

CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE
Opequon Presbyterian Church, Winchester, Virginia

December 24, 2016

5:00 p.m.

†Please stand if able.

All read bold print.

GATHER

PRE-SERVICE MUSIC FOR THE YOUNG AT HEART

CHRISTMAS CAROL SING

As we gather together, please remain seated, and join in singing the first verse of each of these familiar Christmas Carols:

*The First Nowell
Angels We Have Heard on High
It Came Upon the Midnight Clear
God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen
Joy to the World*

WELCOME

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT AND CHRIST CANDLES

..... Kristi, Matt, Bailey, Carter, Caleb & Brady Cooper

ADVENT PRAYER

O God, our hearts sing with joy and praise because of Jesus. At this happy season, we rejoice that Jesus came among us. By his birth and life, he has shown us that we are your people and that we are greatly loved. Help us to remember Christmas all year long by giving to others the gifts of life: hope, peace, joy, love, kindness and understanding. Amen!

GATHERING SONG *The Advent Candles* (Tune: *Away in a Manger*)

**A candle is burning, a flame warm and bright;
A candle of Hope in December's dark night.
While angels sing blessing from heav'n's starry sky
Our hearts we prepare now, for Jesus is nigh.**

**A candle is burning, a candle of Peace;
A candle to signal that conflict must cease.
For Jesus is coming to show us the way;
A message of Peace humbly laid in the hay.**

**A candle is burning, a candle of Joy;
A candle to welcome brave Mary's new boy.
Our hearts fill with wonder and eyes light and glow
As Joy brightens winter like sunshine on snow.**

**A candle is burning, a candle of Love,
A candle to point us to heaven above.
A baby for Christmas, a wonderful birth;
For Jesus is bringing God's Love to our earth.**

**We honor Messiah with Christ-Candle's flame;
Our Christmas Eve candles glad tidings proclaim.
O come, all ye faithful, rejoice on this night
As God comes among us, the Christian's true Light.**

†CALL TO WORSHIP

The impossible is about to happen in a stable. The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.

Those who lived in a land of deep darkness, on them has the light shined!

This is the evening when creation stood still and held its breath, for God was doing the most unbelievable work.

This is the evening when God embraced humanity from the inside, as one of us, from birth to death.

“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given.”

A child is born for US! A son is given to ALL of US!

We come to see the child that has been born, we come to gather in the glow of the stable, we come to sing with angels and wonder with shepherds.

Come and worship! Come and worship!

†CAROL NO. 133 *O Come, All Ye Faithful*

†CHRISTMAS EVE PRAYER

Living God, on this holy night we gather—to stand with shepherds, amazed at your glory; to sing with angels, rejoicing in your work;

to wait with Joseph, trusting in your promise; to sit with Mary, cradling your love. May the good news of this night inspire us to tell the world of our great joy: for to us is born a Savior, the Messiah, the Lord. Glory and praise to you forever! Amen.

†PASSING OF THE PEACE (Please share this prayer with those next to you)
May the peace of Christ be with you.
And also with you.

ENGAGE

BIBLE LESSON & DIALOGUE..... Luke 2:1-20

ANTHEM *Can You Hear It?*
Children's Choir, Carter Cooper, finger cymbals

CONVERSATION WITH THE CHILDREN..... "Building a Manger"

†CAROL NO. 114..... *Away in a Manger*

RESPOND

PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING AND INTERCESSION

THE LORD'S PRAYER (Hymnal p. 35, we say "debts" and "debtors" in the prayer)

OFFERING OF GIFTS

OFFERTORY *Carol*.....Arr. Whitworth

†CAROL NO. 119.....*Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*

†PRAYER OF DEDICATION

GO FORTH

SHARING THE LIGHT OF CHRIST.....*We Pass This Flame to You*

During the song, the ushers will come forward, light their candles, and proceed down the aisles, lighting the candle of the first person in each pew. You are asked to pass the light on to the person on your right or left. *Please only tilt the unlit candles.*

†CAROL *Silent Night! Holy Night!*

**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.**

**Silent night, holy night! Wondrous star, lend thy light;
with the angels let us sing, Alleluia to our King;
Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born.**

CCLI #1622560

†CHARGE AND BLESSING

†CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE

**Go, tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere;
Go, tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born!**

†POSTLUDE

COME AND WORSHIP, COME AND WORSHIP, WORSHIP CHRIST THE NEWBORN KING!

We joyously welcome you to worship tonight as we together celebrate the birth of Jesus. We feel greatly blessed that you are here! Like the shepherds, “let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” (Luke 2:15). Merry Christmas to you and your family!

TAKE CARE WITH THE CANDLES TONIGHT!

We encourage caution and the utmost care with an open flame in sharing the light of Christ at the conclusion of worship tonight. Please watch that each family member responsibly holds the candle upright so as not to drip wax and keeps the candle away from paper and bulletins at all times. Ushers will be watchful and ready to assist.

PARTICIPANTS IN TONIGHT’S SERVICE

David Witt	Pastor
Carole Witt	Director of Christian Education
William Heavner	Organist/Pianist
Susan Homan	Director of Music
Alan McKay	Beadle
The Williams Family	Greeters
Brenda Hawkins	Hospitality Greeter
Bailey & Matt Cooper	Lights
Pat Heavner, Keith McMurdo	Ushers

CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICE

Sunday, December 25—10:00 a.m.

Annual Service of Lessons and Carols

Special Children's Conversation, Special Music

Final Four Cents a Meal Offering

NEW YEAR'S DAY SERVICE

Sunday, January 1—10:00 a.m.

Isaiah 60:1-6, Matthew 2:1-12

Sermon "Celebrating the Journey"

Communion, Covenant Renewal Service