

Our Vision:
To Be the Lantern to Leisure World

Our Mission:
Lighting a pathway into Community.
Growing disciples in God's Love.
Sending the Hope and Joy of Jesus into the Community.

Leisure World Community Church
in Worship *December 24, 2022*

14000 Church Place
Seal Beach, CA 90740-5307

9:50 am
(562) 431-2503

Prelude: "Christmas Medley"

Hannah Yi, *pianist*

Opening Announcements — Pastor Johan Dodge

Welcome! Thank you for choosing to worship the risen Christ here tonight! Worship is often the first place that new people come into contact with this growing community of faith. And so if you are joining us for the first time, I say to you what I saw every Sunday. You are welcome here. Here is a place where all are welcome. For such is the love of God for God's Very Good Creation. If this is not yet your church home, we invite you to join us on Christmas Sunday morning at 9:50 am.

Please ensure that you received a candle when you entered the Sanctuary and be prepared to turn it on row by row when instructed.

The Ceremony of Candle Lighting:

Rev. Johan Dodge
Taylor White & Virginia Olejnik

Let us pray:
O Lord and giver of life, who gave to all the hope of everlasting life, grant that in truth we may seek your divine goodness; to the end that, ever guarded by your power, and conducted by the light of truth, we

may offer to you glory and thanksgiving, now and forever, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

It was dark, and Jesus had not come to them in the twilight, in the evening, in the black and dark night.

The darkness was on the face of the earth; it filled the eyes and nostrils and hearts of humanity until all cried for light lest the world be swallowed in death...

But the darkness grew beyond the cries, beyond the winds of the world, for the darkness was the chaos of souls lost in the landscape of confusion until light could illumine human hearts.

LIGHT CANDLE

The darkness was long, and ignorance struggles in layers of darkness at the edge of existence until GOD TOOK LIGHT FROM LIGHT and with it opened the eyes of his children.

And God saw that this light was good, for this was the new light of the world.

With this light you shall perceive all that is in my world. This light is truth, and it shall make you free.

In this light will your souls, your minds, your spirits, your hearts be illumined.

With this light you will not fear the terror by night or the arrow that flies by day, or the pestilence that walks in darkness or the destruction that wastes at noon.

From the beginning the new light, because it was good, dispelled layers of darkness, and those given it carried the light as it grew in living intensity in the long portals of their minds. The light found what was dark and showed the way that had been lost in the shadow of Babel. Yet, humanity did not embrace the light, for despite its misery it had grown fond of the darkness and fought against those who carried the light of truth.

But the brave keep coming. Not the prisons, the tortures of tyrants, not death could stop the search for that which is, for what the light reveals. The world was divided between those who sought life and light and those who would extinguish the light.

Thus the light was sent from God as a living being, and he came saying:

How blest are those who know their need of God; The kingdom of heaven is theirs. How blest are the sorrowful; They shall find consolation. How blest are the meek:

They are the strength of the world, because they are the tabernacles of God in the world. They are the little ones. They do not know themselves. The whole earth depends upon them. These are the ones for whom it was all created in the first place. They shall inherit the earth!

They are the only ones who will ever be able to enjoy life altogether. They alone appreciate the world and the things that are in it. They are the only ones capable of understanding God's joy. All else are too weak for that joy.

They are the clean of heart. They see God. Their luster and freedom is without limit. They reach out for us to comprehend our misery and drown it in the tremendous expansion of their own innocence, that washes the world with its light.

Come, let us go into the body of that light. Let us live in the cleanliness of that song. Let us throw off the darkness of the world. For this is what all hearts pray for when they cry out: "Thy will be done."

We long for the time when this light, this liberty, this truth, this unspeakable joy, this indefatigable love will catch us all and never let us go, when we shall never fall back from the Paradise of the meek and pure of heart into the forums of prudence where the wise of this world go up and down in sorrow and set their traps for a happiness that cannot exist.

Then, I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had vanished. I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready like a bride adorned for her husband. I heard a loud voice proclaiming from the throne: Now at last God is among the people. God will dwell among them, and they shall be God's people, and God shall be with them. God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be an end to death, and to mourning, crying, pain; for the old order has passed away.

Behold, I am making all things new. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, and I will be their God and they shall be my people. It will be my gift to the thirsty.

The glory of God gave to the city its light, and its lamp was the lamb. By its light shall the nations walk, and the kings of the earth shall bring into it all their splendor. The gates of city shall never be shut by day – and there will be no night.

Then he showed me the river of the water of life, sparkling like crystal, flowing from the throne of God to a manger in a broken world, a tiny room filled with a new light that warmed a world bitter with cold. This is my son, whose light is truth and will never fade.

