

# CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE

Join us on Christmas Eve for a solemn night of holy reverence to our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, the final day of Advent.

**D:** Wednesday, December 24<sup>th</sup>

**T:** 7:00–8:00pm

**L:** Uptown Sanctuary

**Translation:** New King James Version, English Standard Version

**Passages:** Luke 1:26-56; Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 2:1-21; Matthew 2:1-12; Luke 2:22-38; Matthew 2:13-23; Luke 2:39-40; Revelation 3:11-13, 21:1-11,22-27, 22:1-5

## Narrative Outline (Scriptural Order):

- **Welcome & Introduction**
  - ♪ **It Came Upon a Midnight Clear (Love Song)**
- **The Birth of Christ Announced to Mary** — Luke 1:26-56
  - ♪ **What Child Is This** (“...in Mary’s lap sleeping...”)
- **The Birth of Christ Announced to Joseph** — Matthew 1:18-25
  - ♪ **O Come, O Come, Emmanuel**
- **The Virgin Birth** — Luke 2:1-7
  - ♪ **O Little Town of Bethlehem**
- **The Shepherds & Angels, “Glory in the Highest”** — Luke 2:8-20
  - ♪ **Hark! The Herald**
- **The Magi (Wisemen)** — Matthew 2:1-12
  - ♪ **We Three Kings**
- **The Gospel: Why God Sent His Son** — Rv.12:1-10 + 1Jn.3:8 + Jn.3:16-21 + Mt.4:17
  - ♪ **O Holy Night** (“Nails, spears...”)
  - ♪ **Silent Night, Holy Night**
- **Benediction**

## **Welcome**

Merry Christmas, good tidings, and welcome to this special candlelight service on Christmas Eve at the Uptown Church.

Tonight, we gather together to worship and celebrate, with the prophets and the apostles, with and our spiritual forefathers and our whole church family, the virgin birth of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, who conquered death and saved us from our sin nearly two thousand years ago.

## **Introduction**

The Messiah was prophesied to come when humanity fell into sin and death.

God said in Genesis 3:15,

“And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.”

Now we know that women do not have “seeds” — men do.

Yet it is from the seed of a woman that the cosmos would be saved.

This ‘seed’ long foretold at the foundation of the world was a prophecy of the virgin birth.

For millennia, God had given the faithful prophesies and visions of the long expectant Christ, who was to come, to save us all from the coils of Satan.

And at the turn of the age, the time had finally come.

♪ **It Came Upon a Midnight Clear (Love Song)**

## **The Birth of Christ Announced to Mary — Luke 1:26-56**

Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And having come in, the angel said to her, "Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!"

But when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was. Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end."

Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin and do not know a man?"

And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God. Now indeed, Elizabeth your relative has also conceived a son in her old age; and this is now the sixth month for her who was called barren. For with God nothing will be impossible."

Then Mary said, "Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her. Now Mary arose in those days and went into the hill country with haste, to a city of Judah, and entered the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth. And it happened, when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, that the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. Then she spoke out with a loud voice and said, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! But why is this granted to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For indeed, as soon as the voice of your greeting sounded in my ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. Blessed is she who believed, for there will be a fulfillment of those things which were told her from the Lord."

And Mary said:

“My soul magnifies the Lord,  
And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior.  
For He has regarded the lowly state of His maidservant;  
For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed.  
For He who is mighty has done great things for me,  
And holy is His name.  
And His mercy is on those who fear Him  
From generation to generation.  
He has shown strength with His arm;  
He has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.  
He has put down the mighty from their thrones,  
And exalted the lowly.  
He has filled the hungry with good things,  
And the rich He has sent away empty.  
He has helped His servant Israel,  
In remembrance of His mercy,  
As He spoke to our fathers,  
Abraham and to his seed forever.”

And Mary remained with her about three months, and returned to her house.

The prophecies of the Messiah were finally coming to pass:

“A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit. The Spirit of the Lord will rest on him—the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of might, the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the Lord—and he will delight in the fear of the Lord.”

**(Isaiah 11:1-3)**

♪ **What Child Is This** (“...in Mary’s lap sleeping...”)

## **The Birth of Christ Announced to Joseph — Matthew 1:18-25**

Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly. But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.”

So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet Isaiah, saying: “Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,” which means, “God with us.”

Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife, and did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son. And he called His name Jesus.

♪ **O Come, O Come, Emmanuel**

## **The Virgin Birth — Luke 2:1-7**

And it came to pass in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This census first took place while Quirinius was governing Syria. So all went to be registered, everyone to his own city.

Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed wife, who was with child. So it was, that while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

### **—— Matlock Lights the Lampstand and the White Candle ——**

And the voice of the Lord spoken through the prophet Isaiah was heard once more:

“For to us a child is born, to us a Son is given, and the government will be on His shoulders. And He will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the greatness of His government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David’s throne and over His kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever.” (**Isaiah 9:6-7**)

♪ **O Little Town of Bethlehem**

## The Shepherds & Angels, “Glory in the Highest” — Luke 2:8-20

Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid. Then the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger.”

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying:

“Glory to God in the highest,  
And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!”

So it was, when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another, “Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us.” And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger. Now when they had seen Him, they made widely known the saying which was told them concerning this Child. And all those who heard it marveled at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart. Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them.

Fulfilling the Scriptures spoken through the prophet Micah:

“But you, O Bethlehem, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me One who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days.” (**Micah 5:2**)

♪ **Hark! The Herald**

## The Magi (Wisemen) — Matthew 2:1-11

Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, Magi from the East came to Jerusalem, saying, “Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him.” When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. So they said to him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet Micah:

‘But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,  
Are not the least among the rulers of Judah;  
For out of you shall come a Ruler  
Who will shepherd My people Israel.’ ”

Then Herod, when he had secretly called the Magi, determined from them what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and search carefully for the young Child, and when you have found Him, bring back word to me, that I may come and worship Him also.”

When they heard the king, they departed; and behold, the star which they had seen in the East went before them, till it came and stood over where the young Child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceedingly great joy. And when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him. And when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts to Him: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

And so, the prophecy given to the Gentiles in Babylon, spoken through the prophet Daniel, nearly 700 years before, had finally come to pass:

“I was watching in the night visions, and behold, One like the Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him. Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom the one which shall not be destroyed.” (**Daniel 7:13-14**)

Then being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, the Magi departed to their own country by another way.

Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, “Arise, take the young Child and His mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I bring you word; for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy Him.”

When he arose, he took the young Child and His mother by night and departed for Egypt, and was there until the death of Herod, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, “Out of Egypt I called My Son.”

Then Herod, when he saw that he was deceived by the Magi, was exceedingly angry; and he sent forth and put to death all the male children who were in Bethlehem and in all its districts, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had determined from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying:

“A voice was heard in Ramah,  
Lamentation, weeping, and great mourning,  
Rachel weeping for her children,  
Refusing to be comforted,  
Because they are no more.”

♪ **We Three Kings**

## **The Gospel: Why God Sent His Son**

Now a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a garland of twelve stars. Then being with child, she cried out in labor and in pain to give birth. And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great, fiery red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads. His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to give birth, to devour her Child as soon as it was born. She bore a male Child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron. And her Child was caught up to God and His throne

And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, “Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down.

For this purpose the Son of God appeared, to destroy the works of the devil.

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through Him. He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God.

### **—— Congregation Lights Candles ——**

“Repent, and believe, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

For the Son of God became the Son of Man so that the sons of men may become the sons of God.