



# NORTH WILKESBORO PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

WELCOMING • GROWING • SERVING • LOVING

## A SERVICE OF WORSHIP • CHRISTMAS EVE December 24, 2024 - 7:30 p.m.

Words of Welcome

Rev. R.C. Griffin

### WE BECOME AWARE OF GOD'S PRESENCE

#### Call to Worship

Caroline Czerkowski & Rebecca Skidmore

One: Children of God, we are gathered with hearts full of anticipation, our time of waiting and watching has brought us to this sacred moment. We arrive with assurance, knowing that God-with-us is here, ever present, surrounding us with grace and mercy.

One: As we gather tonight/today, we remember the promised gifts of the Messiah. In the lighting of five candles, we set our gaze upon beacons that sustain us through sleepless nights and restless days. We bear this light together.

One: We call this candle Hope...We call this candle Peace...We call this candle Joy...We call this candle Love...We call this candle Christ.

#### Sung Response (#91)

*Come, Come Emmanuel*

*Come, come Emmanuel. Come Emmanuel.*

One: Source of Infinite Love and Light, we celebrate the birth of hope made new, grateful for the faithfulness of your love. We rejoice in your unending presence, ever alive in the world. Your peace, powerful and still, quiets the fiercest storms. With hearts emboldened, we rest in the hope that never fades.

All: You are with us, nearer than our breath, even now.  
You, O God, are our hope, our peace, our joy and our love.  
You are our all-in-all.

**\*Hymn (#134)**

*Joy to the World*

### **WE OPEN OURSELVES TO GOD'S GRACE**

**\*Call to Confession**

Rev. Amanda Horan

**\*Prayer of Confession (#123, v.3)**

*It Came Upon the Midnight Clear*

*Yet with the woes of sin and strife the world has suffered long;  
Beneath the heavenly hymn have rolled two thousand years of wrong;  
And we at war on earth hear not the tidings that they bring;  
O, hush the noise and cease the strife to hear the angels sing!*

**\*Responsive Assurance of Pardon**

One: The steadfast love of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting.  
Know that you are forgiven and be at peace.

All: **Thanks be to God! Amen.**

**\*Sharing a Sign of Christ's Peace**

**\*Congregational Response (#113)**

*Angels We Have Heard on High, Refrain*

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

### **WE HEAR GOD'S WORD TO US**

**Prayer for Illumination**

**The Christmas Story**

Luke 2:1-20

*(One: Holy Wisdom, Holy Word. Many: Thanks be to God.)*

**Meditation**

Coming and Going

Rev. R.C. Griffin

**WE RESPOND TO GOD IN FAITH**

**\*Affirmation of Faith (#110)**

*Love Has Come*

**The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper**

**Invitation**

One: . . . Not only on a high mountain, but here at the Table,  
he has promised to meet us, in bread broken and cup poured out

**All: From his fullness we have all received grace upon grace.**

**Sung Response (#133)**

*O Come, All Ye Faithful, v. 1*

**Great Thanksgiving**

One: The Lord be with you.

**Many: And also with you.**

One: Lift up your hearts.

**Many: We lift them up to the Lord.**

One: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**Many: It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

One: Creator God, we give you thanks and praise...

... Therefore we break forth together into singing:

**Sung Response (#133)**

*O Come, All Ye Faithful, v. 2*

One: As you spoke long ago to our ancestors in many and various ways ...

... Celebrating these gifts from our Savior, we speak the mystery of faith:

**Sung Response (#133)**

*O Come, All Ye Faithful, v. 3*

One: Gracious God, pour out your Holy Spirit upon us ...

Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,

all glory belongs to you, O God, full of grace and truth.  
**All: Amen.**

**Breaking of the Bread**

**Communion of the People**

**Prayer of Gratitude**

**WE DEPART TO SERVE**

**\*The Candle Lighting Service**

**\*Candle Lighting Hymn (#122)**

*Silent Night, Holy Night!*

*After the singing of Silent Night, you may remain in your pews for a time of prayer and reflection, you may meet and greet those around you, or you may go to share the light and love of Christ. Merry Christmas to you all!*

**\*Please rise, in body or spirit.**



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# Come, Come Emmanuel

91

Musical notation for the first system of the hymn. It consists of a vocal line in treble clef and a piano accompaniment line in bass clef. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. The lyrics are: "Come, come Em - man - u - el. Come, Em -".

