



For unto us a child is Born



PILGRIM CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



A SONG WAS HEARD AT CHRISTMAS

By Timothy Dudley-Smith

A song was heard at Christmas
To wake the midnight sky,
A Saviour's birth, and peace on
earth,
And praise to God on high.
The angels sing at Christmas
With all the hosts above,
And still we sing the newborn
King,
His glory and His love.

www.goodmorningquote.com

Third Sunday of Advent-Joy

December 17, 2023

It is not the Joy that makes us Grateful. It is Gratitude that makes us Joyful.

Prelude

Odessa Bulgar

OPRF Ensemble

Advent Candle Lighting

Candace Enockson & Karen Lease

Joy is not a commodity that can be bought or sold, but lives deep in the human spirit. Help us to hear that truth and believe it. Let go of what our consumer culture says will bring us happiness – money, success, a scramble to the top that leaves us flat. If we have robbed

others of what they need in our clamor and quest for more than our fair share, forgive us. Help us hear the call of John the Baptist to turn around and begin again. God of love, we were made in joy. May we live that way.

We light a candle for joy. May it light the way.

Greeting

Maureen Deahl

***Call to Worship**

Maureen Deahl

Holy God of Joy,

We rejoice in the reality of who you are

We live within the joy of your love for us.

Our contentment comes and goes.

Our happiness ebbs and flows.

**Our feelings depend upon our circumstances,
our physical health, our brain chemistry.**

But our Joy is deeply rooted in our identity as your beloved children

Anthem

Joy

Maddox

Mary and Joseph begin their journey

Matt & Diana Sorber

Narrators: Ann Horton and Sheri Ambrose

Donkey Hannah Kregor

Opening Hymn

Oh Little Town of Bethlehem (stzs 1-3)

p. 6

No Room in the Inn

Innkeeper: Russ Sorber

Congregation chants: No Room! No Room!

Innkeeper

Congregation chants: What about the stable?

The Birth of Jesus

Congregation chants: Let God's Love Shine! Let God's Love Shine!

Solo

Who Could of Imagine a King

Marcella Richardson
Michael Horton

Musical Interlude

The Animals

Stable Animals

Solo

Infant Holy Infant Lowly

Rose DiPietro

Narrators: Samantha & Kiara Behensky

Hymn *Angels, from the Realms of Glory (stzs. 1 & 2)* p. 7

Angels Appear Gabriel & Multitude of Angels

Narrators: Lee & Natalia Capps

Gabriel

Congregation chants: Go to the manger! Go to the Manger!

Hymn *While Shepherds Watched their Flocks (stzs. 1-4)* p. 8

Shepherds and their Flocks Shepherds

Narrators: Joycelin and Bianca Fowler

Prayer for the Offering Maureen Deahl

Offertory Response *Angels We have Heard on High (stz. 4)* p.9

Hymn *We Three Kings (stzs. 1, 2 & 5)* p. 10

Wise Persons and the Star Band of Kings

Narrators: Leslie Sutphen & Lydia Lanning

Wise Person

Congregation chants: I am the way, the truth, and the life.

The Story has begun

Narrators: Shannon and Katherine Obed

Announcements Maureen Deahl

Closing Hymn *Joy to the World* p. 11

Today's pageant participants are:

Narrators:	Sheri Ambrose, Ann Horton, Leslie Sutphen , Lydia Lanning, Lee Capps, Natalia Capps, Samantha Behensky, Kiara Behensky, Joycelin Fowler, Bianca Fowler, Shannon Obed, and Katherine Obed
Innkeeper	Russ Sorber
Mary	Diana Jaimes Sorber
Joseph	Matthew Sorber
Lead Donkey	Hannah Kregor
Kings	Nancy Miller Thomas Guerriero Matthew Lee Kyle Kent Tony Carlos Perez Gwen Ingram Sebastian Capps Tayvon Kumis
Gabriel:	Anna Moroni
Angels:	Carter Behensky, Camille Behensky, Frankie Moroni, Mimi Kumis, Greta, Layla Pandy
Stable Animals:	Jonah Kryger, Joe Moroni, Elise Bailey, Vera Bailey, Keira Obed, Peter Schnipke, Everett Schnipke,
Shepherds:	Matthew Arnold, Elijah Kryger, Jude Knapp, James Niksch, Charlie Niksch
OPRF Ensemble:	Will Fouste, Sarah Giannotti, Max Vanapause, Charlie Peterson, Katherine Obed

