



KIMBALL MEMORIAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

101 VANCE AVE. KANNAPOLIS, NC 28081

P: Pastor

A: Assisting Minister

C: Congregation



THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD

December 24, 2023 — 11:00 pm

In winter's deepest night, we welcome the light of the Christ child. Isaiah declares that the light of the long-promised king will illumine the world and bring endless peace and justice. Paul reminds us that the grace of God through Jesus Christ brings salvation to all people. The angels declare that Jesus' birth is good and joyful news for everyone, including lowly shepherds. Filled with the light that shines in our lives, we go forth to share the light of Christ with the whole world.

Reverend John Futterer, Pastor, pastor@kimballchurch.org

Deacon Liz Fisher, Minister of Word and Service, youth@kimballchurch.org

Keith Sutton, Parish Administrator, churchoffice@kimballchurch.org

Dr. Don Simmons, Music Director and Accompanist

Rev. Dr. David Keck, Pastor Emeritus

Mabel Brown, Parish Worker Emerita

PRE-SERVICE MUSIC

- ♦ *Oh Come, Emmanuel* ~arr. W. Held
- ♦ *Emmanuel* ~M. W. Smith
- ♦ *On the Way to Bethlehem: A Christmas Suite for Organ* ~D. Cherwien
- ♦ *Silent Night* Handbell Choir ~arr. D. Wagner
- ♦ *Fall on Your Knees* Darla Steinert, soloist ~P. Choplin
- ♦ *Carol of the Children* Betsy Ellington-Boynton, Keith Sutton, duet ~John Rutter

THE PROCLAMATION OF THE BIRTH OF CHRIST

Today, the twenty-fourth day of December,
unknown ages from the time when God created the heavens and the earth
and then formed man and woman in His own image.

Several thousand years after the great flood,
when God made the rainbow shine forth as a sign of the covenant.

Twenty-one centuries from the time the promise was given to Abraham and Sarah;
thirteen centuries after Moses led the people of Israel out of Egypt.
Eleven hundred years from the time of Ruth and the Judges;
one thousand years from the anointing of David as king,
in the sixty-fifth week according to the prophecy of Daniel.

In the one hundred and ninety-fourth Olympiad;
the seven hundred and fifty-second year from the foundation
of the city of Rome.

The forty-second year of the reign of Octavian Augustus;
the whole world being at peace,
Jesus Christ, eternal God and Son of the eternal Father,
desiring to sanctify the world by His most merciful coming,
being conceived by the Holy Spirit,
and nine months having passed since His conception,
was born in Bethlehem of Judea of the Virgin Mary.

Now, in our own times, this is the nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ,
God made flesh for us.

1 O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant! O
 2 The high - est, most ho - ly, light of light e - ter - nal,
 3 Sing, choirs of an - gels, sing in ex - ul - ta - tion,
 4 Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this hap - py morn - ing;

come ye, O come ye to Beth - le - hem;
 born of a vir - gin, a mor - tal he comes;
 sing, all ye cit - i - zens of heav - en a - bove!
 Je - sus, to thee be . . . glo - ry giv'n!

come and be - hold him, born the king of an - gels:
 Son of the Fa - ther now in flesh ap - pear - ing!
 Glo - ry to God . . . in . . . the . . . high - est:
 Word of the Fa - ther, now in flesh ap - pear - ing:

Refrain

O come, let us a - dore him, O come, let us a - dore him,

O come, let us a - dore him, Christ the Lord!

GREETING

- A The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
- C **And also with you.**

PRAYER OF THE NIGHT

- A 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 Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C **Amen.**

FIRST LESSON

Isaiah 9:2-7

This poem promises deliverance from Assyrian oppression, a hope based on the birth of a royal child with a name full of promise. While Judah's king will practice justice and righteousness, the real basis for faith lies in God's passion for the people: The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this!

- T**he people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined.
- ³You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you
as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder.
- ⁴For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders,
the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian.
- ⁵For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood
shall be burned as fuel for the fire.
- ⁶For a child has been born for us, a son given to us;
authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor,
Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
- ⁷His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace
for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it
with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore.
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

L Word of God, word of life.

C **Thanks be to God.**

ANTHEM

On Christmas Night ~Sussex Carol, harmonized by Andrew Sims

Betsy Ellington-Boynton, Anne Futterer, Keith Sutton, Bob Boynton

SECOND LESSON

Titus 2:11-14

The appearance of God's grace in Jesus Christ brings salvation for all humanity. Consequently, in the present we live wisely and justly while also anticipating the hope of our Savior's final appearance.

The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, ¹²training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, ¹³while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. ¹⁴He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

L Word of God, word of life.

C Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL

Luke 2:1-14

P The Gospel according to St. Luke the second chapter.

C Glory to You, O Lord.

God's greatest gift comes as a baby in a manger. Angels announce the "good news of great joy" and proclaim God's blessing of peace.

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. ⁵He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. ⁸In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." ¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, ¹⁴"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

P The Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ.

SERMON

Pastor John Futterer

1 Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born king;
 2 Christ, by high - est heav'n a - dored, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord,
 3 Hail the heav'n - born Prince of peace! Hail the Sun of righ-teous-ness!

peace on earth, and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled."
 late in time be - hold him come, off - spring of a vir - gin's womb.
 Light and life to all he brings, ris'n with heal - ing in his wings.