Musical notation for the second system of the hymn. It consists of a vocal line in treble clef and a piano accompaniment line in bass clef. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. The lyrics are: "man - u - el. man - u - el." The system is divided into two sections: "For repeat" and "Final ending".

*This Advent refrain centers on the name of Jesus meaning "God with us" (Matthew 1:23, quoting Isaiah 7:14). Intended for repeated congregational singing, it can be expanded by the addition of stanzas sung by a soloist or choir, or it can serve effectively as a prayer response.*

## Joy to the World

1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re - ceive  
 2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their songs  
 3 No more let sins and sor - rows grow, nor thorns in - fest  
 4 He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the na -

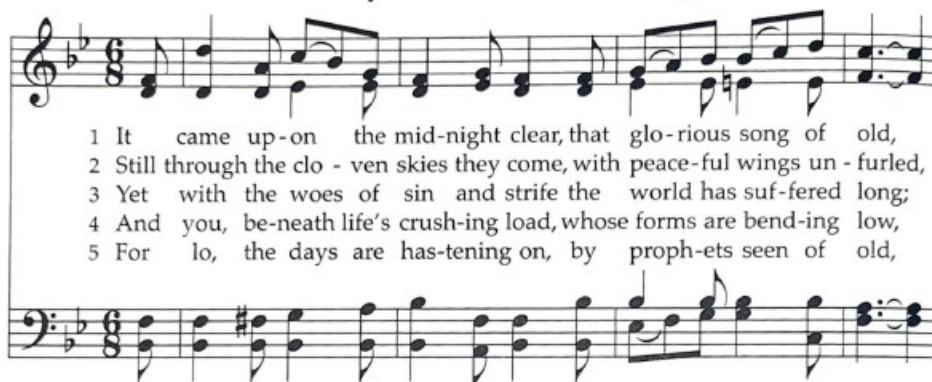
her king; let ev - ery heart pre - pare him room,  
 em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains  
 the ground; he comes to make his bless - ings flow  
 tions prove the glo - ries of his righ - teous - ness

and heaven and na - ture sing, and heaven and na - ture  
 re - peat the sound - ing joy, re - peat the sound - ing  
 far as the curse is found, far as the curse is  
 and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his  
 and heaven and na - ture sing,  
 and

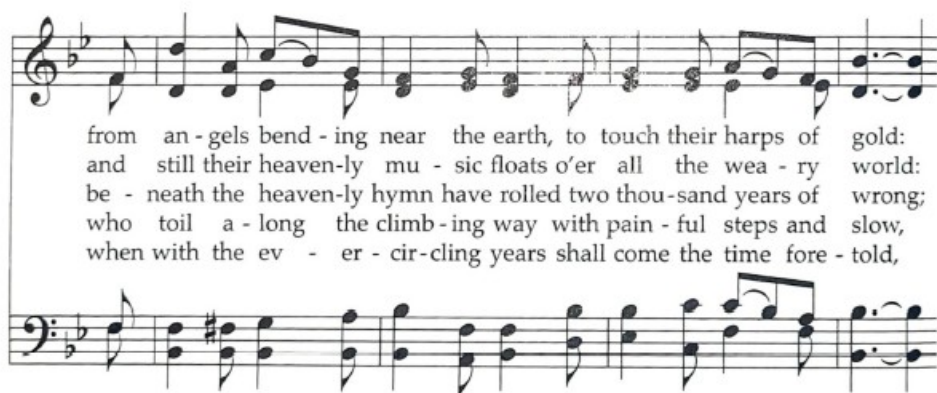
sing, and heaven, and heaven and na - ture sing.  
 joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.  
 found, far as, far as the curse is found.  
 love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.  
 heaven and na - ture sing,

While Isaac Watts did not write this text strictly for Christmas use, he did purposely cast his paraphrase of Psalm 98:4-9 in Christian terms, titling it "The Messiah's coming and kingdom." So "the Lord" here is Jesus Christ, rather than the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

