



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF FENTON

To be a loving community of faith dedicated to helping people know Jesus Christ and grow, share and serve as his disciples.

Christmas Eve

December 24, 2022 7:00 PM

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GATHERING AROUND THE WORD

PRELUDE	“Light of the World”	Pastor Robbie Carnes and Annabeth Carnes
	“Some Children See Him”	Dr. Ray Shuster
	“Noel” Cathy Hollopeter	
	“O Little Town of Bethlehem”	Pastor Robbie Carnes and Emily Hollopeter

WELCOME

INTROIT	“Birthday in a Manger”	Chancel Choir
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CALL TO WORSHIP

Once we walked in darkness.
Now we have seen a great light.
Glory to God in the highest!
Peace to all people on earth.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it.

He was in the world, and the world came into being through him, yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father’s only son, full of grace and truth. From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.

We light the candles of hope, love, joy and peace and tonight we light the Christ candle. The One who comes to save has come! The Light, piercing the darkness.

OPENING PRAYER

Glory to You, God Most High--you have given to us a Savior, the Messiah, the Lord--good news of great joy for all. Make us messengers of the gospel and shepherds of your people. Guide us always in paths of peace; through Jesus Christ we pray.

CAROL PH #147 BH #56 The First Noel (verses 1 and 2)

PROCLAIMING THE WORD

THE NATIVITY (from Luke 2:1-7)

Once, many, many, many years ago, in the country of Israel, far across the sea, on the other side of the world from us, a very special event took place. It happened when the emperor, Caesar Augustus, ordered that a census, a count of all the people, should be taken throughout the whole world. Everyone had to register all the members of their family, and they had to do this by going to the town where their great, great, great, great, great, great, ever so many great, grandfather lived.

There was a couple named Mary and Joseph, who lived in the village of Nazareth. They had to go down south to the town of Bethlehem, where King David had once lived, because he was their great, great, great, great, great, great, ever so many great, grandfather. It probably took Mary and Joseph three or four days to travel to Bethlehem.

Joseph and Mary are placed on the Creche

They took their donkey, which Mary rode with Joseph walking alongside. Mary was pregnant, and their baby was almost due. Joseph was sorry that Mary had to go on this long journey at this time in her pregnancy, but he couldn't leave her behind. And besides, Mary wanted to have Joseph with her whenever the baby was to be born. So there wasn't anything to do except for both of them to go to Bethlehem.

The Donkey is placed on the Creche

When they got there, the town was absolutely bustling with all the visitors. There were people everywhere and activities going on all over the place because everyone had come for the census. Joseph tried to find somewhere for them to stay, but every hotel and inn in the town was full. Finally, they found one whose kind owner, although he didn't have any room for them inside the inn, made a place for them in the stables. There they had a shelter for the night from the cold weather.

The Animals are placed in the Creche

After the long days of the Journey, the time came for Mary to have her baby. There in the stable, with the animals in their stalls, her first son was born. She wrapped him in a blanket and laid him in the manger. Mary and Joseph named him Jesus, as an angel had told them to do.

Baby Jesus is placed in the Creche

CAROL PH #114,115 BH #24,25 "Away in a Manger" (verses 1 and 2)

THE ANNOUNCEMENT TO THE SHEPHERDS (from Luke 2:8-14)

On the hills just outside of Bethlehem there were some shepherds spending the night with their flocks of sheep. It was dark and quiet on the hillside. Suddenly, there was a great light glistening in the sky, and they saw an angel.

The Angel is placed in the Creche

The glory of the Lord shone on them. They were so amazed that they were very frightened. Nothing like this had ever happened to them before. But the angel said to them, "Don't be afraid. I bring you good news which will be a great joy to all people. Today, in the town of Bethlehem, a Savior has been born, Christ the Lord. This will be the sign for you: you will find the baby wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger."

And suddenly there was a huge crowd of heaven's angels with the first angel, and they filled the whole sky with their song, "Glory to God in the highest and peace to his people on earth."

CAROL PH #143 BH #22 "Angels, from the Realms of Glory" (verses 1 and 4)

THE VISIT OF THE SHEPHERDS (from Luke 2:15-20)

When the angels had left and gone back to the heavens, the shepherds said to each other, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that the angels have told us about." So they left their sheep on the hillside and hurried off to Bethlehem.

Shepherds are placed in the Creche

When they got there, they looked around until they found Mary and Joseph in the stable, with baby Jesus lying in the manger. When they saw them, they told Mary and Joseph all the things that the angels had said about the child.

Then the shepherds returned to their flocks, singing and praising God all the way back. It had been just as the angels said it would be.

CAROL PH #136 BH #29 "Go, Tell It on the Mountain"

THE VISIT OF THE WISE MEN (from Matthew 2:1-11)

When Jesus was born in Bethlehem, Herod was king of Israel. He lived in a palace in Jerusalem. Soon after Jesus' birth, some men who studied the stars came from the east to Jerusalem. They had seen a new and special star in the sky, which showed them that a king had been born. They had traveled a long way to find the new king. They asked people in Jerusalem, "Where is the baby who is born to be king of the Jews?"

King Herod heard about this. It made him very upset because he was the king of Israel, and he didn't know anything about any baby who was going to grow up and be king instead of him. So he called the Jewish chief priest and teachers of the law to the palace, and he asked them where the Messiah was to be born. They said, "In Bethlehem, because that's what the prophet Micah said many years ago."

So Herod called the wise men who'd come from the east to a secret meeting. He asked them exactly what time the star had appeared. They told him. Then he sent them on to Bethlehem, and he said, "When you get there, search and find the child. Then come and tell me so I can go to Bethlehem and worship him too."

Away they went to Bethlehem. The star led them all the way. Eventually it stopped just over the place where Jesus was staying. The wise men were very happy about that. They went inside the house and saw the baby with his mother, Mary. They knelt down and worshiped him. Then they opened their bags and took out their gifts—gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.

Wise Men are placed in the Creche

CAROL PH #145 BH #53 "What Child Is This" (verses 1 and 3)

BEARING THE WORD OUT INTO THE WORLD

OFFERING

Let us honor God's great gift with gifts of our own. May God bless the gift to further his kingdom and may God bless the giver. Amen.

OFFERTORY "Sweet Little Jesus Boy"

Dr. Ray Shuster

LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

CHRISTMAS MESSAGE**SHARING THE LIGHT OF CHRIST**

As the light is passed lyrics will be projected on the screen.

Once your candle is lit please keep upright, tilt the unlit candle into the flame to light.

CAROL PH #122 BH #60 “Silent Night”

CHRISTMAS BLESSING

Jesus is Born! Go out into the world and share the good news!

Let all the people say, “Christ is born! Amen!”

Christ is born! Amen!

POSTLUDE “Joy to the World” Sunday School Bell Ringers

Peace be with you!

...and also with you!