Hymn Carol: “Adeste Fideles/O Come All Ye Faithful”

OPENING PRAYER: Pastor Johan

Eternal God, from the tabernacle of heaven to the poverty of a stable, your radiant light shines forth in a tiny baby wrapped in rags; such humble Love astounds us. In Jesus you have become one with us that we might become one with you. Open our hearts to joyfully receive his love that he may be born in us, and we in him, through Christ our Lord. Amen .

Hymn Carol: “O Holy Night”

Congregational Prayer – Marylee Thomsen

This night, this night is a night to remember. A night when home broke in on us. A night when we were not forgotten or alone or abandoned. This night. This night is the night when here and there

became one, when past and future combined in a breathless present. This is a night when we are home, in ourselves, in this family, in the God who loved us enough to walk beside us.

People:

We gather in the night to proclaim the light. We shrug off despair and embrace hope. We set aside conflict and choose peace. We push away despair by claiming joy. We overcome hate by rising into love. Because this night we know, even in the shadows of our doubts, we know that we are loved. That's what it means to be home.

Light the Christ Candle and all candles of the wreath.

Hymn Carol: "Away in a Manger"

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING – Marylee Thomsen

The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all. Jesus Christ has shown us how to live: loving God and neighbor, sharing what we have, engaging in acts of mercy and justice. As we celebrate his birth, and wait in hope for his coming again, let us bring the offerings of our lives before him.

[ushers, please come forward]

Offertory: "The First Noel"

Quartet

SCRIPTURE: - Marylee Thomsen

Isaiah 40:1-2a, 3-5, 10-11a; 49:13

Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned.

A voice cries in the wilderness, prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the dessert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places plain. And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.

Behold the Lord will feed his flock like a shepherd, he will gather the lambs in his arms, he will carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young.

Sing for joy, O heavens, and exult, O earth; break forth, O mountains, into singing! For the Lord has comforted his people, and will have compassion on the afflicted.

[please stand as you are able]

Hymn Carol: “Angels We Have Heard on High”

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING – Marylee Thomsen

God of every good and perfect gift, we thank you for your greatest gift, your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. In this season when so many gifts are given and received, we pray that you will receive the gifts we offer now. Use them according to your purposes and plans, bringing your good news of great joy to all people; through Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION – Pastor Johan

God of glory, by your grace a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests on his shoulders, and in his name we pray.

Wonderful Counselor,

we pray for wisdom for the world’s leaders, that they may use their power to lift burdens and break the bonds of oppression.

Mighty God, we pray for the church of Jesus Christ our Lord, that you will multiply and increase our joy as we share in the harvest you have gathered. Everlasting Father, **we pray for families, friends, and loved ones, that those who now walk in deep darkness may see the great light of your saving love.**

Prince of Peace, **we pray for an end to violence and warfare, that your authority may continue to grow until there is endless peace in every land.**

Lord of hosts, establish your holy realm with justice and righteousness, from this time on and forevermore. **Amen.**

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION – Marylee Thomsen

Glorious God, in Jesus your grace appears, bringing salvation to all.
Help us to ponder your words of love by the light of your Spirit, that
we may proclaim glad tidings of peace and welcome Christ in our
world. Amen.

Hymn Carol: “Hark the Herald Angels Sing”

SCRIPTURE : Marylee Thomsen

Luke 2:1, 3-7

In those days a decree was issued by the Emperor Augustus for a registration to be made throughout the Roman world...For this purpose everyone made his way to his own town; and so Joseph went up to Judea from the town of Nazareth to Galilee, to register at the city of David, called Bethlehem, because he was of the house of David by descent; and with him went Mary who was betrothed to him. She was expecting a child, and while they were there the time came for her baby to be born, and she gave birth to a son, her first-born. She wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them to lodge in the house.

[please stand as you are able]

Hymn Carol: “Joy to the World”

SCRIPTURE : Marylee Thomsen

Luke 2:8-13, 15-16

Now in this same district there were shepherds out in the fields, keeping watch through the night over their flock, when suddenly there stood before them an angel of the Lord and the splendor of the Lord shone round them. They were terror-stricken, but the angel said, “Do not be afraid; I have good news for you: there is great joy coming to the whole people. Today in the city of David a deliverer has been born to you—the Messiah, the Lord. And this is your sign; you will find the child wrapped in his swaddling clothes, in a manger.” All at once there was with the angel a great company of the heavenly host praising God and saying... Gloria in excelsis Deo.
After the angel had left them and gone into heaven the shepherds said to one another, “Come, we must go straight to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to

us.” So they went with all speed and found their way to Mary and Joseph; and the baby was lying in the manger.”

Message: “Come From Away Part 1” Rev. Johan Dodge

Question for Reflection: Pastor Johan Dodge

This is a night for treasuring and pondering the gift and mystery of Christ’s incarnation. How is it possible, why is it necessary, and what does it mean for God to be a human infant, and for a human infant to be God?

