



EPWORTH REHOBOTH BEACH

Worship Order, Announcements & Prayers
Epworth.faith

Christmas Eve, December 24, 2025



Welcome to Epworth Worship
Christmas Eve 8:00 pm
in-person and online

8:00 pm [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. The four candles we've lit stand 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 so 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 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

Phillip Brooks, 1868 / Lewis H. Redner, 1868

**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.**

**How silently, how silently,
the wondrous gift is giv'n!
So God imparts to human hearts
the blessings of His heav'n.
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!**

Lesson: *John 1:1-4* Rev. Dr. Vicki Gordy-Stith

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. What has come 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 overtake 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.

∞ Lessons and Carols ∞ A Celebration of Carols

Joseph M. Martin

Once in royal David's city
stood a lowly cattle shed,
Where a mother laid her Baby
in a manger for His bed.
Mary was that mother mild,
Jesus Christ, her little Child.

This is the day the Lord has made.
Let us rejoice and sing His praise.
Come sing for Joy! Sing for joy!
Joy! Joy! Joy! Joy! Joy! Joy!
This is the season made for praise!
This is the season made for praise!

People lift your voices. Christ is coming soon.
All the world rejoices! Christ is coming soon.
Sleepers awake, rejoice, make straight the way.
Hear the joyful noises! Christ is coming soon.

Watchman tell us of the night,
what its signs of promise are.
Traveler o'er yon mountain's height,
see that glory beaming star.
See that glory beaming star.

Light has come, let the earth proclaim!
Sing to the Lord! Sing a loud hosanna!
Night is gone, hear the glad refrain.
Sing for the King who is come to reign!

Long the earth in darkness lay,
waiting for God's promised glory.
Soon a star will light the way.
Tell the world the wondrous story.

Light has come, let the earth proclaim!
Sing to the Lord, sing a loud hosanna!
Night is gone, hear the glad refrain.
Sing to the Lord. Sing His holy name.

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.
Let heaven and heaven and nature sing.

Repeat the sounding joy. Repeat the sounding joy.
Joy! Joy! Joy! Joy! Joy! Joy!
This is the season made for praise!
This is the season made for praise!
Joy to the world! Joy to the world! Sing joy!

BIDDING PRAYER

Merciful God,
we gather to celebrate the gift of your dear Son,
Jesus Christ.
We bless you for the peace He brings to our homes,
For the goodwill He taught to everyone,
For the glory of your goodness shining in His face,

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For His lowly birth and His rest in the manger,
For the pure tenderness of His mother Mary,
For the fatherly care that protected Him,
For the divine grace that sent the Holy Child
to be the Savior of the World.

In praying and praising, in giving and receiving,
In eating and drinking, in singing and making merry,
In parents' gladness and in children's mirth,
In dear memories of those who have departed,
In precious friendships with those who are here,
In kind wishes for those who are far away,
By welcoming strangers,
By keeping the music of the angel's song here in this place.
God help us everyone, to share the blessing
in His name we keep Christmas.

The Fall of Adam – *Genesis 3:1-11*

Now the serpent was craftier than any other wild animal that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God say, 'You shall not eat from any tree in the garden?'" The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die.'"

But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not die, for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food and that it was a delight to the eyes and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked, and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves.

They heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man and said to him, "Where are you?" He said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself." He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?"

A PRAYER FOR ADVENT

**Veni, veni, Emmanuel. Come, Lord Jesus, come.
Veni, veni, Emmanuel. Come, Lord Jesus, come.
Deliver us from doubt and fear.
Grant us joy and peace.
Restore our hope, redeem our hearts.
Let our sorrows cease.**

**Let all our bitterness and hate
surrender to your loving way,
O veni, veni, come, Emmanuel.**

**Veni, veni, Emmanuel. Come, Lord Jesus, come.
Veni, veni, Emmanuel. Come, Lord Jesus, come.**

**Our longing hearts are waiting Lord,
waiting in the night.
Let all the clouds of sin and shame
give way to truth and light.
Bid envy, strife and quarrels cease.
Fill all the world with joy and peace.
O veni, veni, come, Emmanuel.**

Rejoice! Rejoice!
Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.
Come, O come, Emmanuel.

The Promise to Abraham – *Genesis 12:2-3*

I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

PEOPLE OF PROMISE, ARISE!

People arise! Prepare the way!
Let your music greet the day.
Let all the earth break forth with singing.
Let all the mountains and valleys start ringing.
People arise and share the news:
“Christ the King is coming soon!”

People arise and wake the dawn!
Shout for joy! Break forth in song!
Prophets foretold the wondrous story.
Angels will tell of His infinite glory.
People arise and share the news:
“Christ the King is coming soon!”

Hark, a thrilling voice is sounding.
“Christ is nigh,” it seems to say.
Cast away the works of darkness,
O ye children of the day!
Honor, glory, might and blessing,
praise the coming of the Son.

People rise, your Light has come.
Come all people, arise! Arise!
People arise! People arise! People of promise, arise!

People arise and greet the morn!
Soon a Savior will be born.
He is the Hope of every nation.
All in Him shall find salvation.
People arise and share the news:
“Christ the King is coming soon!”
People arise! People of promise, arise!

