



# *Christmas Eve Communion and Candlelight Worship Service*

**First United Methodist Church of Riverside**  
**4845 Brockton Avenue, Riverside, CA 92506**  
**December 24, 2023 11 pm**

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## *Order of Worship*

\*Please stand as you are comfortable.

**PRELUDE:** "Noël Vosgien" by Jean Bouvard / Robert Phillips, Organist

### **\*TRINITY BELLS**

**\*CALL TO WORSHIP** / Kris Lovekin, Liturgist

(Liturgist) Alleluia! Rejoice on this day of Jesus' birth!

**(People) Let us rejoice and be glad in it!**

(L) Christ comes to us as hope, peace, joy, and love!

**(P) We give thanks to God for the birth of Jesus Christ!**

**(All) We worship with our hearts joyfully lifted to God! Amen!**

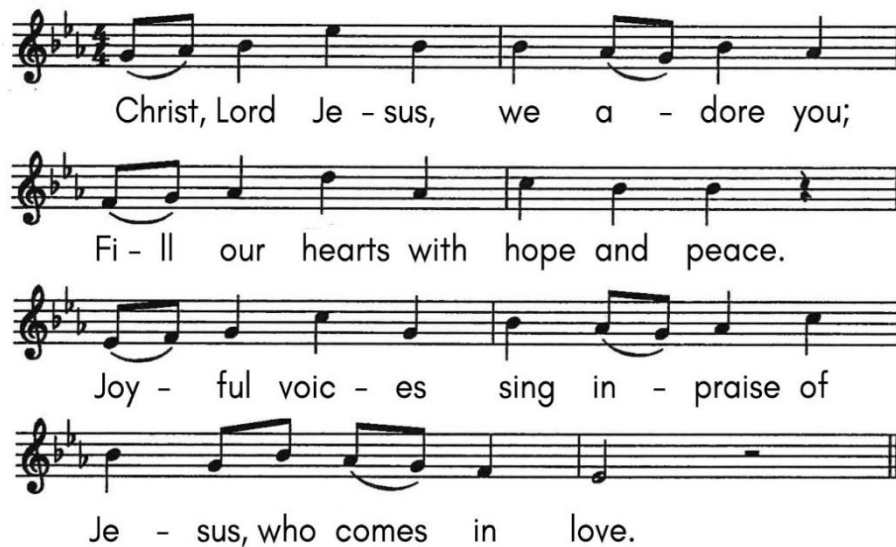
**\*LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE** / Don Andreas and family

(Don Andreas) Tonight we light the Christ candle. We celebrate that hope, peace, joy, and love are with us because Christ is born! "A child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6).

**(All) Christ is Emmanuel, God-with-us! Amen!**

**\*CHRIST CANDLE SONG** Led by Kris Lovekin, Hymn Leader

# Christ Candle Song



Adapted from "Come, Lord Jesus, We Are Waiting"  
Original Music by Dorothy Christopherson  
Modified Word by the Rev. J. T. Kim

## **\*CHRISTMAS PRAYER (UNISON) / ALL** Led by Liturgist

**O God, full of grace, we thank you for calling us together to this joyful worship celebrating the birth of Jesus. We've been waiting these past four weeks, lighting the candles of hope, peace, joy, and love. Today we rejoice that Christ is born! As we light the candle of Christ, celebrating the light of the world that has come, we are deeply grateful that the light of life has shined in all dark corners of the world. Shine your light into the dark corners of our hearts too. Brighten our path so that we may walk closer to your love and justice. Make us the messengers of Jesus' light, so that wherever we go, we may share the love and grace of Christ. Help us be born anew today. We pray in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, the light of the world. Amen.**

**INTERLUDE:** "What Child Is This?" by Anna Laura Page / The Allegro Ringers, directed by Gayla Lonsbery

## **\*GOSPEL READING: Luke 2:1-20 (NRSV) / Liturgist**

### ***The Birth of Jesus***

**<sup>1</sup>In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. <sup>2</sup>This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. <sup>3</sup>All went to their own towns to be registered.**

**<sup>4</sup>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.**

<sup>5</sup> He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. <sup>6</sup> While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. <sup>7</sup> 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.

*The Shepherds and the Angels*

<sup>8</sup> In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup> Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. <sup>10</sup> 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: <sup>11</sup> to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord.