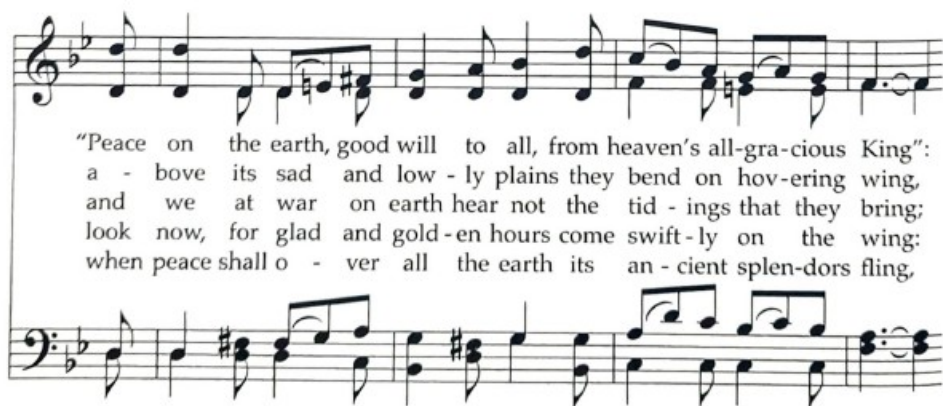
# 123 It Came Upon the Midnight Clear



1 It came up-on the mid-night clear, that glo-rious song of old,  
 2 Still through the clo - ven skies they come, with peace-ful wings un - furled,  
 3 Yet with the woes of sin and strife the world has suf-fered long;  
 4 And you, be-neath life's crush-ing load, whose forms are bend-ing low,  
 5 For lo, the days are has-tening on, by proph-ets seen of old,



from an - gels bend - ing near the earth, to touch their harps of gold:  
 and still their heaven-ly mu - sic floats o'er all the wea - ry world:  
 be - neath the heaven-ly hymn have rolled two thou-sand years of wrong;  
 who toil a - long the climb-ing way with pain - ful steps and slow,  
 when with the ev - er - cir-cling years shall come the time fore - told,



"Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heaven's all-gra-cious King":  
 a - bove its sad and low - ly plains they bend on hov-ering wing,  
 and we at war on earth hear not the tid - ings that they bring;  
 look now, for glad and gold - en hours come swift - ly on the wing:  
 when peace shall o - ver all the earth its an - cient splen-dors fling,

The "it" of the first line of this text by a Unitarian minister does not refer to the birth of Jesus, but to "that glorious song of old," the angelic tidings of peace on earth. The restored third stanza laments how often the noise of human strife has obscured that message.

# 113 Angels We Have Heard on High

1 An - gels we have heard on high, sweet-ly sing-ing o'er the plains,  
 2 Shep-herds, why this ju - bi - lee? Why your joy - ous strains pro-long?  
 3 Come to Beth - le - hem and see him whose birth the an - gels sing;

and the moun-tains in re - ply ech - o - ing their joy - ous strains.  
 What the glad - some ti - dings be which in - spire your heaven - ly song?  
 come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ, the Lord, the new - born King.

## Refrain

Glo - - - ri - a

in ex - cel - sis De - o! Glo - -

This French carol probably dates from the 1700s, though it was not printed until the following century. Because it uses a vernacular language for the narrative stanzas and Latin for the refrain, it belongs to a special category called "macaronic" or mixed-language texts.

TEXT: French carol; trans. James Chadwick, 1860, alt.  
 MUSIC: French carol; arr. Edward Shippen Barnes, 1937  
 Music © 1937, ren. 1965 H. Augustine Smith Jr.

(admin. Fleming H. Revell Company, a div. of Baker Publishing Group)

GLORIA  
 7.7.7.7 with refrain

# Love Has Come

110

Capo 3: (D) F (Bm7) Dm7 (Em7) Gm7 (A) C

1 Love has come: a light in the dark - ness!  
 2 Love is born! Come, share in the won - der.  
 3 Love has come and nev - er will leave us!