Reflection: “It Came Upon a Midnight Clear.” Hannah Yi, pianist

BEING THE LIGHT — lighting of the candles of the congregation

Anthem: “God Rest Ye Merry Gentleman...and All” Quartet
while the quartet sings, the congregation’s candles will be lit and then the congregation will sing a cappella.

[please stand as you are able]

Hymn Carol: “Silent Night”

BLESSING: Pastor Johan

Deep peace of the running wave to you
Deep peace of the flowing air to you
Deep peace of the quiet earth to you
Deep peace of the shining stars to you
Deep peace of the watching shepherds to you
Deep peace of Christ, the Light of the World to you.

Blessed Be the Tie that Binds

Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love. The fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above. Amen.

O COME, ALL YE FAITHFUL

ADÈSTE FIDÈLES
The Jolly Holidays

Music by
JOHN F. WADE

"A"

Soprano

1. O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant, O come ye, O come ye to
2. Sing, choirs of an - gels, sing in ex - u - ta - tion, Sing, all ye cit - i - zens of
3. Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this hap - py morn - ing, Je - sus, to thee be all
4. Ad - é - ste fi - dé - les, lae - ti tri - um - phan - tes, Ve - ní - te, ve - ní - te in

Alto

Tenor

Bass

7

S Beth - le - hem; Come, and be - hold him, born the King of an - gels;
Heav'n a - bove! Glo - ry to God, all glo - ry in the high - est; O come, let us a -
glo - ry giv'n; Word of the Fa - ther, now in flesh ap - pear - ing;
Béth - le - hem: Na - tum vi - dé - te Re - gem An - ge - ló - rum: Ve - ní - te, a - do -

A

T

B

14

S dore him, O come, let us a - dore him, O come let us a - dore him, Christ, the Lord!
re - mus, ve - ní - te, a - do re - mus, ve - ní - te, a - do - re - mus Dó - mi - num.

A

T

B

O Holy Night

Transcribed by David Albulario for Leisure World Community Church, Seal Beach, California

English Words by
JOHN SULLIVAN DWIGHT
Based on *Cantique de Noël*
by Placide Cappeau

Music by
ADOLPHE ADAM



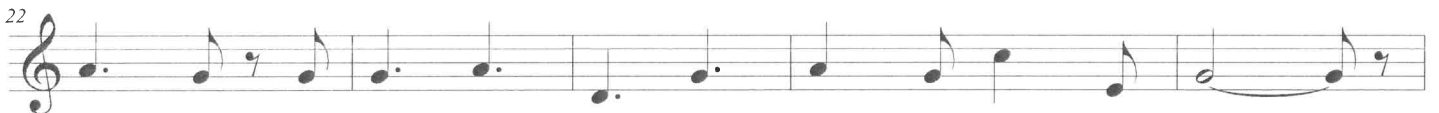
O ho-ly night, the stars are bright-ly shin - ing, it is the night of the dear Sav-ior's



birth. Long lay the world in sin and er - ror pin - ing, 'til He ap -



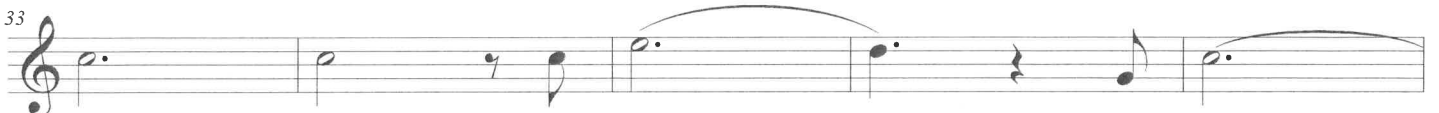
peared and the soul felt its worth. A thrill of hope, the wear - y world re -



joi - ces, for yon - der break a new and glo - rious morn.



Fall on your knees, oh, hear the an - gel



voic - es, O night di - vine,



O night when Christ was born. O night



di - vine, O night, O night di - vine!

Away in a Manger

The Jolly Holidays

1. A - way in a man - ger no crib for a
2. The cat - tle are low - ing the Ba - by a -
3. Be near me, Lord Je - sus, I ask thee to

4

S
bed The lit - tle Lord Jes - us lay down his sweet
wakes But lit - tle Lord Jes - us no cry - ing He
stay Close by me for - e - ver and love me, I

B

8

S
head The stars in the sky — look down where he
makes I love thee, Lord Je - sus! Look down from the
pray; Bless all the dear child - ren in thy ten - der

B

12

S
lay The lit - tle Lord Jes - us a - sleep on the hay.
sky, And stay by my cra - dle til morn - ing is nigh.
care And fit us for heav - en to live with thee there.