<sup>12</sup> This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.' <sup>13</sup> And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

<sup>14</sup> 'Glory to God in the highest heaven,  
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!'

<sup>15</sup> 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.' <sup>16</sup> So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. <sup>17</sup> When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; <sup>18</sup> and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them.

<sup>19</sup> But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. <sup>20</sup> The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

(Liturgist) This is the Gospel of Christ!

**(All) Glory to you, O Christ! Amen!**

**INTERLUDE** "Night of Silence" by Daniel Kantor / Kris Lovekin, Valerie Othon, and Kate Lovekin, accompanied by Robert Phillips

**SERMON: "HEAVEN MEETS EARTH!"** / The Rev. J. T. Kim, Pastor

**\*HYMN OF DEDICATION: #234** "O Come, All Ye Faithful" by John F. Wade

Verse 1

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,

O come ye, O come ye, to Bethlehem.

Come and behold him, born the King of angels;

Refrain:

O come, let us adore him,

O come, let us adore him,

O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord

### Verse 3

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation;  
O sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!  
Glory to God, all glory in the highest;

Refrain:

O come, let us adore him,  
O come, let us adore him,  
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord

### Verse 5

Child, for us sinners poor and in the manger,  
we would embrace thee with love and awe.  
Who would not love thee, loving us so dearly? (Refrain)

**INVITATION TO THE OFFERING** (Adapted from Matt. 2, Luke 2) / Liturgist

(Liturgist) Kings brought gifts. Angels sang praise. Shepherds told tales. Every gift we have to offer the Christ child is a precious gift, blessed by God. Bring your gifts. Bring your hearts. Bring your lives, in gratitude and celebration of the Christ child whose birth we celebrate this night.

**(All) Amen!**

(Liturgist) The ushers to come to receive our offerings.

**OFFERTORY:** "Angels We Have Heard on High" by Alec Wyton

**\*DOXOLOGY: #95** "Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow" by Thomas Ken

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise him, all creatures here below;  
praise him above, ye heavenly host; praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

**\*UNISON PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING** (Adapted from Isa 9, Titus 2, Luke 2) / Led by Liturgist

**Beautiful Savior, we are so grateful for your birth so many years ago, and we are so joyful to have your presence in our lives this night. In gratitude, we offer our gifts, however humble they might be. Transform our gifts with your glory and grace, that our gifts might become grace and love, and light and hope, for a world in need of you. Amen.**

## **HOLY COMMUNION**

### **THE GREAT THANKSGIVING FOR CHRISTMAS EVE**

(Pastor) The Lord be with you.

**(People) And also with you.**

(Pastor) Lift up your hearts.

**(People) We lift them up to the Lord.**

(Pastor) Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**(People) It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

(Pastor) It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Almighty God, creator of heaven and earth. You created light out of darkness and brought forth life on the earth. You formed us in your image and breathed into us the breath of life. When we turned away, and our love failed, your love remained steadfast. You delivered us from captivity, made covenant to be our sovereign God, and spoke to us through your prophets.

In the fullness of time you gave your only Son Jesus Christ to be our Savior, and at his birth the angels sang glory to you in the highest and peace to your people on earth. And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

**(All Sing) Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

(Pastor) Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ. As Mary and Joseph went from Galilee to Bethlehem and there found no room, so Jesus went from Galilee to Jerusalem and was despised and rejected. As in the poverty of a stable Jesus was born, so by the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection you gave birth to your Church, delivered us from slavery to sin and death, and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit.

As your Word became flesh, born of woman, on that night long ago, so, on the night in which he gave himself up for us, he took bread, gave thanks to you, broke the bread, gave it to his disciples, and said: "Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

When the supper was over he took the cup, gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said: "Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ's offering for us, as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

**(All Sing) Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.**

## **PRAYER OF CONSECRATION**

(Pastor) Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here, and on these gifts of bread and wine. Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ, that we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood. By your Spirit make us one with Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world, until Christ comes in final victory, and we feast at his heavenly banquet.

**(All) Through your Son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy Church, all honor and glory is yours, Almighty God, now and forever.**  
**(All Sing) Amen. Amen. Amen.**

### **SHARING OF THE BREAD AND CUP**

(Pastor) Please take your Bread and Cup now in this sanctuary and at your home if you are partaking in this communion via online or telephone!

