

The _____
First Congregational Church
of Woodstock _____

*Declaring, "Jesus Christ is the same, yesterday, today,
and forever." Hebrews 13:8*

December 13th, 2020

The Order of Morning Worship

For assistance as we “gather” remotely and in-person to worship together.

December 13th, 2020

Ten-thirty

Welcome

Pastor Doug Warren

Christmas Eve Offering Announcement

Brandon Bergey

Prelude & Silent Prayer

❖ Call to Worship

Psalm 6

Pastor: I saw the Lord, seated on a throne, high and exalted,

Congregation: And the train of his robe filled the temple.

Above him were seraphs, each with six wings: with two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying. And they were calling to one another:

Pastor:

Congregation: “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory.”

❖ Hymn of Exultation

Number 196

Come, Thou Long – Expected Jesus

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

Waiting for the consolation of Israel. Luke 2:25

1. Come, thou long - ex - spect - ed Je - sus, born to set thy peo - ple free;
 2. Joy to those who long to see thee, Day-spring from on high, ap - pear;
 3. Come to earth to taste our sad - ness, he whose glo - ries knew no end;
 4. Born thy peo - ple to de - liv - er, born a child and yet a king,

from our fears and sins re - lease us; let us find our rest in thee.
 come, thou prom - ised Rod of Jes - se, of thy birth we long to hear!
 by his life he brings us glad - ness, our Re - deem - er, Shep - herd, Friend.
 born to reign in us for - ev - er, now thy gra - cious king - dom bring.

Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion, hope of all the earth thou art,
 O'er the hills the an - gels sing - ing news, glad tid - ings of a birth:
 Leav - ing rich - es with - out num - ber, born with - in a cat - tle stall;
 By thine own e - ter - nal Spir - it rule in all our hearts a - lone;

dear De - sire of ev - 'ry na - tion, joy of ev - 'ry long - ing heart.
 "Go to him, your prais - es bring - ing; Christ the Lord has come to earth."
 this the ev - er - last - ing won - der, Christ was born the Lord of all.
 by thine all - suf - fi - cient mer - it, raise us to thy glo - rious throne.

Scriptural Call to Repentance

Isaiah 30:15 – 18

In repentance and rest is your salvation, in quietness and trust is your strength, but you would have none of it. Yet the Lord longs to be gracious to you; He rises to show you compassion. For the Lord is God of justice. Blessed are those who wait for Him!

Collective Confession

Psalm 51

Be gracious to us, O God, according to Your lovingkindness; according to the greatness of Your compassion blot out our transgressions. Wash us thoroughly from our iniquity, and cleanse us from our sin. For we know our transgressions, and our sin is ever before us. Against You, You only, we have sinned, and done what is evil in Your sight, So that You are justified when You speak, and blameless when You judge.

Proclamation of Forgiveness

Hebrews 2:18

Because Jesus Himself suffered when He was tempted,
He is able to help those who are being tempted.

Scripture Reading

Revelation 1: 1 – 3

The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show to His bond-servants, the things which must soon take place; and He sent and communicated *it* by His angel to His bond-servant John,² who testified to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, everything that he saw.³ Blessed is the one who reads, and those who hear the words of the prophecy and keep the things which are written in it; for the time is near.

Pastor: The Word of the Lord.

Congregation: Thanks be to God!

Pastoral Prayer

❖ Hymn of Reflection

In Christ Alone

In Christ Alone

Words and Music by
Keith Getty and Stuart Townend

♩ = 60

VERSE

G D G A D/F#

1. In Christ a - lone my hope is found, He is my
 2. In Christ a - lone, who took on flesh, full - ness of
 3. There in the ground His bod - y lay, Light of the
 4. No guilt in life, no fear in death, this is the

3

G D/F# Em⁷ G/A D G D G A D/F#

light, my strength, my song; This Cor - ner - stone, this sol - id Ground, firm through the
 God in help - less babel! This gift of love and right - eous - ness, scorned by the
 world by dark - ness slain; Then, burst - ing forth in glo - rious Day, up from the
 pow'r of Christ in me; From life's first cry to fi - nal breath, Je - sus com -

