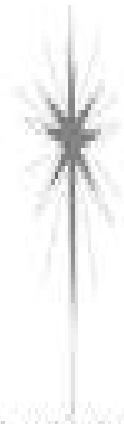
No.230

THE BENEDICTION

THE POSTLUDE

“Tell The Good News”

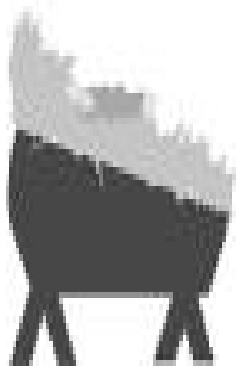
Arr. Smith



5:00 PM, 7:00 PM & 11:00 PM

Christmas Eve

Services





Christmas Eve Prayer

Most Loving Father, thank you for this night and for all it represents.
Thank you for the hope you bestow, the peace you bring, the love
you pour out, and the joy you give.

We praise you most of all for Jesus, your Word made flesh.

May he light our way as the holy star lit the way for the wise men.

Amen.

- Rev. Richard J. Fairchild



A Christmas Eve Service of Lessons and Carols

THE PRELUDE:

“O Holy Night”

(Piano: Carolyn Crawley & Sharon Haskell

Organ: Dayna Middlebrooks & Joy Potts)

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

CONGREGATIONAL CAROL:

“Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus”

No.196

FIRST LESSON:

Isaiah 9:2,6-7 “To Us A Child Is Born”

CONGREGATIONAL CAROL:

“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

No 211

SECOND LESSON:

Isaiah 11:1-2,6-9 “The Branch from Jesse”

(Harp Trio: Jeannine Love, Jo Miller, & Mary Kay Messenger)

“Lo, How A Rose E’er Blooming”



THIRD LESSON:

Luke 1:26-38 “The Birth of Jesus Foretold”

**(Ladies Ensemble With Accompanist: Carolyn Crawley)
“Jesus, Jesus, Rest Your Head”**



FOURTH LESSON:

Luke 2:1-7 “The Birth of Jesus”

**(Chancel Choir)
“The Holly She Bears A Berry”**



FIFTH LESSON:

Luke 2:8-12 “The Shepherds and the Angels”

(Vocal Duet: Katherine Cornelius & Janet Watson

Harpist: Mary Kay Messenger)



CONGREGATIONAL CAROL:

“Once In Royal Davis’s City” No.250

SIXTH LESSON:

Luke 2:13-18 “The Angel Proclaims”

(Sacred Dancers)

“Mary Did You Know”



CHRISTMAS OFFERING

(Handbell Choir)
“An English Christmas”



DOXOLOGY

CONGREGATIONAL CAROL:

“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing” No. 240

SEVENTH LESSON:

(Reading) “The Star Led Them To The Christ Child”
John 1:14

(Vocal Quartet: Tuned To Revival
Ernie Dorrell, Ron Hesketh, Jim & Joy Potts)



EIGHT LESSON:

(Reading) “The Joy of Christmas”

**(Women’s Choir & Handbell Choir,
Trumpet: Hank Kaiser
Tambourines: Dayna Middlebrooks & Mary Olson)
“Gloria Deo!”**



NINTH LESSON:

Matthew 2:1-8 “The Visit of the Magi”

**(Jubilation)
“Tell It On The Mountain”**



FINAL READING:

“The Star Shone Bright That Night”

~ SHARING THE CHRISTMAS LIGHT ~



CONGREGATIONAL CAROL:

(Harp Trio with Flutist, Ashley Pritz)
"Silent Night" No. 239

EXTINGUISH CANDLES, THEN STAND:

CONGREGATIONAL CAROL:

(Trumpets: Hank Kaiser & Josh Staab)
"Joy To The World" No. 246



THE BENEDICTION

THE POSTLUDE:

"O Come, All Ye Faithful"

7 PM Christmas Eve Service

The 7 PM Christmas Eve Service was identical to the 5 PM Service.



11 PM Christmas Eve Service



PRELUDE: "In The Bleak Winter" By G. Holst
CALL TO WORSHIP: "Emmanuel, Emmanuel" No 204
THE HYMN OF PRAISE: "Angels We Have Heard On High" No.238
THE COLLECT:

Leader: Joy has come to our world! The Savior is born!

People: All Heaven and earth sing for joy. God has come to the people!

Leader: Let every heart be receptive to God's gift of salvation in Jesus, His son.

People: May the Son of God, born in Bethlehem, be born in us today.

OLS TESTAMENT LESSON: II Samuel 7:1-11,16

SPECIAL MUSIC:

(Soloist Dayna Middlebrooks)
"Away In A Manger"



THE PASTORAL PRAYER & THE LORD'S PRAYER

OFFERTORY: "Christmas Lullaby" by D. Callender

THE DOXOLOGY

THE HYMN "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" No.240

GOSPEL LESSON: Luke 1:26-38

WITNESS TO THE WORD OF GOD:

"If You Look REAAA! Carefully!" By Rev. Mark Whittaker

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION:

by Rev. Mark Whittaker &
Rev Richard Evans



CELEBRATION OF LIGHT:



CONGREGATIONAL CAROL: "Silent Night"

EXTINGUISH CANDLES AND STAND

CONGREGATIONAL CAROL "Joy To The World!"

No246

THE BENEDICTION

THE POSTLUDE: "Christmas Carol Medley"

SCRIPTURE FOR EVERYDAY

Disciples ask, "Father, what do you want for Christmas?"
And God answers, "Come unto me all you that labor and are heavy laden,
and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am
meek and lowly of heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

Matthew 11:28-29