Joy - ful, all you na - tions, rise; join the tri - umph of the skies;
 Veiled in flesh the God - head see! Hail, in - car - nate de - i - ty!
 Mild he lays his glo - ry by, born that we no more may die,

with an - gel - ic hosts pro - claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"
 Pleased as man with us to dwell, Je - sus, our Em - man - u - el!
 born to raise each child of earth, born to give us sec - ond birth.

Refrain

Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born king!"

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

The Christmas Creed

- A With the people of God in Christ now and in every time, let us confess our faith.
- C I believe in Jesus Christ, and in the beauty of the Gospel that began in Bethlehem. I believe in Him whose spirit glorified a little town; in Him, of whose coming only shepherds saw the sign and for whom the crowded inn could find no room. I believe in Him who proclaimed the love of God to be invincible; in Him whose cradle was a mother's arms, whose home in Nazareth had love for its only wealth. I believe in Him who looked at people and made them see what His love saw in them; in Him who lovingly brought sinners back to purity and lifted human weakness up to meet the strength of God. I acknowledge the Glory of all that is Christ-like: The steadfastness of friends, the blessedness of homes, the beauty of compassion, the miracle of hearts made kind at Christmas, the courage of those who dare resist all hate and evil. I believe that only by love expressed, shall the earth at length be purified. For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.**

PRAYERS OF GOD'S PEOPLE

- P Trusting in God's good news of great joy for all people, we offer our prayers for ourselves, our neighbors, and the world God loves.

Each prayer petition will conclude: "Hear us, O God."

The congregation's response is: "Your mercy is great."

- P Abide with us, O God of mercy, and receive our prayers according to your abundant grace.
- C Amen.**

SHARING OF GOD'S PEACE

- A Following his resurrection, the Lord Jesus breathed peace upon his disciples. We share in this peace of Christ in the Church today. The peace of the Lord be with you.
- C And also with you.**
- A Please greet those around you with words of peace.

(Especially greet the children and youth.)

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

P In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus 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.

P 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.

THE LORD'S PRAYER *Sung to the tune of Away in a Manger*

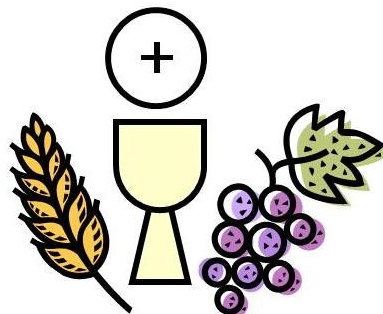
Our Father in heaven, all praise to your name!
 Your kingdom among us, Your will done the same.
 By mortals and angels Come, Lord, reign alone;
 Oh, hear us and bless us from Heaven's high throne.

The Bread that we yearn for provide us each day;
 As we forgive others our sins take away;
 In times of temptation, to lead us be near;
 From evil deliver your children most dear.

For yours is the Kingdom; o'er all things You reign.
 And Yours is the power; all things You maintain.
 To You be the glory, resounding again.
 From all of creation forever Amen.

HOLY COMMUNION

We have two options for Communion during this time. You are free to come forward to receive the bread and pre-filled cups of wine from our clergy and lay assistants, returning to your seats after you've deposited the empty cup and following the guidance of our ushers; or you may continue to use the pre-packaged communion elements which are available from the ushers at the entrance to the Sanctuary. However you choose to receive Communion, know that we are glad you're here for this Sacrament!



You may receive the Elements as the words are said:
The Body of Christ given for you; The Blood of Christ shed for you.

CAROLS DURING COMMUNION

O Little Town of Bethlehem
It Came Upon the Midnight Clear
The First Noel
Infant Holy, Infant Lowly

ELW 279
ELW 282
ELW 300
ELW 276

The Church will be in darkness except for candles in the chancel. After the blessing, the light is passed from the altar to the congregation. Please handle with care...leaving the lighted candle upright as the flame is passed. The candles will remain lit until the Benediction.

CHORAL RESPONSE

Peace, Peace
Choir

Powell-Bock

HYMNS

Silent Night, Holy Night

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1 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! All is calm,
 2 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Shep - herds quake
 3 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Son of God,

all is bright round yon vir - gin moth - er and child.
 at the sight; glo - ries stream from heav - en a - far,
 love's pure light ra - diant beams from your ho - ly face,

Ho - ly In - fant, so ten - der and mild, sleep in heav - en - ly
 heav'n - ly hosts . . . sing, al - le - lu - ia! Christ, the Sav - ior, is
 with the dawn of re - deem - ing grace, Je - sus, Lord, at your

peace, sleep in heav - en - ly peace.
 born! Christ, the Sav - ior, is born!
 birth, Je - sus, Lord, at your birth.

CHRISTMAS PRAYER

P 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.

1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re -
 2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their
 3 No more let sin and sor - row grow nor thorns in -
 4 He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the

ceive her king; let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare him
 songs em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and
 fest the ground; he comes to make his bless - ings
 na - tions prove the glo - ries of his righ - teous -

room and heav'n and na - ture sing, and heav'n and na - ture
 plains re - peat the sound - ing joy, re - peat the sound - ing
 flow far as the curse is found, far as the curse is
 ness and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his

and heav'n and na - ture sing, and

sing, and heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.
 joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
 found, far as, far as the curse is found.
 love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.

heav'n and na - ture sing,

BENEDICTION

P God bless you and keep you, † Jesus grant you grace and truth, and the Spirit send peace upon your hearts, now and forever.

C Amen.

DISMISSAL

A Christ the Savior is born!
Go in peace. Proclaim the good news.

C Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Joy to the World

~arr. R. Thygerson



**Please extinguish and place your candles
in the receptacles in the Narthex.**

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