7

G D/F# Em⁷ G/A D D/F# G D/F# A^{sus} A D/F#

fierc - est drought and storm. What heights of love, what depths of peace, when fears are
 ones He came to save. Till on that cross as Je - sus died, the wrath of
 grave He rose a - gain! And as He stands in vic - to - ry, sin's curse has
 - mands my des - ti - ny. No pow'r of hell, no scheme of man, can ev - er

11 G Bm⁷ A^{sus} A G D G A D/F#

stilled, when striv-ings cease. My Com-fort - er, my All in All, here in the
 God was sat - is - fied. For ev - 'ry sin on Him was laid; Here in the
 lost its grip on me; For I am His and He is mine, bought with the
 pluck me from His hand; Till He re - turns or calls me home, here in the

INSTRUMENTAL

15 G D/F# Em⁷ G/A D Am⁷

love of Christ I stand.
 death of Christ I live.
 pre - cious blood of Christ.
 pow'r of Christ I'll stand!

18 Em⁷ D D^{sus} D

“*Heavenly Choir Singing*”

Luke 2: 8 – 20

⁸In the same region there were *some* shepherds staying out in the fields and keeping watch over their flock at night. ⁹And an angel of the Lord *suddenly* stood near them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them; and they were terribly frightened. ¹⁰And *so* the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people; ¹¹for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹²And this *will be* a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.” ¹³And suddenly there appeared with the angel a multitude of the heavenly army *of angels* praising God and saying,

¹⁴“Glory to God in the highest,
And on earth peace among people with whom He is pleased.”

¹⁵When the angels had departed from them into heaven, the shepherds *began* saying to one another, “Let’s go straight to Bethlehem, then, and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.” ¹⁶And they came in a hurry and found their way to Mary and Joseph, and the baby as He lay in the manger. ¹⁷When they had seen *Him*, they made known the statement which had been told them about this Child. ¹⁸And all who heard it were amazed about the things which were told them by the shepherds. ¹⁹But Mary treasured all these things, pondering them in her heart. ²⁰And the shepherds went back, glorifying and praising God for all that they had heard and seen, just as had been told them.

