



Christmas Eve Worship Service
December 24, 2021

Gathering

Prelude: “ O Little Town of Bethlehem”

arr.

Janzer

“Away in a Manger”

arr.

Stearns

“Creator of the Stars at Night”

arr.

Haan

Congregation, we invite you to meditate on the words of Creator of the Stars found in LUYH 71

Welcome & Prayer

Pastor Laura

When the world was dark
and the city was quiet,
you came.

the friendly voice no longer speaks,
the doctor’s face says it all?

You crept in beside us.

Will you come into that darkness,
and do something different,
to embrace your people?

And no one knew.

Only the few who dared to believe
that God might do something different.

And will you come into the dark corners
and the quiet places of our lives?

Will you do the same this Christmas, Lord?

We ask this...because the fullness our lives long
for
depends on us being as open and vulnerable to
you
as you were to us,
when you came,
wearing no more than diapers,
and trusting human hands
to hold their Maker.

Will you come into the darkness of today’s
world;

not the friendly darkness
as when sleep rescues us from tiredness,
but the fearful darkness,
in which people have stopped believing
that war will end
or that food will come
or that a government will change
or that the church cares?

Will you come into our lives,
if we open them to you
and do something different?

Will you come into that darkness
and do something different
to save your people from death and despair?

When the world was dark
and the city was quiet
you came.

Will you come into the quietness of this city,
not the friendly quietness
as when lovers hold hands,
but the fearful silence when
the phone has not rung,
the letter has not come,

You crept in beside us.

Do the same this Christmas, Lord,
Do the same this Christmas.
Amen.

“When the world was dark” from *Cloth for the Cradle*, p. 92-93 by the Wild Goose Resource Group, © 1997, 2000 WGRG % Iona Community, Scotland, GIA Publications, In., exclusive North American agent. Reprints permitted with a license from ONE LICENSE.

We hope for an end to the darkness and for the beginning glimpses of light. We hope expectantly as those who wait for a promise that is coming. We light this candle of hope.

***Sing: "O Little Town of Bethlehem"**

LUYH 88,

vs 1, 3, 4

***Greeting:**

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16). On this Christmas night we celebrate God's gift of love, seen in the birth of Jesus Christ. We light this candle of love.

***Sing: "Angels We Have Heard on High"**

LUYH 82

"Love's Incarnate Birth" - Madeleine L'Engle

Observe and contemplate.

Make real. Bring to be.

Because we note the falling tree

The sound is truly heard.

Look! The sunrise! Wait -

It needs us to look, to see,

To hear, and speak the Word.

Observe and contemplate

The cosmos and our little earth.

Observing, we affirm the worth

The birth of Love's most lovely Word.

Of sun and stars and light unfurled.

So, let us, seeing, celebrate

The glory of Love's incarnate birth

And sing its joy to all the world.

Observe and contemplate.

Make real. Affirm. Say Yes,

And in this season sing and bless

Wind, ice, snow; rabbit and bird;

Comet, and quark; things small and great.

Oh, observe and joyfully confess

Song: "I Wonder as I Wander"

Organ/Flute

1. *I wonder as I wander out under the sky, How Jesus the Savior did come for to die. For poor on 'ry people like you and like I... I wonder as I wander out under the sky.*

2. *When Mary birthed Jesus 'twas in a cow's stall, with wise men and farmers and shepherds and all. But*

high from God's heaven a star's light did fall, and the promise of ages it then did recall.

3. *I wonder as I wander out under the sky, How Jesus the Savior did come for to die. For poor on 'ry people like you and like I... I wonder as I wander out under the sky*

Scripture: Isaiah 11: 1-9

1 A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse;
from his roots a Branch will bear fruit.

2 The Spirit of the Lord will rest on him—
the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding,
the Spirit of counsel and of might,
the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the Lord—

3 and he will delight in the fear of the Lord.
He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes,
or decide by what he hears with his ears;

4 but with righteousness he will judge the needy,
with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth.
He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth;
with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked.

5 Righteousness will be his belt
and faithfulness the sash around his waist.

6 The wolf will live with the lamb,
the leopard will lie down with the goat,
the calf and the lion and the yearling^[a]
together;
and a little child will lead them.

7 The cow will feed with the bear,
their young will lie down together,
and the lion will eat straw like the ox.

8 The infant will play near the cobra's den,
and the young child will put its hand into
the viper's nest.

9 They will neither harm nor destroy
on all my holy mountain,
for the earth will be filled with the knowledge
of the Lord
as the waters cover the sea

Sing: "Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming"

LUYH

79, vs. 1-3

The words of the prophet Isaiah remind us of a coming kingdom where peace will reign and all will be well. Because of the birth of Jesus Christ, we can anticipate peace on earth and pray for the ability to be peacemakers until he comes again. We light this candle of peace and then bow our heads in prayer to pray for the world that God so dearly loves.

Prayers of the People

Pastor Laura

Sing: "Of the Father's Love Begotten"

LUYH

78 vs. 1, 5

Word

"Honor, glory, and dominion and eternal victory, evermore and evermore." Emmanuel is born! The Christ child has entered the world. And so we light this candle of joy, and we listen to the story of his birth.

Scripture Reading: Luke 2:1-20

Pastor Laura

***Sing: “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”**

LUYH 80

Message : The Magi’s Tale

Pastor Laura

Song: “*See That Star*” arr. Hunnicutt

Jean/Jeanna

*See that star, it leads to Jesus.
See that star, it leads you onward.
Follow that star to Bethlehem.
Jesus comes to live on earth,
born a child and yet a King.
Come to live like us, a human;
Yet he's Lord of everything.
O star that shines so high above,
help us to see the Father's love,
O wondrous star that beams so bright,
lead us who walk in earth's dark night.*

*Kings may come and kings may go,
but this King will reign forever,
Give him liege and give him homage,
he'll forsake you never.
Follow that star, it leads to Jesus,
see that star, it leads to Jesus.
See that star, it leads you onward,
Follow that star to Bethlehem.*

And finally, we light this candle of light, for Jesus Christ, the light of the world, has been born for us, a light for all to follow.

***Sing: “Silent Night”**

LUYH 85

***Sending**

Pastor Laura

Postlude: “It Came Upon a Midnight Clear”

Innes

Participants:

Rev. Laura de Jong, preaching

Jean Schuitman, organ

Julie Hordyk, piano

Karen Katje, flute

Jeanna Schuitman, solo