

KNOX-METROPOLITAN UNITED CHURCH

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Stushie Art

December 24, 2025

Christmas Eve

***Indicates please stand as you are able**

Prelude

Franz Liszt

"Weihnachtsbaum, *Adeste Fideles: March of the Three Holy Kings*"

***Call to Worship**

One: Isaiah declared, "The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light."

All: Light? But it's dark outside, we don't see a great light. Where is it?

One: Isaiah told the people seeking light, "A child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders."

All: A child? Born for us?

One: Isaiah proclaimed, "He is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." (Isaiah 9:6)

All: All those names for one little baby?

One: Indeed. Let us worship God who comes to among us tonight as a helpless infant named Jesus.

***Hymn "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"¹ (vv. 1, 2, 4, 7) VU #1**

O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel
that mourns in lowly exile here
until the Son of God appear.

Refrain
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, O Wisdom from on high,
who orders all things mightily;
to us the path of knowledge show,
and teach us in her ways to go. R

Refrain
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, O Rod of Jesse's stem,
from every foe deliver them
that trust your mighty power to save,
and give them victory o'er the grave.

Refrain

**Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel.**

**O come, Desire of nations, bind
all peoples in one heart and mind;
O bid our sad divisions cease,
and be for us the Prince of Peace. R**

Refrain

**Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel.**

Opening Prayer

**God of Cross and Cradle,
we have heard the story of your arrival so many times
it seems normal to us;
yet on that first Christmas night
in a town called Bethlehem,
your arrival was almost unbelievable.**

**As we recall the story
and make our own journey
to the manger,
be here among us.**

**Offer strength to the weary,
comfort to the sorrowful,
patience to the excited,
and joy to all of us.**

We pray in Christ's name.

Amen.

***Hymn "O Little Town of Bethlehem" ² (vv. 1-3) VU #64**

**O little town of Bethlehem,
how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
the silent stars go by;
yet in thy dark streets shineth
the everlasting light;
the hopes and fears of all the years
are met in thee tonight.**

For Christ is born of Mary;
and gathered all above,
while mortals sleep, the angels keep
their watch of wondering love.

O morning stars, together
proclaim the holy birth,
and praises sing to God the King,
and peace to all on earth.

How silently, how silently
the wondrous gift is given!

So God imparts to human hearts
the blessed gift of heaven.

No ear may hear his coming;
but in this world of sin,
where meek souls will receive him, still
the dear Christ enters in.

Scripture Reading

Luke 2:1-7

Elizabeth Calam

Reflection:

“Were You Born in a Barn?”

Hymn:

“Away in a Manger”³

VU #69

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.
The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,
the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,
but little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes.
I love you, Lord Jesus; look down from the sky,
and stay by my side until morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask you to stay
close by me for ever, and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in your tender care,
and fit us for heaven, to live with you there.

Lighting the Christ Candle

Miriam and Brianna Demofsky

One: Caesar Augustus demanded a census, so Mary and Joseph travelled the long, dusty road from Nazareth to Bethlehem. They arrived with many others, all travelling to be counted and there was nowhere for

them to stay. When Mary's first labour pains started, she looked at Joseph and whispered,

All: We will not be afraid.

One: In the corners of rooms, as they travelled on the roads, even on the hills while watching sheep, people shared stories of the Roman Empire. "What does Caesar Augustus want?" they asked each other. "How much longer must we wait for God's messenger, the Messiah?"

All: The world is turning, God is coming, and there is hope.

One: The night Jesus was born, on a lonely hillside full of sheep the sky blazed with the light of angels and the air rang with their voices. The shepherds cowered in fear and then heard their message. "To you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. You will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger."

All: God has done impossible things!

One: The shepherds ran, tripping over their own feet in their rush to see the child. They found Mary and Joseph and Jesus lying in a manger, just as the angels had said. In that helpless infant, God came among us in a whole new way.

All: God has moved into the neighbourhood.