❖ Hymn of Response

Number 224

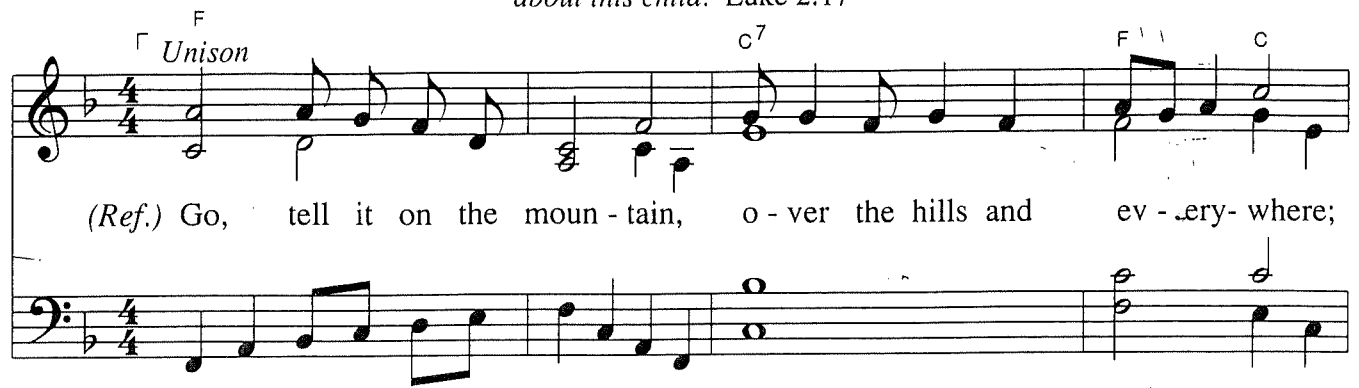
Go, Tell It on the Mountain

Go, Tell It on the Mountain

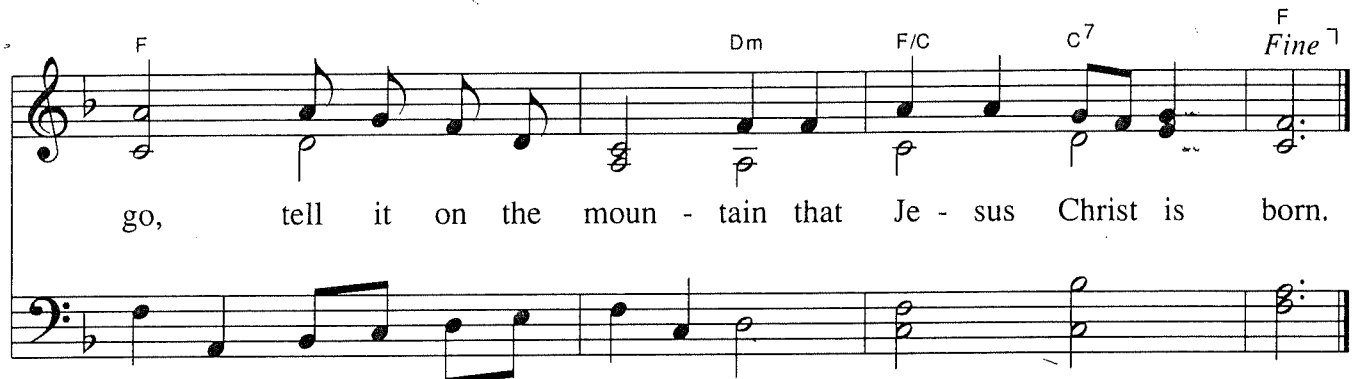
224

When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child. Luke 2:17

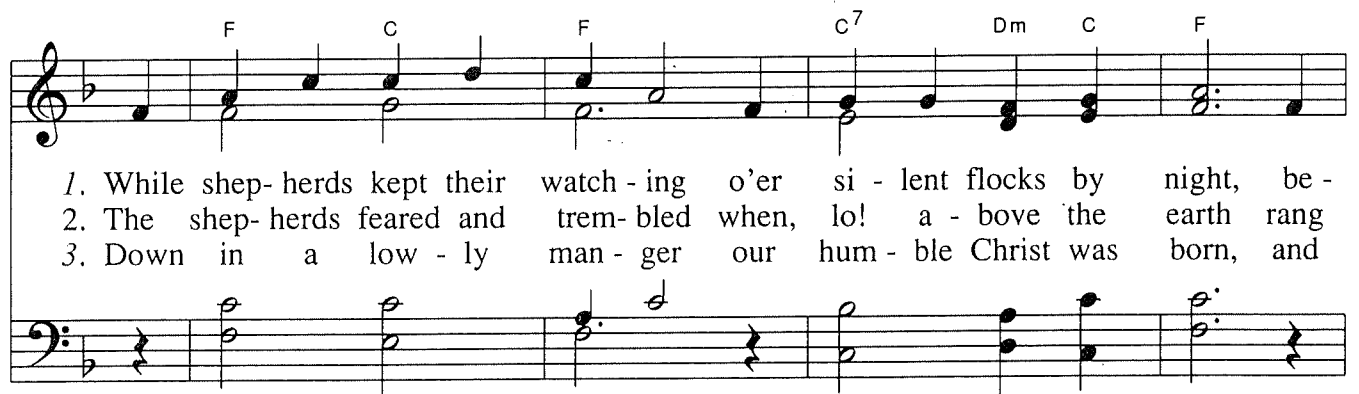
Unison



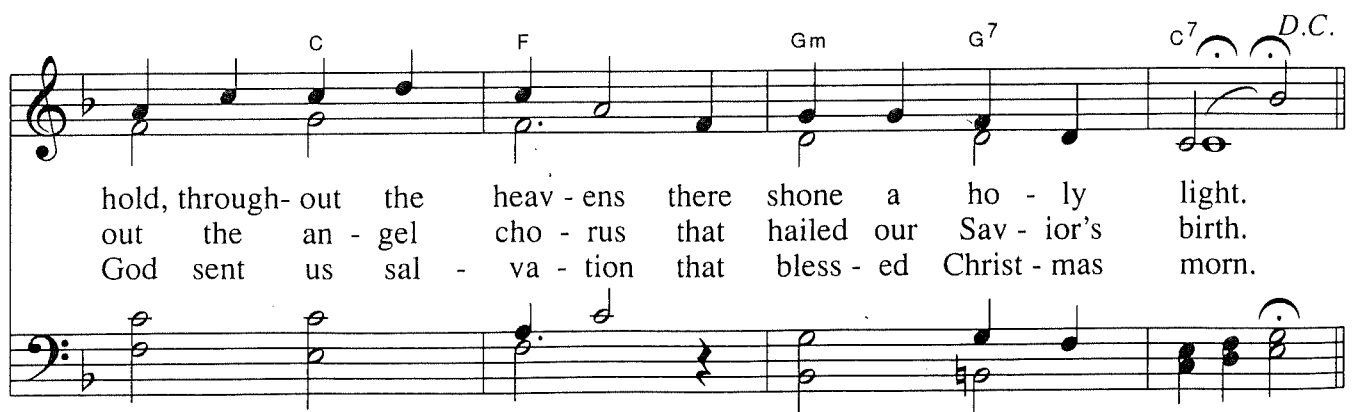
(Ref.) Go, tell it on the moun-tain, o-ver the hills and ev-ery-where;



go, tell it on the moun-tain that Je-sus Christ is born.



1. While shep-herds kept their watch-ing o'er si-lent flocks by night, be-
 2. The shep-herds feared and trem-bled when, lo! a-bove the earth rang
 3. Down in a low-ly man-ger our hum-ble Christ was born, and



hold, through-out the heav-ens there shone a ho-ly light.
 out the an-gel cho-rus that hailed our Sav-ior's birth.
 God sent us sal-va-tion that bless-ed Christ-mas morn.

Spiritual

GO TELL IT Irreg.
Spiritual

❖ Communion Hymn

Number 168

*I Greet Thee, Who My Sure Redeemer Art**Who gave himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age. Gal. 1:4*

1. I greet thee, who my sure Re - deem - er art, my on - ly
 2. Thou art the King of mer - cy and of grace, reign - ing om -
 3. Thou art the Life, by which a - lone we live, and all our
 4. Thou hast the true and per - fect gen - tle - ness, no harsh - ness
 5. Our hope is in no oth - er save in thee; our faith is

trust and Sav - ior of my heart, who pain didst un - der -
 nip - o - tent in ev - 'ry place: so come, O King, and
 • sub - stance and our strength re - ceive; O com - fort us in
 hast thou and no bit - ter - ness: make us to taste the
 built up - on thy prom - ise free; O grant to us such

go for my poor sake; I pray thee from our hearts all cares to take.
 our whole be - ing sway; shine on us with the light of thy pure day.
