

**First Presbyterian Church  
Chippewa Falls, WI  
Worship Service  
December 24, 2022 – 4: 30 PM  
Christmas Eve: A Holy Birth**

**PRELUDE**

**WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**BLESSING OUR OFFERINGS FOR THE FOOD PANTRY**

**OPENING READING**

A decree. A census. A man and a woman arrive in Bethlehem to obey an emperor's wish. Shepherds on the night shift tend their sheep. In the midst of these ordinary events a baby's birth is announced with extraterrestrial fanfare. Glory is given to God in the highest; peace is promised on earth. Henceforth, the world shall be enlightened by God's Word made flesh.

**CANDLE LIGHTING**

- One: Tonight we light the white Christ candle in the center of our advent wreath proclaiming that God's wonderful plan is at the center of all our celebrations. The waiting is done! The baby has come to earth: Immanuel, God with us! And we are filled with joy!.
- Two: The prophet Simon saw the baby Jesus and proclaimed: I have seen the Savior, you have given to all people. He is a light to reveal God to the nations, and he is the glory of your people Israel.
- One: We light the candles of hope, peace, joy and love. And tonight, we light the Christ candle.
- Two: As the Scriptures tell us, I bring you good news of great joy for everyone! The Savior – yes, the Messiah, the Lord has been born tonight in Bethlehem, the city of David!
- One: Sing this song of great joy with me as we celebrate the birth of Jesus!

**OPENING HYMN**

**“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”**

**No. 31**

**OPENING PRAYER**

O God of peace, to you we ascribe all honor and majesty, beauty and strength. You bring forth a child whom we call blessed, upon whose shoulders rests the destiny of nations. You give us the gift of life everlasting, a wonderful counselor who shall guide all your people. With shepherds and angels, we lift our voices rejoicing: All glory to you in the highest and on earth peace among those with whom you dwell.

## **INVITATION TO CONFESSION, PRAYER OF CONFESSION AND ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS**

One: Let us examine our hearts, and confess our sin to God.

**All: Your grace, O God, has appeared for the salvation of all, calling us to renounce false gods and irresponsible love. In the midst of our sin, Christ has appeared as a sign of our hope, redeeming us and calling us to be a people eager to do your will. Make us zealous for good deeds in response to your wonderful deed in Jesus Christ. We confess the vain worship of ourselves and our neglect of your children. Forgive us and empower us to live upright and godly lives in this world.**

One: On this night, of all nights, know this that the assurance of our forgiveness has come. “For a child has been born for us, a son given to us . . . His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He was establish a uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore.

**All: We celebrate the Good News of Jesus Christ. Amen.**

### **SCRIPTURE LUKE 2:1-7**

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph 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. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her 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 place for them in the inn.

**HYMN The First Nowell No 56 vs 1**

### **SCRIPTURE LUKE 2:8-12**

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, and 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.”

**HYMN Angels From the Realms of Glory No. 22 vs 1**

### **SCRIPTURE LUKE 2:13-14**

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”

**HYMN What Child is This No. 53 vs 1**

**SCRIPTURE            LUKE 2:15-20**

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

**HYMN            Go Tell It On the Mountain            No. 29 vs 1**

**CHRISTMAS MESSAGE            "No Room at the Inn"            Rev. Terri Koca**

**CHRISTMAS PRAYER**

"Away In the Manger"    (first four measures)    No 25

**All:    O God, as we hear "Away in a Manager" we think of the many people who are away from home – not with their families this Christmas eve, those who are sick in the hospital, those who are in prison, those not at home because of work commitments or attending school at a distance, and all those who are traveling this night (pause).**

"No Crib for a Bed"    (second four measures)

**All:    We pray for the many homeless throughout our world – those who have suffered loss in hurricanes, fires and earthquakes, as refugees from civil wars; and those drifting from city to city looking for work (pause).**

"the Little Lord Jesus Laid Down his Sweet Head"    (third four measures)

**All:    This night we think of those needing rest – those fearing what lies ahead, those who cannot sleep because of pain, those who are struggling to make ends meet, and those who work this night looking after the health and safety needs of our community (pause).**

"The Stars in the Bright Sky Looked Down Where he Lay"(fourth four measures)

**All:    We pray for the light of your love to touch all those who have lost faith, those who need their confidence and hope restored, and those who face an uncertain future, the leaders of our church and country and for ourselves (pause).**

"The Little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay"    (last four measures)

**All:    May your love be born afresh in each of us this night, that we may spread the light of your love to others. Amen.**

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

## SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

## INVITATION TO THE LORD'S SUPPER

## WORDS OF INSTITUTION

## COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION:

**O God, through this bread and this cup, you have fed us with spiritual food and have made us one with you and with each other. Bless us with faith and courage, O God that we might go from this place to serve you in all love and joy. Amen.**

## CHRISTMAS LITANY AND CANDLE LIGHTING

One: On a night like this, more than 2000 years ago a child was born in hope to change the world

**All: And light shines**

One: Tonight – somewhere – a child is being born in hope to change the world.

**All: And light shines**

One: Tonight – somewhere - someone who is ready to do harm pauses and remembers a child from long ago... and chooses hope and peace instead of violence.

**All: And light shines**

One: Tonight – somewhere – someone who is lonely and afraid is comforted by a stranger... and knows a moment of hope and love.

**All: And light shines.**

One: Tonight – somewhere – someone who is hungry or naked receives the gift of food or clothing... and knows hope, feeling full and warm.

**All: And light shines.**

One: Tonight – somewhere – someone who has been a prisoner is released... and knows hope and freedom.

**All: And light shines.**

One: Tonight – here and there – people choose to act with peace, with love, with generosity, with mercy... and Christ is born again in hope.

**All: And light shines.**

## HYMN “Silent Night” No. 60

## CHARGE AND BENEDICTION