

ASCENSION
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
CHRISTMAS EVE, 2019



Man's maker was made man,
that He, Ruler of the stars, might nurse at His mother's breast;
that the Bread might hunger,
the Fountain thirst,
the Light sleep,
the Way be tired on its journey;
that the Truth might be accused of false witness,
the Teacher be beaten with whips,
the Foundation be suspended on wood;
that Strength might grow weak;
that the Healer might be wounded;
that Life might die.

Augustine (354-430)

~

Here is something marvelous: the Son of God descended from heaven in such a way that, without leaving heaven, he willed to be born in the virgin's womb, to go about the earth, and to hang upon the cross; yet he continuously filled the world even as he had done from the beginning!

John Calvin (1509-1564)

~

Veiled in flesh the Godhead see; hail th'incarnate Deity,
pleased as man with men to dwell, Jesus our Emmanuel...
Mild he lays his glory by, born that man no more may die,
born to raise the sons of earth, born to give them second birth.

Charles Wesley (1707-1788)

~

From where does the New Testament doctrine and ethic of humility come? It comes from the New Testament doctrine of the God who humbled himself in his Incarnation.

Karl Barth (1886-1968)

~

Who among us will celebrate Christmas correctly? Whoever finally lays down all power, all honor, all reputation, all vanity, all arrogance, all individualism beside the manger; whoever remains lowly and lets God alone be high; whoever looks at the child in the manger and sees the glory of God precisely in his lowliness.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-1945)

LIGHTING OF THE ANGEL CANDLE AND THE CHRIST CANDLE

CALL TO WORSHIP • Isaiah 60:1

Arise, shine, for your light has come,
and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.

On Christmas Night, All Christians Sing Traditional English Carol • Public Domain

Tenor

On Christ - mas night all Chris - tians sing, to
hear the news - the an - gels bring; On
Christ - mas night all Chris - tians sing, to
hear the news - the an - gels bring: News of great
joy, news of great mirth,
news of our mer - ci - full - King's
birth.

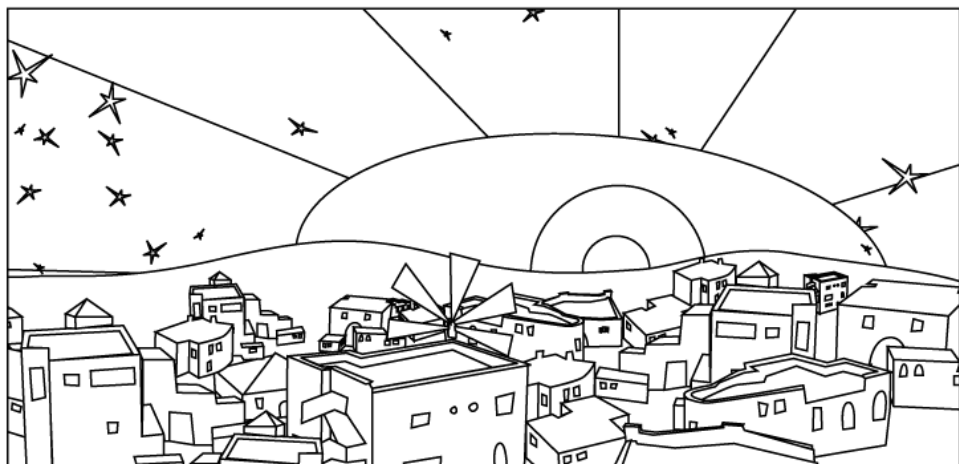
The musical score is written for a Tenor voice in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It consists of 14 staves of music. The lyrics are: "On Christmas night all Christians sing, to hear the news - the angels bring; On Christmas night all Christians sing, to hear the news - the angels bring: News of great joy, news of great mirth, news of our merciful King's birth." The score includes a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a time signature of 4/4. The lyrics are placed below the corresponding notes on the staves.

Then why should men on earth be sad, since our Redeemer made us glad;
then why should men on earth be sad, since our Redeemer made us glad,
when from our sin he set us free, all for to gain our liberty.

When sin departs before Your grace, then life and health come in its place;
when sin departs before Your grace, then life and health come in its place;
angels and men with joy may sing, all for to see the newborn King.

