

**Littleton United Methodist Church
December 24, 2009
The Vigil of the Feast of Christmas
Service of Word and Table**

Prelude

During the prelude, please silently prepare your hearts and minds for worship.

The Lighting of the Altar Candles

Welcome and Announcements

Members and guests please sign the attendance pad located at the end of the pew.

+Introit

He Is Born

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+The Great Proclamation of Christmas

+Greeting

Pastor: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

People: **Amen**

Pastor: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

People: **And also with you.**

Pastor: We who dwelled in shadows have seen a great light,

People: **Glory from heaven embraces the earth, like a mother's arms around a newborn child,**

Pastor: Tucking the earth in folds of peace, like a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes,

People: **Laying the earth in the cradle of truth, like a baby entrusted to a manger.**

Pastor: As the cry of a baby splits the air, uniting the song of shepherds and angels,

People: **Let us give thanks for the birth of a child, through whose young life salvation shines!**

+Entrance Hymn #234

O Come, All Ye Faithful

ADESTE FIDELES

The Lighting of the Christ Candle

Musical Response

One Candle Is Lit

CRADLE SONG

Come listen the sounds of God-with-us ring clear,

And signs of a cross in the distance appear

The word once made flesh, yet the Word ever near.

One candle is lit for the Christ-birth day here.

Prayer of the Day

God of mangers and palaces, of shepherds and kings, reveal yourself to us here in the mystery and magic of the season. Free us to see the signs of your promise and hear the whispers of good news. May we join the songs of joy that proclaim to the world your presence among us. We would glorify and praise you in ways that might convince the world of your grace and transform us all according to your love.

AMEN.

Act of Praise (insert)

Glory Be To God on High

GLORIA

The First Reading

Isaiah 9:2-7

Matt Johnston, Lay Reader

The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned. You have enlarged the nation and increased their joy; they rejoice before you as people rejoice at the harvest, as men rejoice when dividing the plunder. For as in the day of Midian's defeat, you have shattered the yoke that burdens them, the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor. Every warrior's boot used in battle and every garment rolled in blood will be destined for burning, will be fuel for the fire. 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 increase 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. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.

Reader: This is the word of God for us, the people of God.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Psalter

Psalm 96



O sing to the Lord a new song;

 sing to the Lord, all the earth!

Sing to the Lord, bless God's name;

proclaim God's salvation from day to day.

Declare the Lord's glory among the nations,

 the Lord's marvelous works among all the peoples!

For great is the Lord and greatly to be praised,

to be feared above all gods.

For all the gods of the peoples are idols;

 but the Lord made the heavens.

Honor and majesty are before the Lord

in whose sanctuary are strength and beauty.

R

Ascribe to the Lord, O families of the peoples,

 ascribe to the Lord glory and strength!

Ascribe to the Lord the glory of his name!

Bring an offering, and come into the courts

of the Lord!

Worship the Lord in holy splendor;

tremble before the Lord, all the earth!

R

Say among the nations, "The Lord reigns!

**The Lord has established the world, it shall
never be moved.**

The Lord will judge the peoples with equity."

Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice;

let the sea roar, and all that fills it;

let the field exult, and everything in it!

Then shall the trees of the wood sing for joy

before the Lord, who comes to judge the earth.

The Lord will judge the world with righteousness,

and the peoples with his truth

R

The Second Reading

Titus 2:11-14

For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope—the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.

Reader: This is the word of God for us, the people of God.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Hymn #236

While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks

CHRISTMAS

+Gospel Acclamation #2043

Alleluia

CELTIC ALLELUIA

+The Holy Gospel

Luke 2:1-20

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord, the word of God for us, the people of God.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

"A Light in the Darkness"

Rev. Rob Licht

Anthem

Christmas Communion Song

CALLOWAY

+The Apostles' Creed

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Prayer of Confession

God of the commonplace, we confess that we have been impressed by power and authority. We do not expect to meet you in the poor of the land, in cold barns, or on lonely duty watches. We are slow to hear the angels or to embrace the "good news of great joy." We hesitate to leave our chosen tasks to share in your larger purposes. We settle for idols of material security even as you thrust us into the battles of life, where we have nothing on which to rely other than our faith in you. Forgive our lack of

trust. Renew us in the Holy Spirit, we pray. AMEN.

A Moment of Silent Confession

Words of Pardon

Pastor: Hear the good news: Christ died for us while we were yet Sinners; that proves God's love toward us. In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!

People: **In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!**

All: **Glory to God. Amen.**

The Offertory

A special note to our guests: The ministries and work of our church are supported by the generosity and sacrificial giving of our members and friends. You are our GUEST today. Please do not feel compelled to make a contribution. Please accept this time of worship as our gift to you. We hope that it has been meaningful and that you will worship with us again.

+The Doxology #221

In the Bleak Midwinter (vs. 4)

CRANHAM

What can I give him, poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;
If I were a Wise Man, I would do my part;
Yet what I can I give him: give my heart.

The Great Thanksgiving

Insert

The Lord's Prayer

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+Giving of the Bread and Cup

Prayer After Communion

Eternal God, we give you thanks for this holy mystery in which you have given yourself to us. Through it, may we await in blessed hope the appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ. Grant that we may go into the world in the strength of your Spirit, to give ourselves for others, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

+Closing Hymn #239

Silent Night, Holy Night

STILLE NACHT

+Dismissal with Blessing

+Congregational Response

Dona Nobis Pacem

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+Taking God's Light Into The World

+Chiming of the Trinity

+Postlude

+The congregation will stand as you are able

**** Communion rail offerings are designated for the Pastor's Discretionary Fund.**



