

**First Presbyterian Church
Las Cruces, New Mexico
Christmas Eve Service
December 24, 2020 – 7 P.M.**

PRELUDE

“Comfort, Comfort, Now My People”	Gerald Near (b. 1942)
“A La Ru” (Hispanic Christmas Lullaby)	Karl Osterland (b. 1956)
“Softly O’er the Manger” (Incorporating Familiar Carols)	Janet Rand (1956)
“Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah” (Yiddish Folk Tune)	Wayne L. Wold (b. 1954)

WELCOME AND GREETING

MEDITATION

What came into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. He has rescued us from the power of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!

(John 1:4, Col. 1:13-14, 2 Cor. 9:15)

CHORAL INTROIT *Coral Introit*

“O Holy Night” Arr. Carl Deis
Beth Thomas and Elijah Estrada

*CALL TO WORSHIP
(Isaiah)

Rev. Norm Story

Leader: The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing. They shall see the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God. The Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel.

People: **Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come. He will come and save you."**

Leader: They shall know that I, the LORD their God, am with them, and that they are my people, says the Lord GOD. You are my sheep, the sheep of my pasture and I am your God, says the Lord GOD.

People: **Comfort, O comfort my people, says our God. He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead the mother sheep.**

*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!

*True God from true God, Light from light eternal,
born of a virgin, a mortal he comes;
very God, begotten, not created!*

Refrain

3rd verse – Choral Scholars

Refrain

*Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning;
Jesus, to thee be all glory given; Word of the Father,
Now in flesh appearing!*

Refrain

*PRAYER OF ADORATION AND THE LORD’S PRAYER

Eternal God, this holy night is radiant with the brilliance of your one true light. May that light illuminate our hearts and shine in our words and deeds. May the hope, the peace, the joy, and the love represented by the birth in Bethlehem this night fill our lives and become part of all that we say and do. On this night of glory and wonder, we pray for the troubled and lonely, for all who long for the promise of Christmas joy and blessings. May all receive the true light of your comforting arrival into their dark and fearful places of dread or regret. We pray this night you will speak to us, that we may welcome and receive the Christ-child afresh. Praying as Jesus taught his disciples, **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**

PLEASE BE SEATED

CAROL OF ANTICIPATION

“Gentle Mary Laid Her Child”

*Gentle Mary laid her child lowly in a manger;
there he lay, the undefiled, to the world a stranger.
Such a babe in such a place, can he be the Savior?
Ask the saved of all the race who have found his favor.*

*Angels sang about his birth; wise men sought and found him;
Heaven’s star shone brightly forth, glory all around him.
Shepherds saw the wondrous sight, heard the angels singing;
all the plains were lit that night; all the hills were ringing.*

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

Lyn and Judith Ames

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE

#146 “Gentle Mary Laid Her Child” (vs. 3)

*Gentle Mary laid her child lowly in a manger;
he is still the undefiled, but no more a stranger.
Son of God, of humble birth, beautiful the story;
praise his name in all the earth; hail the King of glory!*

Lesson 1 Carol	John 1:1-14, 17-18 #113 “Angels We Have Heard on High”	Janet Loman
Lesson 2 Carol	Isaiah 7:14, 9:2-7 #119 “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”	Steve Loman
Lesson 3 Carol	Luke 1:26-38 “#140 “Once in Royal David’s City”	Elizabeth Loman
Lesson 4 Carol	Matthew 1:18-25 #115 “Away in a Manger”	Sarah Loman
Lesson 5 Carol	Luke 2:1-7 #123 “It Came Upon the Midnight Clear”	Will Schroeder
Lesson 6 Carol	Luke 2:8-20 #121 “O Little Town of Bethlehem” ➤ Congregation to sing verses 1, 2, and 4 ➤ Choral Scholars to sing verse 3	Molly Schroeder

ANTHEM

“Angels’ Carol”

John Rutter

CHRISTMAS MEDITATION

Isaiah 9:2, 6-7

Rev. Norm Story

CELEBRATING JESUS CHRIST, THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

CAROL

“Silent Night”

STILLE NACHT

*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: “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.*

CHRISTMAS PRAYER

BENEDICTION

Leader: Merry Christmas!

People: **Merry Christmas!**

HYMN RESPONSE

“Joy to the World”

ANTIOCH

*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 Savior 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 world 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.*

POSTLUDE

Carol Improvisation

Howard A. Smolleck