 • death's ap - proach - ing hour, strong - heart - ed then to face it by thy pow'r.
 sweet grace found in thee and ev - er stay in thy sweet u - ni - ty.
 strong - er hope and sure that we can bold - ly con - quer and en - dure.

Benediction

Hebrews 13: 20 – 21

Pastor: Now the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the eternal covenant, even Jesus our Lord, equip you in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever.

Congregation: Thanks be to God. Amen.

The Congregation may be seated after the Benediction for silent prayer.

Postlude

*~~ Organist: Jonathan Denham ~~
~~ Please ensure cell phones are off ~~*

Online Giving

NOTE: If you would like your online giving support to be applied to your 2020 Charitable Tax Statement, please make your donations before December 23. All online donations made after December 23, will be applied to your 2021 Charitable Tax Statement. If you have any questions, please contact Andy Cole at (802)457 – 3930 or email him at fccandrewcole@gmail.com.

Christmas Poinsettias

Poinsettias always add to the festive color of Christmas and can be given as a memorial to a loved one and taken home after the Christmas Eve or the next Sunday service. To order a 6” red or white poinsettia, contact Carol Powell at 457-3833 on or before Dec. 13.

Virtual Baby Card and Gift Shower for
Jonathan, Annie and baby Denham

When: December 13, 2020

How: website, mail in cards, baby basket in church for cards and gifts

Dear Family and Friends,

You are all invited to participate in a virtual baby shower. Ruth Emery (hgemery@aol.com or 802-457-4950) and I wish it could be in person, but the current restrictions won't permit it. We are so excited to have Jonathan and Annie with us at FCCW and we as a church family love to celebrate this joyous time with them and help support them.