121 O Little Town of Bethlehem

1 O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, how still we see thee lie!
 2 For Christ is born of Mar - y and, gath - ered all a - bove,
 3 How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly, the won - drous gift is given!
 4 O ho - ly child of Beth - le - hem, de - scend to us, we pray;

A - bove thy deep and dream - less sleep the si - lent stars go by.
 while mor - tals sleep, the an - gels keep their watch of won - dering love.
 So God im - parts to hu - man hearts the bless - ings of his heaven.
 cast out our sin and en - ter in; be born in us to - day.

Yet in thy dark streets shin - eth the ev - er - last - ing light;
 O morn - ing stars, to - geth - er pro - claim the ho - ly birth,
 No ear may hear his com - ing, but in this world of sin,
 We hear the Christ - mas an - gels the great glad ti - dings tell;

the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee to - night.
 and prais - es sing to God the king, and peace to all on earth.
 where meek souls will re - ceive him, still the dear Christ en - ters in.
 O come to us; a - bide with us, our Lord Em - man - u - el!

Though he was famed during his lifetime as a great preacher, no sermon Phillips Brooks ever preached has been heard or read by as many people as have sung this carol he wrote in December 1868 for the Sunday School children of Holy Trinity Episcopal Church in Philadelphia.

TEXT: Phillips Brooks, 1868
 MUSIC: Lewis Henry Redner, 1868

ST. LOUIS
 8.6.8.6.7.6.8.6
 (alternate tune: FOREST GREEN)

143 Angels, from the Realms of Glory

1 An - gels, from the realms of glo - ry, wing your flight o'er
 2 Shep - herds, in the fields a - bid - ing, watch - ing o'er your
 3 Sag - es, leave your con - tem - pla - tions; bright - er vi - sions
 4 All cre - a - tion, join in prais - ing God the Fa - ther,

all the earth; you, who sang cre - a - tion's sto - ry,
 flocks by night, God with us is now re - sid - ing;
 beam a - far; seek the great de - sire of na - tions;
 Spir - it, Son, ev - er - more your voic - es rais - ing

now pro - claim Mes - si - ah's birth:
 yon - der shines the in - fant light: come and wor - ship,
 you have seen his na - tal star:
 to the e - ter - nal Three in One:

come and wor - ship, wor - ship Christ, the new - born king!

This familiar carol was first published as a poem in the Christmas Eve 1816 issue of a newspaper the author edited in Sheffield, England. The tune name celebrates the location of a prominent Presbyterian Church in London, sometimes called the "Presbyterian cathedral."

TEXT: Stanzas 1-3, James Montgomery, 1816, 1825; stanza 4, *Salisbury Hymn Book*, 1857
 MUSIC: Henry Thomas Smart, 1867

REGENT SQUARE
 8.7.8.7.8.7

While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks 118

1 While shep-herds watched their flocks by night, all seat - ed
 2 "Fear not," said he, for might - y dread had seized their
 3 "To you, in Da - vid's town this day, is born of
 4 "The heaven - ly babe you there shall find to hu - man

on the ground, the an - gel of the Lord came down, and
 trou - bled mind: "Glad ti - dings of great joy I bring to
 Da - vid's line the Sav - ior, who is Christ the Lord, and
 view dis - played, all hum-bly wrapped in swath-ing bands, and

glo - ry shone a - round, and glo - ry shone a - round.
 you and hu - man - kind, to you and hu - man - kind.
 this shall be the sign, and this shall be the sign:
 in a man - ger laid, and in a man - ger laid."

5 Thus spoke the seraph, and forthwith
 appeared a shining throng
 of angels praising God, who thus
 addressed their joyful song,
 addressed their joyful song:

6 "All glory be to God on high,
 and to the earth be peace;
 good will to all from highest heaven
 begin and never cease,
 begin and never cease!"

