

CHRISTMAS EVE – December 24, 2020

Light all candles today

†LITANY OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

Leader: Why light a candle that will burn out?

People: The message of this candle cannot be quenched.

Leader: It speaks of hope:

People: Good news of great joy shall come to all people.

Leader: It speaks of peace:

People: To us is born a Savior, Christ the Lord.

Leader: It speaks of joy:

People: Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth.

Leader: It speaks of love:

People: A child has been born for us, a Son given to us. In Him is Life, and the life is the light of the world.

Leader: And to all who receive Him, who believes in His name, He gives the power to become children of God.

People: We light this candle in faith.

Suggested Hymns:

Hope: O Come, O Come Emmanuel (#9 in The Presbyterian Hymnal)

Peace: Angels We Have Heard on High (#23 in The Presbyterian Hymnal)

Joy: Joy to the World (#40 in The Presbyterian Hymnal)

Love: Good Christian Friends, Rejoice (#28 in The Presbyterian Hymnal)

Christ: The First Nowell (#56 in The Presbyterian Hymnal)

The Gospel reading for December 24, 2020:

Luke 2:1-20

2:1 In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. 2 This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. 3 All went to their own towns to be registered. 4 Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. 5 He

went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. 6 While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. 7 And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. 8 In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. 9 Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. 10 But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see--I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: 11 to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. 12 This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." 13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, 14 "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!" 15 When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." 16 So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. 17 When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; 18 and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. 19 But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. 20 The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

Prayer for Christmas Eve:

O Jesus, light of the world, in you God broke the hold of darkness on the world of Caesar. We pray that today, as in those days, you will illumine us with the vision of a new world--a world in which hate yields to love, weapons are turned into tools, and enemies become allies. Give us the grace not only to see that vision, but to put flesh on it as did Jesus in Nazareth of Galilee. Amen