There are several ways that you can participate:

The **first** way can be found in the back of the church, on November 29, December 6, and December 13 as you will find a holiday basket to put your baby gift cards in. If you would like to drop off a baby gift, then Terri or myself will be there to collect them and store them until everything is in.

The **second** way, just in case you don't feel comfortable coming into the church, you can mail the cards to the church. Please put on the bottom left of the envelope, **BABY SHOWER**. The address is FCCW, 36 Elm Street, Woodstock, VT 05091.

The **third** way, is through the baby website registry that is as follows: Jonathan Denham and Anne Denham's Baby Registry on <https://www.myregistry.com/baby-registry/jonathan-denham-and-anne-denham-woodstock-vt/2581881>

After the 13th, we will make sure that the gifts and cards get to them in their new apartment.

We thank you in advance as you bless them with your love and support.

In Christian Love,

Anne Koop (anne.t.koop@gmail.com, 802-345-1217)

Christmas Eve Offering Recipient
Bethany Birches Camp, Plymouth, VT

Seek First His Kingdom and All These Things Will Be Given To You As Well.

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I write to you with a full heart. My heart is filled with thankfulness, grace, and abundance. 2020 has been a challenging year for most. For some, it has been beyond challenging. For us here at Bethany Birches it has been stressful. When we realized summer camp would be possible and safe, and that young people needed a Christ-centered camp experience now more than ever, we were determined to find a way to abide by the guidelines, keep everyone safe, and run camp! We are so glad we did. Thought it was tiring, stressful, character-building, it was worth all of it. I suppose that's the way it is in the Kingdom of God. Jesus himself said in Luke 17 that whoever tries to keep their life will lose it and whoever loses their life will preserve it. This summer, and year in general has brought various kinds of loses. As promised, the camp, and those of us serving it have been preserved. Resources continue to be provided, lives impacted, and learning and growth abound.

On the topic of lives impacted, I couldn't be more pleased with one of our counselors this summer. While I was pleased with many of them, and think the summer team did a great job, the story of this one young woman helps me to envision the heart of our work. She had come to camp many years as a child and then even into her teen years. She was at camp every chance she got. She brought her friends. As she grew, and became involved in more activities, we saw less of her in her later teen years. She came back to us to be on staff in 2019. She wasn't sure she could be a counselor so took a support role. In 2020 she realized she wanted to be a counselor. She wasn't sure her faith was strong enough, or that her Bible knowledge was great enough. We hired her with enthusiasm because we know and love her and felt she was enough, and trusted her to guide campers toward their own relationships with God as her counselors did with her for so many years. As the summer wore on, she asked hard questions of us. She shared honestly and passionately. She gave deeply of herself to her campers and fellow staff. She started to read her Bible more often. After summer, she asked multiple times for us to begin a Bible study for staff and campers (which is now underway with many teens who are not currently in the faith). She is working hard to apply

all she is learning to her daily life. It is young people like this that are so needed right now. This young woman helps me remember that people are connecting deeply with God and those around them through the work we do at camp.

Now you can understand a little more why my heart is full. I have much to be thankful for, including that God would call me to this work, and let me witness so much change and joy and love, even while I am a sinner. I have you to be thankful for as well. Thank you for committing your Christmas Sacrificial Offering to the mission of Bethany Birches Camp. Join me in praying that God guides each of us as we are invited to make our own sacrifices and that as we respond to God's call in our lives, fruit is borne and, in the context, here at camp, many come to know Jesus and have intimate experience with God.

May the Lord bless you and keep you,

Brandon Bergey, Executive Director
Bethany Birches Camp

Copies of Pastor Doug's Advent Booklet
are available in the Narthex.

Christmas Eve Service

To accommodate the COVID restrictions, this year we will be offering 2 in – person Christmas Eve Services – 5:00 pm and 7:00 pm. If both services fill, we will offer a third service. Seating is limited per state guidelines. Reservations will be required. To reserve your seat, go to www.fccw.net/ChristmasEve. Services will also be streamed live.

Heavenly Choir Singing

1. Angels Announce Christ's Coming to Shepherds.

2. What Has the Angels Singing?

3. How Does Christ's Coming Achieve These Things?

Conclusion: The shepherds heard an angelic choir announcing that which all of God's people had been waiting to hear. The three things they heard announced: God's glory, world peace, and God's favor resting on His people were made a reality in and through Christ. He is the glory of God revealed. He makes peace through His sacrifice. He brings the favor of God to rest on His people forever.

