

CHRISTMAS EVE

A PAGEANT IN CELEBRATION OF CHRIST'S BIRTH

24 DECEMBER 2020



***ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
8 SUNNYSIDE AVENUE, PLEASANTVILLE, NY
STJOHNSPLEASANTVILLE.ORG***

ORDER OF SERVICE

PRELUDE

WARREN BLYDEN, ORGANIST

All sing together Hymn #83; verse 1,2, & 3

O Come All Ye Faithful

O come, all ye faithful,
joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
come, and behold him,
born the King of angels;

*O come, let us adore him,
Christ the Lord.*

God from God,
Light from Light eternal,
lo! he abhors not the Virgin's womb;
only-begotten
Son of God the Father;

Refrain

Sing, choirs of angels,
sing in exultation,
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above;
glory to God,
glory in the highest;

Refrain

WELCOME

BISHOP ST. NICHOLAS

Narrator #1

Prologue to the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ According to John (1:1-14)

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. in him was life, and the life was the light of all people.

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. There was a man

sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him.

He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him.

He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

Narrator #2

The Gospel according to Matthew tells us: the birth of Jesus took place in this way. His mother, Mary, betrothed to Joseph, was expecting a child from the Holy Spirit. Her husband, Joseph, worried about this and an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a Dream saying:

Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the baby in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you will call him Jesus, for he will save His people from their sins.”

All this took place in fulfillment of what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel.” God with us.

All sing together Hymn #56, O Come, vs. 1 & 7 “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear.

*Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel!*

O come, Desire of nations, bind
in one the hearts of all mankind;
bid thou our sad divisions cease,
and be thyself our King of Peace.

Refrain

Narrator #2 continues From the Gospel according to Luke we learn:

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed and each person had to return to his ancestral town for the census.

Joseph and Mary, his betrothed, traveled from their home in Nazareth of Galilee, to Judea and the city of Bethlehem – Joseph’s ancestral home, the royal house of King David.

Bethlehem was crowded with people and upon arriving, there was no place for Mary and Joseph at the inn. But the caring innkeeper, feeling pity on Mary, let them stay in a stable he used for the animals.

All sing together Hymn #79 vs 1-3, &5 “Oh Little Town of Bethlehem”

O little town of Bethlehem,
how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
the silent stars go by;
yet in thy dark streets shineth
the everlasting Light;
the hopes and fears of all the years
are met in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary;
and gathered all above,
while mortals sleep, the angels keep
their watch of wondering love.

O morning stars, together
proclaim the holy birth!
and praises sing to God the King,
and peace to men on earth.

How silently, how silently,
The wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts
the blessings of his heaven.
No ear may hear his coming,
but in this world of sin,
where meek souls will receive him, still
the dear Christ enters in.

O holy Child of Bethlehem,
descend to us, we pray;
cast out our sin and enter in,
be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels
the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us,
our Lord Emmanuel!

All sing together Hymn #109

vs 1,2 & 4

“The First Noel”

The first Nowell the angel did say
was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
in fields as they lay, keeping their sheep,
on a cold winter's night that was so deep.
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
born is the King of Israel.

They looked up and saw a star
shining in the east beyond them far,
and to the earth it gave great light,
and so it continued both day and night.
Refrain

This star drew nigh to the northwest,
o'er Bethlehem it took its rest,
and there it did both stop and stay
right over the place where Jesus lay.
Refrain

Narrator #1 continues

That night near Bethlehem, shepherds were out in the field, keeping watch over their flocks when an angel of God appeared to them. The glory of the Lord shone around them and they were filled with fear.

The angel said to them, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.”

“And this will be a sign: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths lying in a manger. And suddenly with the angel there was a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom God is pleased.

The angels disappeared into heaven and the shepherds said to each other, “Let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened that the Lord has made known to us.” And the shepherds went quickly and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger. And when they saw him they told them what the angels said concerning the child. And all who heard it wondered about what the shepherds told them, but Mary treasured up all these things in her heart.

The shepherds in seeing the newborn Christ, glorified and praised God for all they had heard and seen. The child was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived.

