

Christmas Eve: December 24, 2021

Christmas Eve Service 2021

Welcome by Don

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

***Reader One:** 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.*

***Reader Two:** 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.*

***Reader One:** We light these candles, hoping to become the light, hoping to radiate light by how we live. We light these candles to create a space called home in this place, in our place, in inner places. We light these candles to declare that unto us a Savior is born, who is Christ the Lord. Welcomed home by angels singing and shepherds kneeling. Welcomed home by those like us who have worshiped for thousands of years. Welcomed home again tonight, right here, right now, in us.*

***Reader Two:** It's time to be home.*

Song: Silent Night

Reading #2

***Reader 1:** And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. God saw that the light was good, and God separated the light from the darkness.*

***Reader 2:** Christ is the light of all lights. We associate candles with Advent and Christmas. Glowing candles are twinkling and radiant in our homes, in the center of our tables. In our churches we see the Advent candles of hope, peace, joy, and love. Wherever we see them, candles may be a silent witness to that glorious light of Bethlehem.*

Reader 1: Christians are the candles by which the world is made bright with hope and spiritual confidence. Each candle must be lighted from another.

Reader 2: Though one candle may not shed much light, many candles will brightly light any dark place. This speaks to our need for Christian community, for unity within the household of God. For as Christ said to his followers, "You are the light of the world." The witness of a solitary Christian seems small indeed, but it represents one point from which the darkness is pierced by light. Together as a community of God's people, the church, we bring the light of each to become the light of all. Together we share the light of Christ, lifting the darkness of doubt, despair, or fear that shrouds the world. That, indeed, is such a light that the world cannot extinguish.

Reader 1: Jesus Christ identified himself as the Light of the world. Jesus also told his followers, the Church, that we too are to be the light of the world.

Reader 2: "Neither do you light a candle and hide it under a bushel, but put it on a candlestick so that it gives light to all that are in the house." [Lifts the lighted candle.] Let us lift our candles high. As the light of the world, let us accept our call to take it out into all the world.

Song: Joy to the World

Let's Keep Christmas

Read by Rose Morgan

Closing: Don Mauldin