



Tuesday 8:00pm, December 24, 2024



Welcome to Epworth Worship
Sunday 10 am
in-person and online

10 am [Blended Worship Order](#)
[Calendar](#) & [Announcements](#)
Prayer List
[Staff & Leadership](#)

***VISION: Explore Faith,
Embrace Community***
***MISSION: Inviting, Belonging,
Connecting, Caring***

All Means All

As a [Reconciling Ministries Network](#) congregation, we welcome all people, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity, to share their prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness.



19285 Holland Glade Rd.
Rehoboth Beach, DE 19971
302-227-7743 Epworth.faith



~ *We Gather in Worship* ~

Prelude

Doug Yetter, organ

Welcome

Rev. Dr. Vicki Gordy-Stith

CALL TO WORSHIP

The Prophet Isaiah said:

The people who walked in darkness
Have seen a great light;
Those who lived in a land of deep darkness—
On them light has shined.

O Come, O Come Emmanuel!

The Priest Zechariah said before John's birth:

By the tender mercy of our God,
The dawn from on high will break upon us,
To give light to those who sit in darkness,
To guide our feet into the way of peace.

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

The Evangelist John said:

What has come into being in him was life
And the life is the light of all people.
The light shines in the darkness,
And the darkness did not overcome it.

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

God is with us

God is coming into our lives in a new way
The birth of the Christ-child is the renewal of hope
A reminder that Christ will come again
Keep watch for the light; it is drawing near

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

O COME ALL YE FAITHFUL

Congregation / Chancel Choir / Bell Choir

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

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation.

O sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!

Glory to God, all glory in the highest.

{Refrain}

**Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning,
Jesus, to thee be all glory given.**

Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing: *{Refrain}*

☞ Lighting of the Christ Candle ☛

All season long, we have been lighting candles as we prepare for this special night—the night we welcome baby Jesus, God's love born among us. We lit candles standing for hope, peace, joy, and love.

We hope for a day when our world is at peace. We hope for a peace sustained not by a temporary truce, but a peace sustained by justice for all of God's beloved children.

We hope for a day when all people know that they are loved, when all people are free to experience joy. We hope for this future that sometimes feels really far away.

We hope because God has promised that a new reality is possible. A New Creation even! We hope because God has a habit of showing up in unlikely places...just when we least expect it!

Tonight, we light those candles of hope, peace, joy, and love as our prayer for the world and as our commitment to be a part of its transformation.

Tonight we light an extra candle. The white candle. The center candle. The Christ Candle! For tonight our hope for a different future collides with a story from our ancient past, and God shows up once more right here in our messy present!

God knows full well the pain and brokenness of our world and chooses to show up anyway, right into the thick of it! Emmanuel. God with us!

For unto us this day, in the city of David, a child is born. A Savior. God's Love made flesh! Thanks be to God. Amen.

O 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,
the hopes and fears of all the years
are met in thee tonight.**

**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**

∞ Lessons and Carols ∞ JOURNEY OF PROMISES

Joseph M. Martin

N: Engraved in the sands of time is a golden path of promise, traced by the finger of the Ancient of Days. It is a winding road that stretches from darkness to light and from despair to hope.

It is a journey which began in the hearts of devout prophets and culminates in the glorious celebration of Christmas, a royal highway paved with grace and lined with the signposts of a faithful and loving God. Joining the sojourn of countless pilgrims through the ages, we travel the time-worn path of adventurous obedience. May the words and songs of the prophets and saints spur us onward as we invite you to join us on this Journey of Promises.

COME AWAY

A golden bed of straw, a wooden cattle stall,
Dancing shadows on the wall, come away, come away.
A cloudless winter sky, a silver star on high,
A holy infant's borning cry, come away, come away.
Come away, come away. Run to the miracle; Jesus awaits.
*Come away, come away. Come take the journey of promises,
journey of promises.*

A father's watchful gaze, a shepherd's simple ways,
Angelic voices shout in praise, come away, come away.
A deep and sacred night, a candle's fading light,
A gentle mother's lullaby, come away, come away.

{Refrain}

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Come! Come! Come, O come Emmanuel.
Come, O come Emmanuel.
Come, O come. Come, O come.
Come, O come Emmanuel.

ARISE AND SHINE!

N: Arise, shine. Your light has come. 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.

For Jesus said: I am the Light of the World. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of eternal life.

Arise and shine! Your Light has come,
for God has sent the Promised One.
Arise and shine! Your Light has come.
Declare the works that the Lord has done.

Sing, shout, be jubilant all the earth.

Sing of our merciful King's birth.

From out of darkness we have light,
for God has danced into our night.
Rejoice, rejoice, the heavens reply,
for our redemption draweth nigh.
Angels and people with joy may sing;
all for to praise the King of kings.

Arise and shine! Your Light has come,
for God has sent the Promised One.
Arise and shine! Your Light has come.
Declare the works that the Lord has done.

Walk in the light of the Lord.

Walk in the light and rejoice for a Savior is born.

Arise and shine! Your Light has come,
for God has sent the Promised One.
Arise and shine! Your Light has come.
Declare the works that the Lord has done.