All out of darkness we have light which made the angels sing this night;
all out of darkness we have light which made the angels sing this night;
"Glory to God and peace to men, now and forevermore, Amen!"

PRAYER OF INVOCATION



FIRST LESSON • Micah 5:2-5

² You, O Bethlehem Ephrathah,
who are too little to be among the clans of Judah,
from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel,
whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days.

³ Therefore he shall give them up until the time
when she who is in labor has given birth;
then the rest of his brothers shall return to the people of Israel.

⁴ And he shall stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the LORD,
in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God.
And they shall dwell secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth.

⁵ And he shall be their peace.

It Came Upon The Midnight Clear

Text: Edmund H. Sears • Music: Richard S. Willis • Public Domain

Alto

It came up - on the mid - night clear, that
Still through the clo - ven skies they come, with
3 And ye, be - neath life's crush - ing load, whose
glo - rious song of old, from
peace - ful wings un - furled, and
6 form are bend - ing low, who
an - gels bend - ing near the earth to
still their heav'n - ly mu - sic floats o'er
8 toil a - long the climb - ing way with
touch their harps of gold: "Peace
all the wea - ry world: A -
11 pain - ful steps and slow, Look
on the earth good will to men, from
bove its sad and low - ly plains they
13 now! For glad and gold - en hours come
heav - en's all - gra - cious King;" the
bend - on hov - 'ring wing, and
16 swift - ly on the wing: O
world in sol - emn still - ness lay to hear the an - gels
ev - er o'er its Ba - bel sounds the bles - sed an - gels
rest be - side the wea - ry road and hear the an - gels
19
sing.
sing.
sing.

For lo, the days are hast'ning on, by prophet bards foretold,
When with the evercircling years comes round the age of gold;
When peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling,
And the whole world give back the song which now the angels sing.



SECOND LESSON • Luke 1:26-38

²⁶ In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, ²⁷ to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" ²⁹ But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰ And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹ And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. ³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, ³³ and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."

³⁴ And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?"

³⁵ And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God. ³⁶ And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. ³⁷ For nothing will be impossible with God." ³⁸ And Mary said, "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

CHOIR: "For Unto Us A Child Is Born"



THIRD LESSON • Luke 2:1-7

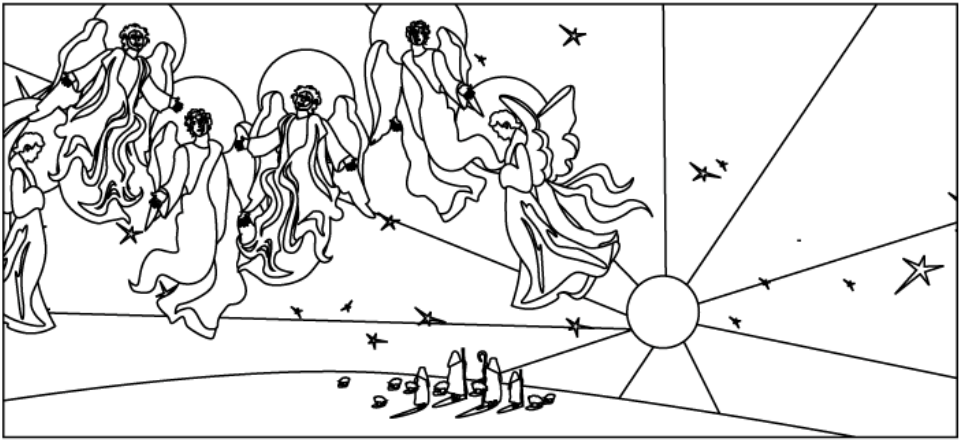
¹ In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. ² This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³ And all went to be registered, each to his own town. ⁴ And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, ⁵ to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. ⁶ And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. ⁷ And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

O Holy Night

Text: John S. Dwight • Music: Adolphe Adam • Public Domain

Tenor

8 O ho - ly night - the stars are bright - ly shin -
5 Tru - ly He taught - us to love one a - noth -
8 ing, it is the night of our dear Sav - ior's birth.
10 er, His law is love and His gos - pel is peace.
8 Long lay the world - in sin and er - ror pin -
14 Chains shall He break - the slave he is our bro -
8 ing till He ap - peared and the soul felt its worth.
18 ther, and in His name all op - res - sion shall cease.
8 A thrill of hope the wear - y soul re -
22 Sweet hymns of joy in grate - ful cho - rus
8 joic - es, for yon - der breaks a new and glor - ious
26 raise we, let all with - in us praise His ho - ly
8 morn. Fall - - - on your knees - - - O hear -
32 name.
8 the an - gel voic - es! O night - - - di -
37 vine - - - O - night - - - when Christ was born!
42 O night! Di - vine! O night!
48 O night di - vine!



