

Lighting of Candles*Silent night, holy night*

HWB #193

"Light shines in the darkness and the darkness cannot overcome it,"
proclaims the ancient word;
light stands firm against the dark landscape of reality,
warmth prances in rooms too long drafty.
Each of us holding a flickering candle;
seemingly insignificant one by one, yet magnificent when held together.
Each of us making a choice to stand in the light;
proclaiming the indisputable presence of unquenchable light.
Light shines in the darkness and the darkness cannot overcome it.

Singing*Joy to the world*

HWB #318

Benediction

Ancient One,
who makes all things new,
may we receive with gentleness
and touch with hopefulness
and protect with fierceness
and love with tenderness;
and may we celebrate with gratefulness
and welcome with humbleness
and tend with gracefulness
all that you give
into our care.

In the name of the everlasting love come again to each of us,
we pray.

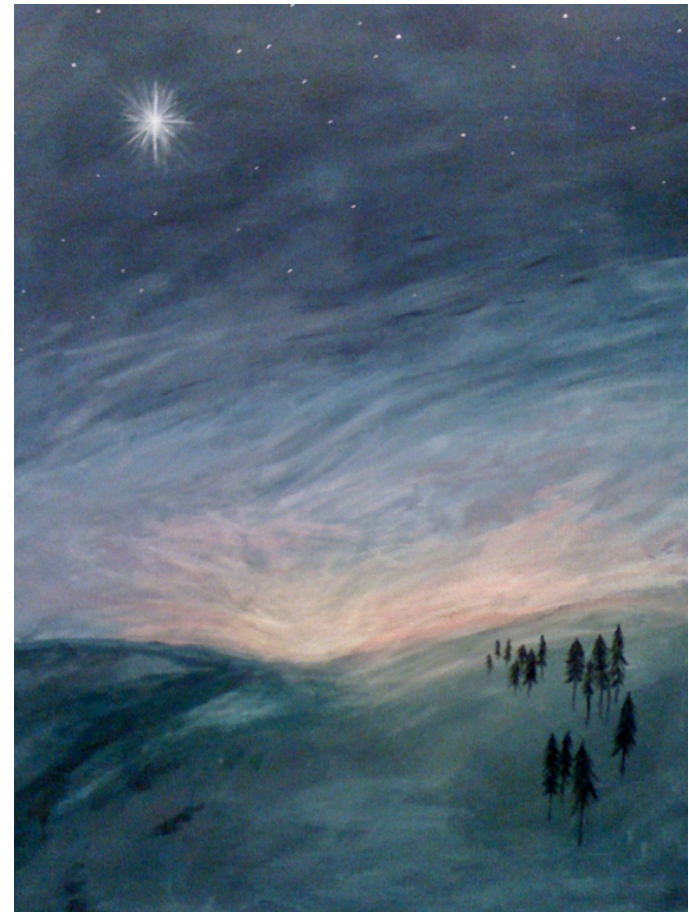
Amen.

Worship Leader—Susan Gascho-Cooke
Song Leader—Louise Ranck
Prelude & Solo Vocalist—Patrick Ressler
Scripture Reading—Jerry Gibbs
Sound Technician—Don Kulp
Environment—Chris Fraser

Greeters—Stephanie Horst, Jack Shope; Ushers—Donna Walton, Carolyn Weaver

COMMUNITY MENNONITE CHURCH OF LANCASTER

328 West Orange Street, Lancaster, PA 17603

Christmas Eve, 2011*9 p.m. Service**Painting by Chris Fraser*

Prelude "Mary Had a Baby" Patrick Ressler

Call to Worship

We wait.
We wait...
not because we do not know the story of Jesus,
and not because you are not already and always here.
We wait
because to wait
is to expect something more
To wait is to expect that the story
might enter our hearts
and our world
in new ways,
to bring the change for which we long.

Advent Candle Lighting

All: In the stillness of this night,
We sense the first stirrings of Christmas joy
And know the wait will soon be over.
Praise be!

Singing *Oh little town of Bethlehem* HWB # 191
O how joyfully HWB #209

Scripture Isaiah 9: 2–7

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. You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. 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. His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

Singing *Lo how a Rose e'er blooming* HWB #211

Scripture Luke 2: 1–7

In those days a decree went out from Emperor 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 for them in the inn.

Singing *Infant holy, infant lowly* HWB #206

Scripture Luke 2: 8–20

In that 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; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

Singing *To us a Child of hope is born* HWB #189

Gifts