Hymn #94; vs 1-4

While Shepherds Watched their Flocks by Night

While shepherds watched their flocks by night,
all seated on the ground,
the angel of the Lord came down,
and glory shone around.

“Fear not,” said he, for mighty dread
had seized their troubled mind;
“Glad tidings of great joy I bring
to you and all mankind.

“To you, in David’s town, this day
is born of David’s line
the Savior, who is Christ the Lord;
and this shall be the sign:

“The heavenly Babe you there shall find
to human view displayed,
all meanly wrapped in swathing bands,
and in a manger laid.”



All join in singing

“Jesus our Brother”

Jesus our brother, kind and good,
was humbly born in a stable rude,
and the friendly beasts around him stood,
Jesus our brother, kind and good.

“I,” said the donkey, shaggy and brown,
“I carried his mother uphill and down.
I carried his mother to Bethlehem town.
I,” said the donkey shaggy and brown.

“I,” said the cow, all white and red,
“I gave him my manger for his bed.
I gave him my hay to pillow his head.
I,” said the cow all white and red.

“I,” said the sheep with curly horn,
“I gave him my wool for his blanket warm.
He wore my coat on Christmas morn.
I,” said the sheep with curly horn.
“I,” said the dove from rafters high,
“I cooed him to sleep, so he should not cry.
We cooed him to sleep, my mate and I.
I,” said the dove from rafters high.

Thus every beast by some good spell,
in the stable dark was glad to tell
of the gift he gave Emmanuel,
the gift he gave Emmanuel.

Narrator # 2

Now after Jesus was born, three wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, saying “Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star rise in the heavens, and we have come to worship him.” They set out and there ahead of them went the star. After meeting With King Herod, they went on their way to Bethlehem.

And the star they had seen went before them and came to rest over the place where the child was. When they saw the star they rejoiced with great joy. Going into the manger they saw Jesus with his mother, Mary, and they fell down and worshipped him.

All sing together Hymn #128

“We Three Kings”

We three kings of Orient are,
bearing gifts we traverse afar,
field and fountain,
moor and mountain,
following yonder star.

*O star of wonder, star of night,
star with royal beauty bright;
westward leading,
still proceeding,
guide us to thy perfect light!*

Born a King on Bethlehem’s plain,
gold I bring to crown him again,
King for ever,
ceasing never
over us all to reign.

Refrain

Frankincense to offer have I:
incense owns a Deity nigh;
prayer and praising,
gladly raising,
worship him, God Most High.

Refrain

Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume
breathes a life of gathering gloom;
sorrowing, sighing,
bleeding, dying,
sealed in the stone-cold tomb.

Refrain

Glorious now behold him arise,
King and God and Sacrifice;
heaven sings alleluia:
alleluia the earth replies.

Refrain



Narrator #2

Jesus, our Savior, was born humbly in the city of Bethlehem and grew up the son of a carpenter in Nazareth. Yet no other person has ever changed humanity as wonderfully as Jesus has.

Homily

The Rev Mary B. Gregorius

All sing together, Hymn #111

“Silent 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.

Silent night, holy night,
shepherds quake at the sight,
glories stream from heaven afar,
heavenly hosts sing alleluia;
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.

BLESSING

THE REV MARY B. GREGORIUS

DISMISSAL

THE REV DEACON LYNN WERDAL

POSTLUDE

WARREN BLYDEN, ORGANIST

ESSENTIAL PARTICIPANTS AND CHARACTERS

Organist:	Warren Blyden
Soprano Soloist	Angela Berg
Bishop St. Nicholas	The Rev Deacon Lynn Werdal
Narrators	Riley Vavolizza Tommy McPhee
Videographers	Hal Gregorius, The Rev Mary B. Gregorius
Video Editor	Raphael Wong
Pageant Characters:	Charlie Bykov Julian Bykov Natasha Bykov Connor Faughnan Oscar Gregorius Elizabeth Hoadley Nate Hoadley Maddie Leety-Wheeler Caroline McCarthy Maggie McCarthy Molly McCarthy Jeremy Pytell Elise Sweirupski Camden Vietz Aleister Worley Parker Worley