FOURTH LESSON • Luke 2:8-18

⁸ And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. ¹⁰ And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. ¹¹ For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹² And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." ¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

¹⁴ "Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!"

¹⁵ When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." ¹⁶ And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. ¹⁷ And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. ¹⁸ And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them.

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Text: Charles Wesley • Music: Felix Mendelssohn • Public Domain

Alto

The musical score is written for an Alto voice part in G major, 4/4 time. It consists of nine staves of music. The lyrics are: "Hark! the her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new - born King; peace on earth, and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners re - con - ciled!" Joy - ful, all ye na - tions rise, join the tri - umph of the skies; with th'an - gel - ic host pro - claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!" Hark! the her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new - born King."

Hark! the her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the
new - born King; peace on earth, and mer - cy mild,
God and sin - ners re - con - ciled!" Joy - ful, all ye
na - tions rise, join the tri - umph of the skies;
with th'an - gel - ic host pro - claim, "Christ is born in
Beth - le - hem!" Hark! the her - ald an - gels sing,
"Glo - ry to the new - born King."

Christ, by highest heav'n adored; Christ the everlasting Lord;
late in time, behold him come, offspring of the virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see; hail th'incarnate Deity,
pleased as man with men to dwell, Jesus our Emmanuel.

Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

Hail the heav'n born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings, ris'n with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by, born that man no more may die,
born to raise the sons of earth, born to give them second birth.

Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"



FIFTH LESSON • John 1:1-14

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. ⁴ In him was life, and the life was the light of men. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

⁶ There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷ He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. ⁸ He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.

⁹ The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. ¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. ¹¹ He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. ¹² But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, ¹³ who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

HOMILY

INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE AND PRAYER

(All who confess faith in Jesus Christ may partake of this Sacrament: baptized members of a congregation that proclaims the Gospel, who are at peace with God and with their brothers and sisters in Christ, and who seek God's grace to live more faithfully for their Lord and Savior in this world.)

WORDS OF INSTITUTION • 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

GIVING OF THE BREAD AND CUP

(Please come forward after the musicians. Grape juice is available for those who do not want wine. The cup with the ribbon contains gluten-free crackers.)

Silent Night

Text: Franz Gruber • Music: Joseph Mohr • Public Domain

Tenor

Si - lent night! Ho - ly night!

3
8 All is calm, all is bright, round you vir - gin

6
8 moth - er and child. Ho - ly in - fant so

8
8 ten - der and mild, sleep in heav - en - ly peace,

11
8 sleep in heav - en - ly peace.

Detailed description: The image shows a musical score for a Tenor voice part. It consists of five staves of music in 4/4 time. The lyrics are written below the notes. The first staff starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The lyrics are 'Si - lent night! Ho - ly night!'. The second staff begins with a measure rest of 3 measures, then continues with 'All is calm, all is bright, round you vir - gin'. The third staff continues with 'moth - er and child. Ho - ly in - fant so'. The fourth staff continues with 'ten - der and mild, sleep in heav - en - ly peace,'. The fifth staff concludes with 'sleep in heav - en - ly peace.'.

Silent night! Holy night! Shepherds quake at the sight!
Glories stream from heaven afar, heavenly hosts sing: Alleluia!
Christ, the Savior, is born! Christ, the Savior, is born!

Silent night! Holy night! Son of God, love's pure light,
radiant beams from thy holy face, with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord at thy birth, Jesus, Lord at thy birth.

Silent night! Holy night! Wondrous star, lend thy light;
with the angels let us sing alleluia to our King;
Christ, the Savior, is born! Christ, the Savior, is born!

BENEDICTION • Matthew 13:16-17

"Blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear. For truly, I say to you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it."