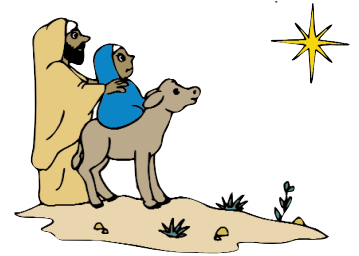




CHRISTMAS

The Committee on Black Congregational Ministries



A Christmas Eve Celebration

PROGRAM

The Prelude

The Call To Worship Litany

(See Bulletin Insert)

The Processional Hymn

"Hark! the Herald Angels Sing"

Invocation

The Lighting of the Christ Candle

Song of Praise and Worship

"O Come, All Ye Faithful"

Greeting and Ritual of Fellowship

❧ THE LIGHT REVEALED ❧

A Prophecy Reading

*Isaiah 9:6-7
Luke 1:26-33*

Music Ministry

❧ THE LIGHT RECEIVED ❧

A Christmas Scripture Reading

Luke 2:1-7

Music Ministry

A Christmas Scripture Reading

Matthew 2:1-10

Offertory Service

Music Ministry

A Christmas Meditation

❧ THE LIGHT REFLECTED ❧

Holy Communion

"O Holy Night"

Song of Celebration

"The First Noel" (English Melody)

Benediction

Merry Christmas Litany

- LEADER:** We join in this most holy night of the year proclaiming:
- PEOPLE:** Glory to God in the Highest and on earth peace.
- LEADER:** Our hearts are filled with joy as we celebrate the birth of our Saviour in Bethlehem's manger.
- PEOPLE:** We sing praises to God and glorify God's name as the angels did on the night of God's birth. We rejoice in the fact that the promise of long ago has now been fulfilled.
- LEADER:** Tonight, we light candles reminding us of the hope, peace, love, and joy of Christ. Now as we light the Christ candle, let us really know that our hopes and fears have been met.
- UNISON:** O God, we celebrate your goodness to us as we join in the triumph and joy of Christmas. As your love has been revealed in all of its fullness, we pray that love may abound in our hearts today and always. Grant that the spirit of the Christ-child may dominate our lives in every way. In His name we pray. Amen.



A TRUMPET FOR ZION

CALL TO WORSHIP

LEADER: Prepare the Way! Make straight paths for God's son.

PEOPLE: How do we know this is The One? Perhaps there is another.

LEADER: Prepare the way! This is the Word made flesh, our brother and our friend.

PEOPLE: How do we know this is The One? Are you sure there is not other?

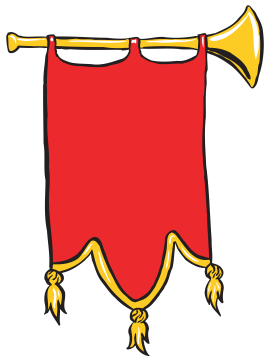
LEADER: This is Mary's little boy child, born in a manger and sent to Africa, in exile.

PEOPLE: Oh, this is the Incognito God, who hides in our colored skins, knows our broken language, and has suffered our undeserved pain!

LEADER: Prepare the way! This is the shield of our Ancestors, The Lion of The Tribe.

PEOPLE: We bow in humble submission to worship our God. Amen.

CANDLE LIGHTING



We are called to prepare the way for a Hidden God. We look for our gods to have power, money and position. We want our gods to be big and strong, able to defend us and make us feel secure. We don't look among the weak and the defenseless for a god. We don't seek any god among the poor and oppressed. No one would look for God in a stable and surely they never conceived of God coming out of Africa! But, today we light this candle as we prepare for our Surprising and Amazing God, who continues to appear in the most unexpected places and among the least favorable of persons.

(The candles are lit)

LEADER: Let us pray. My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God, my Savior.

PEOPLE: The Proclaimer of Justice has looked with favor on the state of the lowly servants. Surely from now on, all generations shall be astonished at our blessedness in God.

LEADER: The Mighty Lion of our Tribe has done great things for us. Holy is the Name of our God.

PEOPLE: The Keeper of Our Souls shows mercy from generation to generation on those who offer

LEADER: Our God is a strong God, who will judge the haughty and the irreverent.

PEOPLE: The record of the Eternal One gives evidence that those who were once powerful, in their own eyes, have been erased from the world's history.

LEADER: But, the meek, the lowly and the insignificant, God lifts to high places.

PEOPLE: God is food in a starving land and water in dry places. The poor become rich and the rich become empty in the scheme of a just and loving God.

LEADER: The Hope of The World has promised our ancestors mercy. We live in that state of promise.

PEOPLE: The Covenant God remembers our plight. This is mighty Good News! Amen. (Luke 1:47-55)

CALL TO CONFESSION

Oft times, it is not God who hides, but us. Let us confess the hidden sins of our lives. Let us pray.

SILENT CONFESSION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

The Holy One's eye is in every place, beholding the evil and the good. It is God's good pleasure to give us the Kingdom! Confessions puts us in the posture to receive. Amen.

OFFERTORY INVITATION

How do we prepare to receive the world's greatest gift? We prepare by giving. "Give and it shall be given unto you, pressed down, shaken together and running over" . . . is the promise of what we shall receive.

OFFERTORY PRAISE

Generous God, you give the sun for light and the water to dry places. It is of your generosity that we offer back to you a share. May these offerings help the desert places to bloom and the high places to be brought low. For we give in the Name of your great gift to us, Jesus, The Christ. Amen.

BENEDICTION

LEADER: Beloved's prepare yourselves for the coming of the Lord.

PEOPLE: We shall strengthen weak hands, and make firm our feeble knees.

LEADER: Say to those of a fearful heart, "Be Strong! The hour of the Lord is near."

PEOPLE: The ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon our heads. We leave with gladness and singing.

LEADER: May the Comforter of Zion keep you until we meet again. Amen.

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