Micah 5: 2, 5

But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah,
who are too little to be among the clans of Judah,
from you shall come forth for me
one who is to be ruler in Israel,
whose coming forth is from of old,
from ancient days ...
And he shall be their peace.

Psalm 89:19 – 29

Of old you spoke in a vision to your godly one, and said:
“I have granted help to one who is mighty;
I have exalted one chosen from the people.
I have found David, my servant;
with my holy oil I have anointed him,
so that my hand shall be established with him;
my arm also shall strengthen him.
The enemy shall not outwit him;
the wicked shall not humble him.
I will crush his foes before him
and strike down those who hate him.
My faithfulness and my steadfast love shall be with him,
and in my name shall his horn be exalted.
I will set his hand on the sea
and his right hand on the rivers.
He shall cry to me, ‘You are my Father,
my God, and the Rock of my salvation.’
And I will make him the firstborn,
the highest of the kings of the earth.
My steadfast love I will keep for him forever,
and my covenant will stand firm for him.
I will establish his offspring forever
and his throne as the days of the heavens.

Taking Gathered Worship Home

This week we will be using the material from our *Advent Devotional*. Allow the repetition each day to slow you down from all the frenetic details of daily life. Rest. Breathe in the reality of Christ's Advent. Ask the Lord to quiet your mind and heart. Ask Him to conform your will with His. Meditate upon the joyous good news that Christ has come and hope in the truth that He is coming again!

Each Day

Leader: Why do we light the Advent candles?

Family: Jesus said, "I am the Light of the world. He who follows me will not walk in darkness but will have the Light of Life."

Leader: What is the meaning of the third lighted candle?

Family: The third candle is the Shepherds' candle signifying the Light of Joy that unexpectantly brightened the hearts of a humble band of shepherds at the announcement of Christ's birth.

Leader: Who were the shepherds?

Family: The Shepherds were a group of lowly men whose work was to watch over flocks of sheep. It was difficult work, often in solitude, and subject to the dangers of life in the wilds. They were often despised and rejected by others who did not value the type of work they did.

Leader: What do the Gospels say concerning the shepherds?

Family: Luke says, "In the same region there were *some* shepherds staying out in the fields and keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord suddenly stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them; and they were terribly frightened. But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people; for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. This *will be* a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.'"

Read aloud Luke 2:13-20

¹³ And suddenly there appeared with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, ¹⁴ “Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased.” ¹⁵ When the angels had gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds *began* saying to one another, “Let us go straight to Bethlehem then, and see this thing that has happened which the Lord has made known to us.” ¹⁶ So they came in a hurry and found their way to Mary and Joseph, and the baby as He lay in the manger. ¹⁷ When they had seen this, they made known the statement which had been told them about this Child. ¹⁸ And all who heard it wondered at the things which were told them by the shepherds. ¹⁹ But Mary treasured all these things, pondering them in her heart. ²⁰ The shepherds went back, glorifying and praising God for all that they had heard and seen, just as had been told them.

Sing, “Go Tell It on the Mountain!”

Refrain:

Go, tell it on the mountain,
Over the hills and everywhere
Go, tell it on the mountain,
That Jesus Christ is born.

1. While shepherds kept their watching
O'er silent flocks by night,
Behold, throughout the heavens
There shone a holy light. *Refrain*

2. The Shepherds feared and
trembled,
When, lo! above the earth
Rang out the angel chorus
That hailed our Savior's birth.
Refrain

3. Down in a lowly manger
Our humble Christ was born,
God sent us salvation
That blessed Christmas morn.
Refrain

Pray

“Lord Jesus Christ, we give You all thanks and praise for Your victory over sin and death at the cross and the empty tomb. We bless You for redeeming us from the empty way of life we inherited from Adam and bringing us into a new life in Your family. We thank You for Your precious blood that was shed for us that we might be delivered from the dominion of darkness into Your glorious kingdom of light. We look forward with hope to Your return when we, with Your holy angels, will never cease to sing the wonders of Your glorious redemption. Amen.”