One: Tonight, we light the Christ candle. God has arrived, our hope has been fulfilled, we can rest in the peace of God's presence, delight in the joy of God's arrival, and feel the comfort of God's abiding love. Christ is born, glory to God in the highest!

**Response: “Hope Shines as the Solitary Star”⁴ MV #220
(Hope, Peace, Joy, Love, Christ)**

Hope shines as the solitary star.

Faith is the inner light.

**You and I together mirror the Light of Lights,
and illumine the pathway home.**

Peace shines as the solitary star.

Faith is the inner light.

**You and I together mirror the Light of Lights,
and illumine the pathway home.**

Joy shines as the solitary star.

Faith is the inner light.

**You and I together mirror the Light of Lights,
and illumine the pathway home.**

Love shines as the solitary star.

Faith is the inner light.

**You and I together mirror the Light of Lights,
and illumine the pathway home.**

Christ shines as the solitary star.

Faith is the inner light.

**You and I together mirror the Light of Lights,
and illumine the pathway home.**

Scripture Reading

Luke 2:8-14

Elizabeth Calam

Reflection

“First Star to the Left”

*Hymn

“Angels We Have Heard on High”⁵

VU #38

**Angels we have heard on high
sweetly singing o'er the plains,
and the mountains in reply,
echoing their joyous strains.**

Refrain

Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

**Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be
which inspire your heavenly song?**

Refrain

**Gloria, in excelsis Deo!
Gloria, in excelsis Deo!**

**Come to Bethlehem and see
Christ whose birth the angels sing;
come, adore on bended knee
Christ, the Lord, the newborn King.**

Refrain

**Gloria, in excelsis Deo!
Gloria, in excelsis Deo!**

**See him in a manger laid,
whom the choirs of angels praise;
Mary, Joseph, lend your aid,
while our hearts in love we raise.**

Refrain

**Gloria, in excelsis Deo!
Gloria, in excelsis Deo!**

Scripture Reading: Luke 2:15-20 David Calam

Reflection "God Is In the Neighbourhood"

*Hymn "Joy to the World" VU #59

**Joy to the world! the Lord is come:
let earth receive her King!
Let every heart prepare him room,
and heaven and nature sing, and heaven and nature sing,
and heaven, and heaven and nature sing.**

**Joy to the earth! the Saviour reigns:
let all their songs employ,
while fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains
repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy,
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.**

No more let sins and sorrows grow,
nor thorns infest the ground:
he comes to make his blessings flow
far as the curse is found, far as the curse is found,
far as, far as the curse is found.

He rules the earth with truth and grace,
and makes the nations prove
the glories of his righteousness
and wonders of his love, and wonders of his love,
and wonders, wonders of his love.

Invitation to Give

Offertory "Weihnachtsbaum, *Old Times*" Franz Liszt

Offertory Hymn "In the Bleak Midwinter"⁷ (v. 4) VU #55

What can I give him, poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;
if I were a wise man, I would do my part;
yet what I can I give him—give my heart.

Prayers of the People

*Hymn "Silent Night, Holy Night"⁸ VU #67

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.

Silent night! Holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight:
glories stream from heaven afar,
heavenly hosts sing Hallelujah,
Christ the Saviour is born, Christ the Saviour 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.

*Commissioning and Benediction

*Choral Amen

VU #967

Postlude

"Weihnachtsbaum, Carillon"

Franz Liszt

Thank you to our guest musician Allison Luff for her musical leadership this evening.

Please drop your taper candles in the baskets by the doors as you exit this evening.

The poinsettias in the Sanctuary this morning are given to the Glory of God, and in loving memory of Edward (Ted) Corman and Shirley Corman from their children, Debra, Darcy (Brian) and Jim (Brenda), their grandchildren, Riley, Raegan, Jessica, Alex, Wesley and Matthew and their families.

Please join us for worship and coffee on Sunday, December 28th at 10:30 am for an intergenerational celebration of Christmas.

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