



CHRISTMAS

Christmas Eve Family Worship

December 24, 2021, 5:00 pm

Abington Presbyterian Church, Abington, Pennsylvania

Christmas Eve Worship

5:00 p.m. Family Service

Friday, December 24, 2021
Abington Presbyterian Church
Abington, Pennsylvania

PRAYER BEFORE WORSHIP *(Invite young children to pray with you, too.)*
O welcome, little Christmas Guest,
Dear Jesus, from above;
Upon Thy face, so pure and mild,
We see God's smile of love.
Amen

PRELUDE Student Christmas Preludes

WELCOME

INTROIT Glory to God *Michael Bedford*

* LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

* OPENING HYMN O Come, All Ye Faithful *Hymn #133, v. 1 & 3*

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!

3. Sing, choirs of angels,
Sing in exultation!
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God, all
Glory in the highest! *(Refrain)*

THE MESSAGE FOR ALL

The Rev. Aaron Twitchell

OFFERTORY INVITATION

* HYMN

O Come, Little Children
O come, little children, O come, one and all!
O come to the manger in Bethlehem's stall,
To see baby Jesus, asleep on the hay,
He came to bring joy to all children today.

THE HOLY FAMILY IS HERE

a Christmas pageant play by Ruth Sall

SCENE 1: After church on a Sunday morning in the fall.

HANDBELL ANTHEM

Away in a Manger

arr. Frances L. Callahan

HYMN

Away in a Manger

Hymn #115, v. 1

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

SCENE 2: At the Holly's House that night at dinner

* HYMN

Angels We Have Heard on High

Hymn #113, v. 1&2

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

Refrain: Glo - - - ria in excelsis Deo!
Glo - - - ria in excelsis Deo!

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

Refrain: Glo - - - ria in excelsis Deo!
Glo - - - ria in excelsis Deo!

CHOIR ANTHEM

Shepherds' Yodel Carol

Ronald A. Nelson

SCENE 3: The Christmas Program Rehearsal

CHOIR ANTHEM

Carol of the Children

John Rutter

SCENE 4: Christmas Eve

HYMN

Silent Night

Hymn #122, v. 1&2

Please turn on your candle and remain seated while we sing

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.
2. **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."

HYMN

Joy to the World

Hymn #134, v. 1&2

1. **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.
2. **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.

BLESSING

* POSTLUDE

Finale from Symphony II

Louis Vierne

Worship Leaders: The Rev. Aaron Twitchell, John Sall, Ruth Sall, Erik Meyer, Cherub Choir, Carol Choir and Joyful Ringers.

Cherub Choir– Charlotte Boutcher, Ainsley Kelly, Maddie McAllister, Henry Palumbo

Carol Choir– Anna Colt, Shane Boyd, Sawyer Boyd, Alexander Constable, Cole Constable, Claire Enama, Molly Gould, Alton Jones, Baxter Jones, Charlotte Jones, Bradyn Kelly, Juliet Palumbo, Taylor Richardson,

Joyful Bell Choir– Anna Colt, Bradyn Kelly, Alexander Constable, Cole Constable, Issac Burgos, Gabriela Burgos, Baxter Jones, Molly Gould

The Holy Family is Here by Ruth Sall

Cast List

Pastor– Pastor Aaron Twitchell

Mr. Holly– Aaron McAllister

Mrs. Holly– Cary McAllister

Holly Children– Maddie McAllister, Ainsley Kelly, Alexander Constable

Narrators– Isaac Freeman, Anna Colt, Alton Jones, Jacob Freeman and Cole Constable

Directors– Anna Colt and Taylor Richardson

Head Angels– Molly Gould and Charlotte Jones

Head Shepherd– Bradyn Kelly

Innkeeper– Claire Enama

Angels– Juliet Palumbo, Baxter Jones, Jacob Freeman, Charlotte Boutcher, Josie Cardellino

Shepherds– Alton Jones, Cole Constable, Isaac Freeman, Henry Palumbo, Shane Boyd, Sawyer Boyd

Prelude Participants: Children and Youth of Abington Presbyterian Church

Candle Lighters: The Wysocki family

Note from Ruth Sall, Author of *The Holy Family is Here*:

In the fall of 2019, months before Covid came to be, I was asked by Sparkhouse, the publisher of our Sunday school curriculum, to help develop a Christmas program that they could publish online. I was so excited and started to brainstorm what kind of play or event I would create. As I delved into the project it became clear that my favorite part of Christmas was helping create the Christmas Eve Family service here at APC. The service changes from year to year but always has one constant—a tableau of the Holy Family in the stable with a real baby, Mary and Joseph, shepherds, angels, and sometimes a few animals (well, kids dressed up as animals). Whether we surround the Christmas story with music and readings or a children’s choir musical, the resulting picture is always one of great delight for the congregation. The newest baby in the church and their family members portray the Holy Family, and we see a live nativity in our worship space. This play is a fictional telling of many different experiences I’ve had coordinating the family service. From nervous little angels and shepherds to loud directors, kids are always moved and changed by embodying the Christmas narrative. Nearly every family that portrays the Holy Family tells me later that it was an amazing and humbling experience to play the roles of Mary and Joseph arriving in an overcrowded city, pregnant and exhausted, looking for a place to rest and to be safe. It’s even more exciting to watch the families with older siblings who participate alongside their new baby brother or sister, looking on in awe and wonder at the scene in the stable when the congregation sings “Silent Night.” (I have also witnessed them lying down on the slate floor in our chancel and staring at the ceiling because this is too much and they are finished being a shepherd.) However it comes together, a living nativity is an amazing moment to stoke children’s imaginations as they wonder about baby Jesus. This program offers a fun “behind-the-scenes” look at a Christmas pageant. The rehearsals change into the real show as it plays out. By the end of the program, everyone can feel enveloped in the wonder of being part of the night our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ was born. Today is the premier performance of *The Holy Family is Here*. I hope that churches around the country come to find this play and incorporate it into their Advent and Christmas worship sometime. For us, it has been a fun experience of seeing a new program come to life with amazing actors, singers and ringers. Merry Christmas!