B

Angels We Have Heard On High

Transcribed and Adapted by David Albulario for Leisure World Community Church, Seal Beach, California

Words: French carol translated
by James Chadwick

Music: French carol melody *GLORIA*
Setting by Edward S. Barnes

$\text{♩} = 130$

The musical score is written for a four-part choir (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) in 4/4 time. It features a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The tempo is marked as 130 beats per minute. The score is divided into four systems, each with a measure number (1, 5, 9, 15) at the beginning. The lyrics are written below the vocal staves. The first system contains the first four lines of the carol. The second system contains the next four lines. The third system contains the line 'Glo - - - - ri - a, in ex-cel-sis De - o!'. The fourth system contains the same line. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and bar lines.

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 Christ whose birth the an - gels sing;
4. See Him in a man - ger laid, Whom the choirs of an - gels praise;

5 And the moun - tains in re - ply E - cho - ing their joy - ous strains.
What the glad - some ti - dings be, Which in - spire your heav'n - ly song?
Come, a - dore on bend - ed knee, Christ the Lord, the new - born King.
Ma - ry, Jo - seph, lend your aid, While our hearts in love we raise.

9 Glo - - - - ri - a, in ex-cel-sis De - o!

15 Glo - - - - ri - a, in ex-cel-sis De - o!

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

words by Charles Wesley

music: Mendelssohn, Felix Mendelssohn
adapt. William H. Cummings

1. Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new - born King; peace on earth and
2. Christ, by high - est heav'n a - dored; Christ the ev - er last - ing Lord! Late in time be -
3. Hail the heav'n-born Prince of peace! Hail the Sun of right - eous - ness! Light and life to

mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled!" Joy - ful, all ye na - tions, rise,
hold him come, off - spring of the Vir - gin's womb. Veiled in flesh the God - head see;
all he brings, ris'n with heal - ing in His wings. Mild he lays his glo - ry by,

join the tri - umph of the skies; with th'an - gel - ic host pro - claim "Christ is born in
hail th'in - car - nate de - i - ty, pleased on Earth with us to dwell, Je - sus, our Em -
born that man no more may die, born to raise each child of Earth born to give us

Beth - le - hem!" Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new - born King!"
man - u - el. sec - ond birth.

Joy to the World

words by Isaac Watts, alt.

tune: *Antioch*, George Frederick Handel
adapt. & arr. by Lowell Mason

1. Joy to the world! The Lord is come. Let earth re-ceive her King.
2. Joy to the earth! The Sav-our reigns. Let men their songs em-ploy
3. He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the na-tions prove

Let while ev-'ry heart pre-pare Him room, and
the the fields - 'ry and floods, rocks, hills and plains re-
glo-ries of His right-eous-ness and

heav'n and na-ture sing, and heav'n and na-ture
peat the sound - ing joy, re - peat the sound - ing
won - ders of His love, and

and re - heav'n and na - ture sing joy and
and peat won - ders of His love

sing, and hea-ven and hea-ven and na-ture sing.
joy, re - peat, won - ders, peat - ven the sound - ing joy.
love, and won - ders of His love.

heav'n and na - ture sing
peat the sound - ing joy
won - ders of His love

God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen ... and All

Transcribed by David Albulario for Leisure World Community Church, Seal Beach, California

Traditional English Carol

God rest ye mer - ry, gen - tle - men, let noth - ing you dis - may! Re -
God rest you al - so, wo - men, who by men have been e - rased, Through
God rest you, queer and ques - tion - ing, your an - xious hearts be still, Be -
God rest your mind, O hu - man - kind, let strife and con - flict cease. Re -

mem - ber Christ will bring love's light the dawn of Christ - mas day, To
his - to - ry ig - nored and scorned, de - filed — and dis - placed; Re -
lieve that you are deep - ly known and part of God's good will For
mem - ber love is ac - tive here, and on - ly to in - crease, To

lead us all from woe and sin when we have gone a - stray.
mem - ber that your sto - ries too, are held with - in God's grace.
all to live as one in peace; the glo - bal dream ful - filled.
car - ry us to well - springs of God's joy - ous hope and peace.

O — ti - dings of com - fort and joy, com - fort and joy, —

O — ti - dings of com - fort and joy. —

Silent Night

w6rds by Joseph Mohr
trans. John F. Young

tune by Franz Gruber, alt.
harm. by Carl H. Reinecke

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

round yon vir - gin moth - er and child. Ho - ly in - fant so ten - der and mild,
glo - ries stream from heav - en a - far, heav'n - ly hosts sing al - le - lu - ia.
ra - diant beams from thy ho - ly face with the dawn of re - deem - ing grace,

sleep in heav - en - ly peace, sleep in heav - en - ly peace.
Christ the Sav - iour is born, Christ the Sav - iour is born!
Je - sus, Lord at thy birth, Je - sus, Lord at thy birth.