**COMMUNION VOLUNTARY:** "In the Bleak Midwinter" by Allen Orton Gibbs

### **\*CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHTING**

*(Pastor first lights his candle from the Christ Candle; then gives it to the designated Light Bearers.)*

(Pastor) Tonight, we celebrate that Jesus Christ is the Light of the world! The Light has come into our world, overcoming all our darkness. To celebrate this joy, let us now share the Light of Christ. The Light of God is given for you – given to you – and by you it is given to others!

**(All) Jesus is our Light! Amen!**

(Pastor) As we're going out to make a big circle in the patio, let us sing "Silent Night, Holy Night."

**\*SENDING HYMN: #239 "Silent Night, Holy Night"** by Joseph Mohr, John F. Young, and Franz Gruber / **All**

#### **Verse 1**

**Silent night, holy night,  
all is calm, all is bright  
round yon virgin mother and child.  
Holy infant, so tender and mild,  
sleep in heavenly peace,  
sleep in heavenly peace. (Repeat)**

**\*BENEDICTION** / Pastor J.T. Kim

(Pastor) "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!" **(All) Amen!**

The beautiful poinsettias you bought, in honor and memory of loved ones,  
may be taken home to enjoy after this service.

*~~ Poinsettia Dedications ~~*

**In honor of:**

**Katrina, John, Lilly and Julia Zeeb by Cindy Marr**

**Patrick, Renee, and Teagan Bong by Cindy Marr**

**Shawna, Troy, and Cora Quinn Rupert by Cindy Marr**

**Rev. and Mrs. J.T. Kim by Rev. Roy and Cheryl Riggs**

**My sister and my 105-year-old aunt by Linda Rydzik**

**Kris Lovekin by Pat Williams**

**Valerie Othon by Pat Williams**

**Our parents Cindy Marr, Barbara and Bob Zeeb  
by John and Katrina Zeeb**

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**In memory of:**

**Rev. Dr. Lambert W. All by Mike Alfred**

**Our parents, Sylvia and Jim Alfred with love, Anne Alfred**

**Cesario Bandong, Jr. by the Arguelles family**

**Eliseo and Aurelia Enriquez by the Arguelles family**

**David Ashworth by Bill and Jeff Ashworth**

**Lynn Ashworth by Bill and Jeff Ashworth**

**Clifford Berger by Margaret Berger**

**Virginia Brawner by Becki Brawner**

**O.L. Brawner by Becki Brawner**

**Dave Cudney, husband, dad, granddad and dad-in-law  
by Loretta Cudney and her family**

**June G. Ward-Overton, Charles B. Overton, Maude L. Ward,  
Albert and Helen Fraser,  
by David Fraser and Sarah Overton-Fraser**

**My parents, Clifford and Lavaun Lundquist by Patti Gardenias**

**My father, Rev. Woon Sang Kim;  
my mother, Cha Sun Kim; and my sister, Kay Moon  
by Pastor J. T. Kim**

**Our moms, Pat Knowles and Doris Lewis Burgess  
by Don and Lyn Knowles**

**My parents, Clint and Gerry Marr by Cindy Marr**

**Laurel McDonald by the McDonald and Rice families**

**Kathleen Phillips  
by Robert Phillips**

**Dick, Rose, Russell and Dalene Riggs, and Bonnie Shomaker  
by Rev. Roy and Cheryl Riggs**

**Richard Williams and Laurie Williams by Pat Williams**

**Clint and Gerry Marr by John and Katrina Zeeb**

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### *The Week Ahead*

- Merry Christmas! Monday, 12/25 and Tuesday, 12/26 the church campus will be closed.
- Wednesday, 12/27 and Thursday, 12/28 the church office will be open 10 am – 2 pm.
- Thursday, 12/28, The Aldersgate will rehearse (Music room) – 7 pm.
- Friday, 12/29 – church office will be open from 10 am – 12 pm (New Year's holiday)
- New Year's Eve Sunday, 12/31:
  - Youth Bells Rehearsal (Sanctuary) – 9:30 am
  - New Year's Eve Worship Sanctuary – 10 am
  - Church School (Club Ark and Nursery) – 10:15 am



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