



# Christmas Eve

## Pollocksville Presbyterian Church Christmas Eve Communion Service

6:30 pm

December 24, 2022

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Prelude

\*Carol

“O Come All Ye Faithful”

#41

Presbyterian Hymnal

\*Gathering Prayer (*unison*)

**Almighty God, now in the silence, whisper in our ear that joy which comes into every life. Now in the comfort of carols, sing of hope which takes away the despair which envelops us. Now in familiar words heard anew, speak to us of grace, which is born into barren lives, of peace which is birthed in war's shadowed fears. Now leaning next to those who have always been a part of us, and those from whom we have been apart, remind us of your heart which always accepts us, always welcomes us. Now in the love which is ours forever, draw us closer to your heart, so we can be surprised by wonder, swaddled in serenity, embraced by tenderness. Now touch us once again with Christmas, God in Community, Holy in One. AMEN**

\*The Peace of Christ

*Leader:* This night no one is a stranger. All are joined together as one family through the miracle of the birth of one small baby. Let us share our joy and excitement at being present when God reaches down to touch the earth.

The Peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

*People:* **And also with you.**

Unison Prayer for Forgiveness

**This was going to be the year, God of silent nights, when we were going to give away more than we spent, but we didn't. This was going to be the season when we spent more time with others, but we filled our calendars with meetings. This was going to be the Christmas when we wrote personal letters to friends and family, but we spent too much energy filling out our to-do lists. This was going to be a truly holy season, but it just got to harried and hurried. Forgive us, Love Gifter, and draw us closer to the Baby born not into wealth and power, but into poverty and weakness; to the One who loves unconditionally and welcomes all; to the Child who gathers other children to him, to bless them and serve them; to the One who drew near to us, so we might be drawn to your heart – Jesus Christ, our Brother, our Lord.**

*Silence is observed*

Assurance of God's Pardon

*Leader:* Into the valleys of our death, Jesus comes with life; into the shadows of our world, Jesus brings light; into the brokenness of our lives, Jesus brings forgiveness and peace.

*People:* **Thanks be to God for the gift of the Baby of Bethlehem, Who brings joy and peace to us in these moments of forgiveness and in all the days to come. Amen.**

Anthem

"O Holy Night"

~ Duet

Jennifer Miller & Amber Swanger

Scripture

Luke 2:1-20

Meditation

"Wrapped in Swaddling Cloths"

~ Jay Bender

Anthem

"Sweet Little Jesus Boy"

~ Jay Bender

## The Invitation

### The Great Prayer of Thanksgiving and the Lord's Prayer

*Leader:* May the God of silent nights be with you!

*People:* **May the God of herald angels be with you!**

*Leader:* Open your hearts to the One born in the little town of Bethlehem.

*People:* **May Emmanuel come to abide in our hearts.**

*Leader:* Join all believers in singing of our joy this night.

*People:* **May our voices blend with those of the angels and shepherds in thanks and praise.**

## The Words of Institution

### The Communion of the People of God (by Intinction)

### The Communion Prayer

\*Carol

"O Little Town of Bethlehem"

#44

Presbyterian Hymnal

### \*Charge and Benediction

*Leader:* Let us go to be the gift another needs,

*People:* **sharing God's blessings of love and grace, running to tell the Story we heard from the shepherds.**

*Leader:* Let us go to be the comfort which can swaddle others,

*People:* **sharing Jesus' compassion with the poor and needy, welcoming the holiness offered by the most vulnerable we meet.**

*Leader:* Let us go to kindle the lives around us,

*People:* **sharing the Spirit's peace with all the broken, learning the language of hope from the children in our midst.**

## TAKING THE LIGHT INTO THE WORLD

Weather permitting, we will take the Christ Candle from the sanctuary and all will recess outside on the ramp, steps, and sidewalk. We will use the Christ Candle to light our individual candles. Once assembled, we will conclude with "Silent Night."



## CHRISTMAS EVE

#1- We have watched; we have waited

#2- in hope (*Light a purple candle*)

for peace (*Light the second purple candle*)

in joy! (*Light the third pink candle*)

with love. (*Light the fourth purple candle*)

Now our redemption draws near!!! (*The Christ candle – center white – is lit*)

#1- Here the Word of the Lord from Isaiah 9: 2-7:

The people walking in darkness have seen a great light;  
on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned.

You have enlarged the nation and increased their joy;  
they rejoice before you as people rejoice at the harvest,  
as warriors rejoice when dividing the plunder.

For as in the day of Midian's defeat,  
you have shattered the yoke that burdens them,  
the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor.

Every warrior's boot used in battle and every garment rolled in blood  
will be destined for burning, will be fuel for the fire.

For to us a child is born, unto us a son is given,  
and the government will be on his shoulders.

And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Of the greatness of his government and peace, there will be no end.  
He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom,  
establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness  
from that time on and forever.

The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this.

#2- Let us pray:

O God, we thank you for the wonderful gift of Jesus. Help us, like Mary, to think deeply about what His coming means for us, and like the shepherds, to sing praises because He has come into our world. Help us to spread light and joy and love in the world by the way we live and the things we do and say. Be with us always. AMEN.