

Christmas Eve Communion Service

December 24, 2023

5:00 P.M.

PRELUDE

WELCOME

TRINITY CHIMES

OPENING MUSIC #22 “Angels, from the Realms of Glory”
(verses 1, 2, & 4, The Presbyterian Hymnal)

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

Steve & Sandy Gaskey

We have lit the four candles of Advent reminding us of four promises continually offered to us by God. And now we light the Christ candle because all four of them are manifest in this one.

In Christ we find light and life, and the courage to be like him, answering his call and following in his footsteps.

CHRISTMAS EVE PRAYER

Loving God, we open ourselves to you, this Christmas Eve. Enter our lives this night. Illumine our paths with the light of Christ’s presence. Help us to see clearly the way before us. Transform our hearts this night and draw us close to you. Amen.

HYMN #31 “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”
(The Presbyterian Hymnal)

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Almighty God, Light of the World, you caused light to shine out of darkness in the advent of Jesus our Christ; calling us to repent. We confess our tendency to wallow in our sadness, to be swallowed up by griefs both large and small. We have not opened our hearts to you and the joy you give. Forgive us for hoarding happiness like there is not enough to go around. Show us how to bring joy to others. We ask that the Spirit of Christ be born anew within us, this night. O Lord. Hear our silent confessions . . . (*Please take a moment for silent confession.*)

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

Leader: God’s love knows no bounds. Love comes down at Christmas—a love so deep and so profound that nothing will ever be the same again. Know that this love is for you—to touch you, to heal you, to forgive you, to make you whole.

People: **We are made whole in the light of the Christ child. Amen.**

RESPONSE OF PRAISE “Angels We Have Heard on High”
(refrain only, The Presbyterian Hymnal)

TIME WITH THE CHILDREN

ANTHEM

“That’s the Good News”

SCRIPTURE READING

Luke 2:1-20

CHRISTMAS EVE MEDITATION

Rev. Valerie Hicks

HYMN #40

“Joy to the World!”
(verses 1, 2, & 4, The Presbyterian Hymnal)

GIVING GOD OUR OFFERING AND OUR CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING

Offertory

“O Holy Night”

Offering Prayer

Creator God, we are aware of just how much we have to be thankful for tonight. Receive these gifts, tokens of our gratitude for your unending grace. Use our offering to breathe a sense of wonder and joy into a hurting world. In Christ’s name we pray. Amen.

INVITATION TO THE LORD’S TABLE

THE GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING & THE LORD’S PRAYER

THE WORDS OF THE INSTITUTION AND THE COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Great and saving God, you have gathered your scattered people around gifts of bread and wine, the body and blood of our Savior, Jesus Christ. As we, like the shepherds, return on our way, may we proclaim all we have heard and seen, praising you in word and loving deed for the gift of Jesus, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

SPECIAL MUSIC

“Gloria”

CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHTING

Leader: The People who walked in darkness have seen a great light.

People: The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not over come it.

Leader: Those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has a light shined.

People: We have beheld Christ’s glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father.

Leader: For to us a child is born, to us a Son is given.

People: A great joy for all people, a Savior, Christ the Lord.

HYMN #60

“Silent Night, Holy Night”

(verses 1, 2, & 4, The Presbyterian Hymnal)

Leader: Jesus said, “I am the light of the world; he who follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.” As you extinguish your candle, let your light so shine that people around you will be moved by the good things you do to glorify God in heaven.

BENEDICTION

Leader: Gabriel foretold it.

People: The angels heralded it.

Leader: The shepherds came to see for themselves.

People: And it is true.

Leader: Immanuel, God with us.

People: God is with us through Jesus Christ, the babe of Bethlehem and our resurrected Lord.

Leader: The world will never be the same;

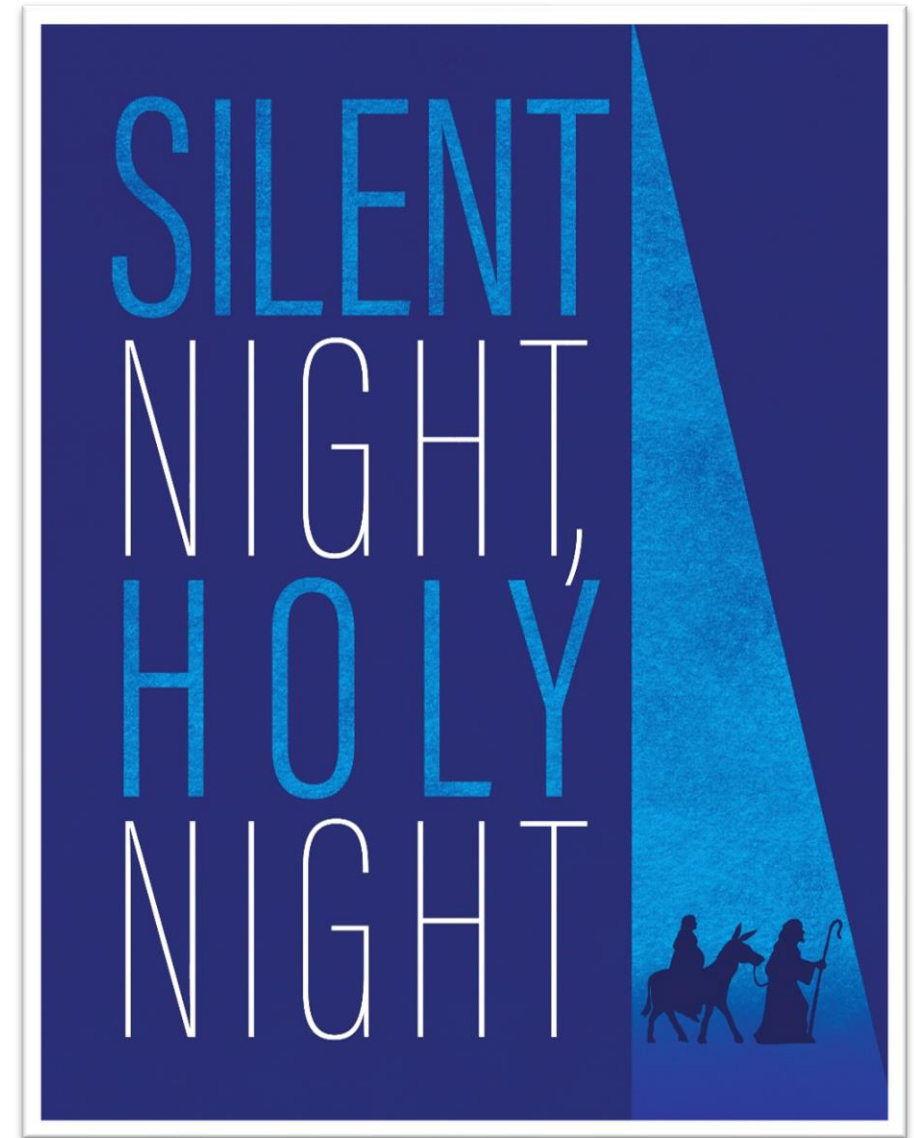
People: we ourselves will never be the same.

Leader: Go then and tell the world — Jesus Christ is born.

POSTLUDE

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The Session and Staff of Bethpage Presbyterian Church of Kannapolis wish you a blessed and joyous Christmas. As we celebrate the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, may he again be born in our hearts, may our faith be renewed, and may our commitment to follow him be strengthened.



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