The publication of this text in the late 17th century marked an important moment in the transition from the older practice of psalm-singing to the newer style of hymn-singing. This tune was not originally written for church use but was derived from an operatic aria.

TEXT: Nahum Tate, 1700, alt.

MUSIC: George Frederick Handel, 1728; arr. Lowell Mason, 1821

CHRISTMAS

CM with repeat

(alternate tune: WINCHESTER OLD, 117)

113 Angels We Have Heard on High

1 An - gels we have heard on high, sweet-ly sing-ing o'er the plains,
 2 Shep-herds, why this ju - bi - lee? Why your joy - ous strains pro - long?
 3 Come to Beth - le - hem and see him whose birth the an - gels sing;

and the moun-tains in re - ply ech - o - ing their joy - ous strains.
 What the glad - some ti - dings be which in-spire your heaven-ly song?
 come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ, the Lord, the new - born King.

Refrain

Glo - ri - a

in ex - cel - sis De - o! Glo -

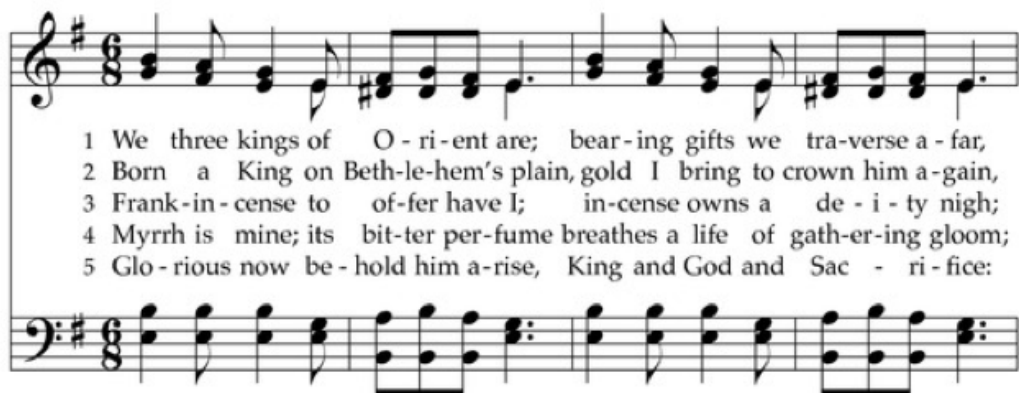
This French carol probably dates from the 1700s, though it was not printed until the following century. Because it uses a vernacular language for the narrative stanzas and Latin for the refrain, it belongs to a special category called "macaronic" or mixed-language texts.

TEXT: French carol; trans. James Chadwick, 1860, alt.
 MUSIC: French carol; arr. Edward Shippen Barnes, 1937
 Music © 1937, ren. 1965 H. Augustine Smith Jr.
 (admin. Fleming H. Revell Company; a div. of Baker Publishing Group)

GLORIA
 7.7.7.7 with refrain

- ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o!

151 We Three Kings of Orient Are



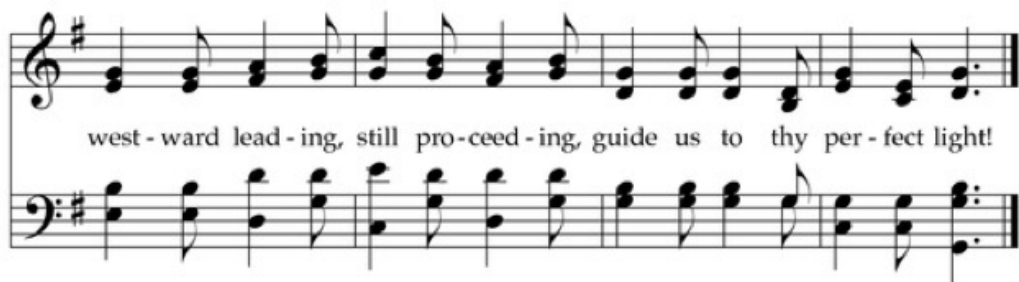
1 We three kings of O - ri - ent are; bear - ing gifts we tra - verse a - far,
 2 Born a King on Beth - le - hem's plain, gold I bring to crown him a - gain,
 3 Frank - in - cense to of - fer have I; in - cense owns a de - i - ty nigh;
 4 Myrrh is mine; its bit - ter per - fume breathes a life of gath - er - ing gloom;
 5 Glo - rious now be - hold him a - rise, King and God and Sac - ri - fice:



