

IN THE NAME OF THE ONE WHO HAS COME, WELCOME.
This service, purposefully more brief with no "big" sermon, is for the child in all of us. It is also for The Child who comes this night for all of us. The stable that first Christmas night was neither quiet nor sterile, yet it was holy and peaceful because of God's presence in that Child. May the presence of The Child among these many children bring us a night that is holy and peaceful - and lively and lovely.

A CHRISTMAS SERVICE FOR THE CHILD

The child in all of us
The Child who comes for all of us;

PRELUDE "The Holy Boy" John Ireland
"Canonic Sonata No. 2 in G Major, 1. Spiritoso & III,
Allegro assai" G.P. Telemann
"Christmas Prelude" Charles Callahan

***HYMN 283** "O Come, All Ye Faithful" ADESTE FIDELES

*THE INVOCATION and A LITANY FOR CHRISTMAS

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Unto us a Child is born;

Christ is born today!

Unto us a Son is given;

Christ is born today!

For the world, for this time, for these needs,

Christ was born for this!

For the joy, the peace, the hope of God,

Christ was born for this!

For our doubts, our fears, our sins,

Christ was born to save!

For our hearts, our minds, and our bodies,

Christ was born to save!

Unto us a Child is given,

Christ is born in us this night!

Glory to God in the highest,

And peace to God's people on earth!

*PRAYER OF THE DAY (in unison)

Pastor: Almighty God,

All: **you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that here on earth we may walk in the light of Jesus' presence and in the last day wake to the brightness of his glory; through your Son, Jesus Christ our new-born Lord who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

WORD OF WELCOME

Jim Hedlund

FIRST LESSON - Isaiah 9: 2, 6-7 "They.... have seen a great light"

HYMN 289 "Angels We Have Heard on High" (vs 1)

GLORIA

SECOND LESSON - Titus 2: 11-14 "...that makes us children"

HYMN 277 "Away in a Manger"

AWAY IN A MANGER

*THE HOLY GOSPEL - Luke 2: 1-20 "Good tidings of great joy"

CHILDREN'S SERMON "Named"

Pastor Bair

OFFERING

OFFERTORY "Interlude on the Coventry Carol"

W.S. Lloyd-Webber

THE CANDLELIGHTING "Cradle Song"

Johannes Brahms

You that hover over the palm trees in night so deep,
O holy angels, quiet the branches! My child is asleep.
O palm trees of Bethlehem, the winds are lashing!
Why must you toss so with angry crashing?
O hush your raging!
Come bow down now and silence keep;
Quiet the branches, my child is asleep.

The electric lights in the nave will be turned off to symbolize the darkness of the world into which the Light has come. The light will come to you from the Paschal Candle via candles held by ushers in the center aisle, and then out the pews. To receive the light, tilt your unlighted candle into the flame of the lighted candle. To share the light, HOLD YOUR LIGHTED CANDLE UPRIGHT and allow the unlighted candle to lean into the Light. THE LIGHTED CANDLE IS NEVER TILTED, because symbolically, The Light does not bow to the darkness.

*THE GOSPEL OF THE INCARNATION - John 1: 1-18

***HYMN 281** "Silent Night, Holy Night"

STILLE NACHT

*PRAYERS

*THE LORD'S PRAYER "Our Father, who art. . ."

Page 145

*BENEDICTION

Please extinguish your candle after the benediction.

***HYMN 270** "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"

MENDELSSOHN

POSTLUDE "In dulci jubilo"

Dietrich Buxtehude

PLEASE RETURN YOUR CANDLE to the box near the door.

**Please stand for this part of the liturgy or remain seated as you need.*

† † † † † † †

THANKS TO Hansi Hoskins, Ruth Grigorov, Katie Pritt Fittipaldi, and Liisa Ambegaokar Grigorov for their musical contributions to this service.

FAITH & CARE: USHER: Joan Carlson; GREETER: Helen Swank; READERS: Ruth Grigorov & Helen Swank; ACOLYTES: Jaana & Ruth Grigorov.

THERE IS NO NURSERY during this service; all children are welcome in the "living room" for the worship.

Christmas Notes

THE CELEBRATION of Christmas was spread to Ireland by Patrick (461), to England through Augustine of Canterbury (604), to Germany through Boniface (754), to Scandinavia through Ansgar (865), through Cyril and Methodius to the Slavic peoples (869), through Adalbert to Hungary (997). Celebrations involved colorful services, carols and Christmas plays. Christmas celebrations came to this country with the settlers and missionaries. In New England, however, the zeal of the Puritans down-played the holiday. There Christmas remained outlawed until the second half of the 1800's, when Christians in great numbers arrived from Ireland and Germany bringing with them their celebrations of Christmas including the Christmas tree and wreath (Germany) and lights in the windows (ancient Gaelic).

NAMES. The original Latin names for Christmas are The Feast of the Nativity of our Lord or The Birthday of our Lord. Many countries use the name "nativity" to signify the celebration: La Navidad (Spanish), Karacsony (Hungarian), Boze Narodzenie (Polish), Rozhdestvo Khrista (Russian and Ukrainian). The French "Noel" comes either from the Latin "natalis" (birthday) or from "nowel" (news). "Christmas" comes from "Christ's Mass" -- the worship on that day. The German Weihnacht(en) means "blessed (or holy) night." Similar designations of a holy night are used in some Slavic languages.

THANKS: to all who helped decorate the church for the season. To Steve and Tammy Devlen for their wonderful building – and people – care. To Erik Kibelsbeck and choir for their gifts. To Jim and Betta Hedlund for arranging for the tree in the narthex.

GREETING. As originally used, the word "merry" did not denote "joyful, hilarious" but rather "blessed, peaceful, pleasant." Blessed, peaceful, and pleasant Christmas!

POINSETTIAS. This native plant of Central America is now widely-used in churches and homes at Christmas, because the flaming star of its red bracts resembles the star of Bethlehem. The plant is named for Dr. Joel Roberts Poinsett (1851) who brought the plant back to South Carolina from Mexico, where he served as U. S. Ambassador. The people of Mexico call the poinsettia "flower of the Holy Night". The legend is told of a poor child coming to church on Christmas and having no gift to offer to the Holy Child. He knelt outside the church and prayed. When he opened his eyes, springing up at his feet was this beautiful green plant with its dazzling red blossoms.

THE POINSETTIAS . You may take your plant after the 9:00 p.m. service tonight. We thank the many folks who helped decorate the church.

ST. LUKE MINISTERS:

The People of this Community

ST. LUKE STAFF:

Rick L. Bair	[rlb8@cornell.edu]	(h) 387-3479 Pastor
Erik Kibelsbeck	[ekibelsbeck@ithaca.edu]	Music Director
Michelle Gray	[lluthera@twcny.rr.com]	Admin. Assistant
Stephen Devlen	[srd4@cornell.edu]	Sexton
Tammy Devlen		Sexton

ST. LUKE OFFICE 607 273-6811

ST. LUKE WEBSITE www.stlukeithaca.org

CHRISTMAS EVE

6:00 SERVICE

First Lesson:

ISAIAH 9:2, 6-7

2 The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.

6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.

7 Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.

Second Lesson:

TITUS 2: 11-14

- 11 For the grace of God has appeared for the salvation of all men.
- 12 training us to renounce irreligion and worldly passions, and to live sober, upright, and godly lives in this world,
- 13 awaiting our blessed hope. The appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,
- 14 who gave himself for us to redeem us from all iniquity and to purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.