The Peace that Christ will Bring is Foretold

– *Isaiah 9:2, 6*

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.
For a child has been born for us,
a son given to us;
authority rests upon his shoulders,
and he is named
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

SONGS OF HOPE AND JOY

Come, Thou long-expected Jesus,
born to set Thy people free,
From our fears and sins release us,
Let us find our rest in Thee.
Israel’s strength and consolation,
hope of all the earth Thou art;
Dear desire of every nation,
joy of every longing heart,
Joy of every longing heart.

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Lord of the nations, King of all creation,
“God with us,” Emmanuel.
Lord, You are holy. Lord, You are worthy.
Come to our world with us to dwell.

Lord of the nations, Lord of creation,
Come, now and set your people free.
Lord, Jesus come!

Born your people to deliver,
born a child, and yet a King.
Born to reign in us forever,
now Thy gracious kingdom bring.
By Thine own eternal Spirit
rule in all our hearts alone.
By Thine all sufficient merit,
raise us to Thy glorious throne,
Raise us to Thy glorious throne!

Christ's birth and Kingdom are Foretold by Isaiah

– *Isaiah 11:1-3*

A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse,
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.
The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him,
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of counsel and might,
the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.
His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord.
He shall not judge by what his eyes see
or decide by what his ears hear.

The Angel Gabriel Visits Mary – *Luke 1:26-31*

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, “Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you.” But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus.

MY SOUL DOTH MAGNIFY THE LORD

My soul doth magnify the Lord.
My heart is filled with His glory and praise.
My song rejoices in God, my King.
My life is filled with His glorious grace.
Rejoice my soul. O my soul, rejoice, rejoice!
My soul doth magnify the Lord.

My soul doth magnify the Lord.
My heart is filled with hope and love.
My song is lifted high above,
for soon we'll see God's Promised One!
Rejoice, my soul. O my soul, rejoice, rejoice!
My soul doth magnify the Lord.

Let the hungry rejoice and sing.
God sends the Bread of Life.
Let the lost and the wandering rejoice.
God is our Shepherd and Guide.
God is eternal. God is supernal.
God is the Giver of Life!
God will protect us, God will sustain us.
God will redeem us. God will complete us.

God's mercy endureth to all generations.

My soul doth magnify the Lord.
My heart is filled with His glory and praise.
My song rejoices in God, my King.
My life is filled with His glorious grace.
Rejoice my soul. Rejoice, O my soul.
Rejoice, rejoice O my soul!
My soul doth magnify the Lord!
My soul doth magnify the Lord!

The Birth of Christ – *Luke 2:1-7*

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. 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. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child.

While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. 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 in the guest room.

The Shepherds go the Manger – *Luke 2:8-17*

Now in that same region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. 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: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”

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.” So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child.

ANGELS WE HAVE HEARD ON HIGH

Angels we have heard on high,
sweetly singing o'er the plains:
And the mountains in reply,
echoing their joyous strains.

Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be
which inspire your heavenly song?

Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Come to Bethlehem and see
Him whose birth the angels sing.
Come adore on bended knee
Christ the Lord, the newborn King.

Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Gloria in excelsis Deo!
Gloria! Gloria! Gloria! Gloria!
Gloria in excelsis Deo!

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BENEDICTION

VICKI: The light of the Christmas star to you,
The warmth of home and hearth to you,
The cheer and good will of friends to you,
The hope of a childlike heart to you,
The joy of a thousand angels to you,
The love of the Son, and God's peace to you.
Go now in peace and let Christmas begin!

LET CHRISTMAS BEGIN

There's a light in the stable so golden and bright,
Bringing new hope and joy to the cold winter's night.
O Candle from heaven, come warm us again.
Come and shine in our darkness. Let Christmas begin.

There's a voice in the shadows where Jesus awaits,
bringing new peace and joy to a world filled with hate.
O come to our hearts, Lord, we need You again.
Come speak to our longing. Let Christmas begin.

There's a song in the silence, a carol of peace,
bringing new hope and joy to the children of grace.
Come angels of song, and rejoice once again.
Come sing to our silence. Let Christmas begin.
Come sing to our silence. Come speak to our longing.
Come shine in our darkness. Let Christmas begin.
Let Christmas begin.

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

☞ 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.

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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;
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 ∞

A CHRISTMAS TRILOGY

Chancel Choir / Congregation

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.

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

Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel
Born is the King of Israel.
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel
Born is the King of Israel.

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 th'angelic hosts proclaim,
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
Hark! the herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn King."

Hail, the heaven-born Prince of Peace!
Hail, the Son of righteousness!
Light and life to all He brings,
Ris'n with healing in His wings.
Mild He lays His glory by,
born that we no more may die,
born to raise us from the earth,
born to give us second birth.

Hark! the herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn King.

Benediction Rev. Dr. Vicki Gordy-Stith

Postlude *Gloria!* ... Jason D. Payne

Our Musical Family

Lee Ann Walling – piano

Marcy Parykaza – flute

Margaret Edwards – oboe

Sarah Greendonner – clarinet

Rob Putt – bassoon

Jim Satcher – trumpet

Annual Worship Theme
Nov. 30, 2025 - Jan. 4, 2026

Jesus & Human Dignity
Advent-Christmas Series



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)

Bookkeeper: [Bryan Warner](#) (x105)

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—[Tom Lewis](#)

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

Inviting Leadership Team

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

[Rev. Dr. Bo Gordy-Stith](#) and [Mike Tyler](#)

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](#)