(D) (Bm7) (Em) (A7) (D)  
 F Dm7 Gm C7 F

Love shines forth in the Beth - le - hem skies. See, all  
 Love is God now a - sleep in the hay. See the  
 Love is life ev - er - last - ing and free. Love is

(A) (D) (Bm) (D) (A) (G) (D)  
 C F Dm F C B<sup>b</sup> F

heav - en has come to pro - claim it; hear how their song of  
 glow in the eyes of his moth - er; what is the name her  
 Je - sus with - in and a - mong us. Love is the peace our

(Em7) (F#7) (G) (A) (Bm) (A7)  
 Gm7 A7 B<sup>b</sup> C Dm C7

joy a - ris - es: Love! Love! Born un - to you, a  
 heart is say - ing? Love! Love! Love is the name she  
 hearts are seek - ing. Love! Love! Love is the gift of

(D) (A) (G) (A) (D) (A) (A7) (Dsus) (D)  
 F C B<sup>b</sup> C F C C7 Fsus F

Sav - ior! Love! Love! Glo - ry to God on high.  
 whis - pers. Love! Love! Je - sus, Em - man - u - el.  
 Christ - mas. Love! Love! Praise to you, God on high!

Here is a chance to sing a familiar French carol tune with new words, the most important clearly being "Love." The senses "seen and heard" (as in Acts 4:20 and elsewhere) organize the first two stanzas, while the third holds the summary statement: "Love is the gift of Christmas."

# O Come, All Ye Faithful 133

1 O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant; O come  
 2 True God from true God, Light from light e - ter - nal, born  
 3 Sing, choirs of an - gels; sing in ex - ul - ta - tion; sing,  
 4 Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this hap - py morn - ing; Je -

ye; O come ye to Beth - le - hem! Come, and be - hold him,  
 of a vir - gin, a mor - tal he comes; ver - y God, be -  
 all ye cit - i - zens of heaven a - bove! Glo - ry to God, all  
 sus, to thee be all glo - ry given; Word of the Fa - ther,

*Refrain*

born the King of an - gels!  
 got - ten, not cre - at - ed! O come, let us a - dore him; O come, let  
 glo - ry in the high - est!  
 now in flesh ap - pear - ing!

us a - dore him; O come, let us a - dore him, Christ, the Lord!

From its Roman Catholic origins, this 18th-century hymn has spread to worldwide use by many denominations in both Latin and vernacular versions. Once popular with a wide range of hymn texts, this tune is now firmly associated with this Christmas text from which it is named.

# Silent Night, Holy Night! 122

1 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! All is calm, all is bright  
 2 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Shep - herds quake at the sight;  
 3 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Son of God, love's pure light  
 4 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Won - drous star, lend thy light;

'round yon vir - gin moth - er and child! Ho - ly In - fant, so ten - der and  
 glo - ries stream from heav - en a - far, heav - en - ly hosts sing "Al - le - lu -  
 ra - diant beams from thy ho - ly face, with the dawn of re - deem - ing  
 with the an - gels let us sing Al - le - lu - ia to our

mild, sleep in heav - en - ly peace, sleep in heav - en - ly peace.  
 ia: Christ the Sav - ior is born; Christ the Sav - ior is born!"  
 grace, Je - sus, Lord, at thy birth, Je - sus, Lord, at thy birth.  
 King: Christ the Sav - ior is born; Christ the Sav - ior is born.

## GERMAN

- 1 *Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht!  
 Alles schläft, einsam wacht  
 nur das traute, hochheilige Paar.  
 Holder Knabe im lockigen Haar,  
 schlaf in himmlischer Ruh,  
 schlaf in himmlischer Ruh!*

## KOREAN

- 1 *고요한밤 거룩한밤  
 어둠에 묻힌밤  
 주의부모 앉아서  
 감사기도 드릴때  
 아기잘도 잔다  
 아기잘도 잔다*

## SPANISH

- 1 *¡Noche de paz, noche de amor!  
 Todo duerme en derredor,  
 entre los astros que esparcen su luz,  
 bella, anunciando al niño Jesús,  
 brilla la estrella de paz,  
 brilla la estrella de paz.*

The tradition that this carol's tune was created for guitar accompaniment at its first singing on Christmas Eve 1818 seems reliable, though a recent find shows that the text was about two years old. But there is no question that this is now a favorite Christmas carol worldwide.