field and foun - tain, moor and moun - tain, fol - low - ing yon - der star.
 King for - ev - er, ceas - ing nev - er o - ver us all to reign.
 prayer and prais - ing glad - ly rais - ing, wor - ship - ing God Most High.
 sor - rowing, sigh - ing, bleed - ing, dy - ing, sealed in the stone - cold tomb.
 Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! sounds through the earth and skies.

Refrain


O star of won - der, star of night, star with roy - al beau - ty bright,



west - ward lead - ing, still pro - ceed - ing, guide us to thy per - fect light!

Although Christians had begun by the 2nd century to speak of these visitors from eastern countries (Matthew 2:1-12) as "kings," perhaps because of passages like Psalm 72:10 and Isaiah 60:3, it is more accurate to think of them as magi or astrologers, the scholars of their day.

134

Joy to the World

1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re - ceive
 2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their songs
 3 No more let sins and sor - rows grow, nor thorns in - fest
 4 He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the na -

her king; let ev - ery heart pre - pare him room,
 em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
 the ground; he comes to make his bless - ings flow
 tions prove the glo - ries of his righ - teous - ness

and heaven and na - ture sing, and heaven and na - ture
 re - peat the sound - ing joy, re - peat the sound - ing
 far as the curse is found, far as the curse is
 and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his
 and heaven and na - ture sing,

and
 sing, and heaven, and heaven and na - ture sing.
 joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
 found, far as, far as the curse is found.
 love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.

heaven and na - ture sing,

While Isaac Watts did not write this text strictly for Christmas use, he did purposely cast his paraphrase of Psalm 98:4-9 in Christian terms, titling it "The Messiah's coming and kingdom." So "the Lord" here is Jesus Christ, rather than the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

TEXT: Isaac Watts, 1719, alt.

MUSIC: Attr. George Frederick Handel, 1742; arr. Lowell Mason, 1836

ANTIOCH

CM with repeat

(alternate tune: RICHMOND, 266)

Announcements

Christmas Eve Worship

Sunday, December 24, 5:00 PM

All are welcome to join us for a candlelight service of lessons and carols as we welcome the start of Christmas with joy and singing!

Christmas Fund Special Offering Accepted

Sunday, December 24, 2023, 5:00 PM

Pilgrim supports the work of the wider UCC – the Illinois Conference and National Setting through two ways. First, we directly support the conference through our benevolence budget. Second, we support the national setting through special offerings intended to cover specific programmatic needs. At the Christmas Eve service we have the opportunity to give to The Christmas Fund, which supplements pensions for those pastors and lay church employees whose ministries have typically been in smaller, often financially struggling congregations. These supplements offer help with food, medical care, and other living expenses. You can donate to the Christmas Offering online, on the tithe.ly app. or by depositing a check with Christmas Offering on the subject line.

Friday Bible Study

Beginning Friday, January 5, 2024, we will resume our weekly noon Bible study with The Letter of Paul to the Romans. The resource we will use is [Romans: 18 Studies for Individuals and Groups by N.T. Wright](#). (available from many sources - this link it to Thriftbooks). Our study will be divided into two 8 week sessions: Part I - January 5th - March 1st. Part 2 - April 5th - May 31st.

We will meet from 12:00-1:00 pm, via Zoom. If you are interested in joining us, please email me by January 1st and I will send you the Zoom link., Gloria Cox - revgcox@gmail.com. All are welcome!

MIGRANT ASSISTANCE

Community of Congregations has established a Migrant Response Portal through which community members can volunteer their time, expertise and donate money and supplies to support our new neighbors. To volunteer time and talent; or donate, click here: <https://www.communityofcongregations.org/migrant-crisis/>

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