Sing, shout, be jubilant all the earth.

Sing of our merciful King's birth,
our merciful King's birth.

People of Zion arise! Arise! Arise! Arise!

WHEN WILL MESSIAH COME?

N: Our ancestors said: We watch in hope for the Lord, we wait for God our Savior. Be strong and do not fear. Our God will come; he will come to save us.

Now we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. Blessed are your eyes because they see. Many prophets longed for what you behold but did not live to see it.

Almighty God, we cry to You; when will Messiah come?

When will You wipe our tears away?

When will Messiah come?

Spirit of truth, we call unto You; when will Messiah come?

When will our sorrow turn to joy?

When will Messiah come?

O come, O come Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel.

O come, O come Emmanuel.

O come, come, come Emmanuel.

Lord of the promise, hear our plea:
when will Messiah come?

When will we greet Emmanuel? When will Messiah come?

When will we greet Emmanuel? When will Messiah come?

LIFT UP YOUR HEADS

N: Lift up your heads, O you gates; be lifted up,

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you ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in.

The Lord said: I am the door; I am the gate; whoever comes through me will be saved. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only.

Lift up your heads, you everlasting doors;
open up and let the King of glory come in.
Let the King of glory come in. {Repeat section}

Who is the King of glory? Who is the King of glory?
The Lord of Hosts! He is the King of glory!
The Lord of Hosts! He is the King of glory!

Lift up your heads, you everlasting doors;
open up and let the King of glory come in.
Let the King of glory come in.

Alleluia, let us sing to the one eternal King.
Alleluia, evermore, to the King and Lord of lords.

Who is the King of glory? Who is the King of glory?
The Lord of Hosts! He is the King of glory.
The Lord of Hosts! He is the King of glory.

Lift up your heads, you everlasting doors;
open up and let the King of glory come in.
Let the King of glory come in. Let the King of glory.
Let the King of glory in!

SONGS OF BETHLEHEM

N: But you, Bethlehem, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel. And he will be called the Prince of Peace and of his peace, there will be no end.

And Joseph went from Nazareth to Bethlehem, with Mary his wife. And while they were there, she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger. And there were shepherds living out in the nearby fields, keeping watch over their flocks. An angel of the Lord appeared to them and said, "Today in the town of David a Savior has been born." Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared, saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace." Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared, saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace." Christ himself is our peace.

Once in royal David's city stood a lowly cattle shed,
Where a mother laid her baby in a manger for a bed.
Mary was that mother mild, Jesus Christ, her tiny Child.
Jesus came to earth from heaven,
who is God and Lord of all,
Sheltered in a rustic stable, cradled in a common stall.
He was poor and meek, a Lamb,
perfect Child of Bethlehem.

O sing a song of Bethlehem, of shepherds watching there,
And of the news that came to them from angels in the air.
The light that shone on Bethlehem fills all the world today.
Of Jesus' birth and peace on earth the angels sing always.

O holy Child of Bethlehem be born in us today.
Sing alleluia! Sing alleluia! Sing alleluia!
Come praise the Child of Bethlehem!

Come to Bethlehem and see
Christ whose birth the angels sing.
Come, adore on bended knee
Christ, the Lord, the newborn King.
Oh, see Him in a manger laid
whom the choirs of angel's praise.
Mary, Joseph, lend your aid,

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while our hearts in love we raise.
Sing gloria in excelsis Deo. Gloria in excelsis Deo.
O holy Child of Bethlehem be born in us today.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

UNTO US A SON IS GIVEN

N: We were promised that our mourning would be turned into gladness, and that comfort would replace our sorrow. That promise was fulfilled: I will bring you good news of great joy that will be for all people. For unto us a Child is born; unto us a Son is given. The holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.

Unto us a Son is given. Unto us a Child is born.
Unto us a Son is given. He shall reign as Lord of Lords.
And He shall rule the nations, and every eye shall see
the glory, glory, glory of the Lord in truth revealed.
Glory, glory, glory of the Lord revealed.

God rest ye people of the faith, let nothing you dismay.
For God will send Messiah to earth on Christmas day
to save us all from Satan's power
when we were gone astray.

O, tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy.
O, tidings of comfort and joy.

HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING

N: We know with all our heart and soul that not one of all the good promises our God has failed. Every promise has been fulfilled. For no matter how many promises God has made, they are "Yes" in Christ. And so through him, the "Amen" is spoken by us to the glory of God.

Glory to the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last.
He is the Life and the Giver of Life, the Journey and the Journey's End. Come and worship!

Come and worship! Glory to God in the highest.
Sing Gloria! Glory to the newborn King!

**Hark! The herald angels sing, glory to the newborn King!
Peace on earth and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled!**

Joyful, all ye nations rise! Join the triumph of the skies!

*With angelic hosts proclaim,
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
Hark! The herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn King!"*

**Christ by highest heaven adored,
Christ the everlasting Lord!
Late in time behold Him come,
offspring of the Virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see!
Hail the Lord! The King of kings!
Pleased on earth with us to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel.
Hark! The herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn King!"**

Rejoice and sing, alleluia!
Let all the people sing unto the Lord!

**Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace!
Hail the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all He brings,
Risen with healing in His wings.
Mild, He lays His glory by,
Born that we no more shall die.
Born to raise us all from earth,
born to give us second birth.**

**Hark! The herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn King!”**

Let all creation sing unto the Lord!
Sing unto the Lord! Sing unto the Lord! Alleluia!

Prayers of the People

Jesus Christ, born in a stable,
Be with the poor and homeless this Christmas time.

As we pray, live and give; shine your everlasting light.

Jesus Christ, born of Mary,
Be with young mothers across the world this Christmas time.

As we pray, live and give; shine your everlasting light.

Jesus Christ, visited by Shepherds,
Be with all who have to work this Christmas,
and those who long to work.

As we pray, live and give; shine your everlasting light.

Jesus Christ, who became a refugee,
Be with those who fear for their lives,
and those who have left homes and families this Christmas.

As we pray, live and give; shine your everlasting light.

AMEN.

*And now with the confidence of the Children of God,
we pray the prayer Christ taught us:*

THE LORD’S PRAYER

Sermon

Rev. Dr. Vicki Gordy-Stith

STILL, STILL, STILL

Epworth Bell Choir / Instrumentalists

Still, still, still, you can hear the falling snow.
For all is hushed, the world is sleeping,
Holy star, its vigil keeping
Still, still, still, you can hear the falling snow.

Sleep, sleep, sleep, ‘tis the eve of our Savior's birth.
The night is peaceful all around You
Close Your eyes, let sleep surround You.
Sleep, sleep, sleep, ‘tis the eve of our Savior's birth.

Dream, dream, dream, of the joyous day to come.
While guardian angels without number
Watch You as You sweetly slumber.
Dream, dream, dream, of the joyous day to come.

☞ The Light of Christ ☛

Again, Jesus spoke to them, saying, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life.” – *John 8:12*

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, 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, Christ the Savior is born!

Silent night, holy night,
Son of God, love’s pure light;

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radiant beams from thy holy face
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

Silent night, holy night,
wondrous star, lend thy light;
with the angels let us sing,
Alleluia to our King;
Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born!

☞ The Light of Christ Leads Us Into The World ☞

Benediction

Rev. Dr. Vicki Gordy-Stith

JOY TO THE WORLD

Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her King.
Let every heart prepare him room,
and heaven and nature sing,
And heaven and nature sing,
and heaven, and heaven, and nature sing.

Joy to the world, the Savior reigns!
Let all their songs employ.
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
Repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy, repeat,
repeat, the sounding joy.

He rules the world with truth and grace,
and makes the nations prove
the glories of his righteousness,
and wonders of his love,
And wonders of his love, and wonders,
and wonders of his love.

Postlude

Gloria! . . . Jason D. Payne

Our Musical Family

Lee Ann Walling – piano
Marcy Parykaza – flute
Margaret Edwards – oboe
John Gottdiener – clarinet
Rob Putt – bassoon
Jim Satcher – trumpet

Annual Worship Theme September 2024—August 2025

Hospitality



Epworth Ministry Organization



Staff & Leadership

Church Office: 302-227-7743 (plus extension)

Lead Pastor: [Rev. Dr. Vicki Gordy-Stith](#) (x102)

Pastor of Community & Communication:

[Rev. Dr. Bo Gordy-Stith](#) (x103)

Minister of Music: [Doug Yetter](#) (x106)

Caring Minister: [Mickie McManamon](#) (x104)

Belonging Minister: [Gwen Osborne](#) (x108)

Youth Minister: [Joy Gordy-Stith](#)

Minister to Deaf and Hard of Hearing: [Sandy Roca](#)

Office Manager: [Tammy Zhang](#) (x100)

Facilities Manager: [John Hilt](#)

Kitchen Sexton: [Maureen Knesel](#)

Preschool Director: [Betsy Plowman](#) (x107)

Cemetery Superintendent: [Jay Stevenson](#)

Governing Board Chair—[Linda Kauffman](#)

Lay Leader—[Todd Popham](#)

Finance Chair—[David Hagelin](#)

Staff-Parish Relations Chair—[Sandy Pierce](#)

Board of Trustees Chair—[Dee Speck](#)

Scheduling/Rentals & DOVs: [Susan Jimenez](#)

Inviting Leadership Team

(Inclusive Ministries, Food Ministries, Ecumenical/Interfaith, Social Justice)

[Rev. Dr. Bo Gordy-Stith](#) and [Bob Joynson](#)

Belonging Leadership Team

(Small Groups, New Members/Belongings, Sunday School, Youth & Adult Groups)

[Gwen Osborne](#), [Linda BenderHilt](#), [Loretta Mahan](#),
[Cathie Lewis](#) and [Teri Moore](#)

Connecting Leadership Team

(Worship, Music, Arts)

[Doug Yetter](#) and [Murray Archibald](#)

Caring Leadership Team

(Missions, Pastoral Care Team, Care Ministries)

[Mickie McManamon](#), [Dee Speck](#) and [Holly Reynolds](#)