Christmas Eve Service 2025 Tippecanoe Presbyterian Church
Pastor Trish Eckert

✧Prelude ~ Tippe Musicians (while we enjoy hot cider and cookies)

✧ Call to Worship
On this holy night, we come,
dazzled and awe-struck,
ready to sing alongside the angels.

On this holy night we come,
eager and hopeful,
ready to journey alongside the shepherds.

On this holy night we come,
quietly and tenderly,
ready to worship alongside Mary.

On this holy night we come,
singing, trusting, believing, proclaiming:
good news is louder than fear.

Let us worship our good news, with-us God.

✧ Blessing Poem: *Honeysuckle*
~ Prayer by Rev. Sarah A. Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org
There is an abandoned house on my block.
Maybe someone owns it and is just waiting to fix it up,
or maybe it belongs to a family that simply cannot let it go.
Either way, the yard is an overgrown tangle of weeds—
crabgrass and yellow nutsedge, horsetail and clover—
unforgiving and entrenched.
Over the summer, a honeysuckle bush crept
from that forgotten house over the fence and through the yard.
It spilled out in broad patches on the sidewalk.
As a result, you could not pass that mess of a house without
the taste of honey in your mouth.
You could not pass that mess of a house without
being engulfed in the sweet scent of something good.
It was almost as if the earth was saying, sure, things are chaotic here,
but pause for a moment.
Pull a flower bud off in your fingers.
Break the stem.
Slurp the tiny bead of honey at the base.
Remember that even when bad news is unforgiving and entrenched,
good news grows out of its cage,
across the sidewalk,
just to get to you.

✧ Candle-lighting music: *The Light of Christ*
The light of Christ has come into the world
The light of Christ has come into the world

✧ Candle-lighting ~
In a fearful world, where do you see the
presence of God?

We see God's fingerprints all around us. We
see God in the beauty of the stars. We see
God in the love of this community. We see
God in the dreams we hold for a better world.

You are right. Even in a fearful world, God
is here. God is all around us.

On this holy night, we light the Christ Candle
as a reminder of this good news. May this
flicker of light help us remember that even
in a fearful world, God's love is all around us.

Thanks be to God for a love like that! Amen.

Sing *(Sung to the melody of 467 "Give Us Light")*
Lyrics:
Give us light; give us light; give us light, O God

✧***O Holy Night***
O Holy night! The stars are brightly shining
It is the night of our dear Savior's birth
Long lay the world in sin and error pining
Til He appeared and the soul felt its worth
A thrill of hope the weary world rejoices
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn
Fall on your knees; O hear the Angel voices!
O night divine, O night when Christ was born
O night, O Holy night, O night divine!

Luke's Gospel tells us that when Mary gave birth to Jesus, she laid him in a manger, for there was no place for them in the inn. Scholars argue about where, exactly, the birth occurs—and why. Was it in a stable or the living room of a simple peasant home? Was Bethlehem teeming with visitors who were also there to be counted in the census? Was Joseph's family inhospitable because they disapproved of his marital situation? Regardless of where the birth occurs, we know that Christ is born in a crowded, unlikely place. And yet, God makes a place there anyway. God draws the circle wider as shepherds and unexpected guests arrive. This Christmas, let us also make room—for strangers and neighbors alike. For this is good news of great joy for all people.

Luke 2: 1-4
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.

***O Little Town of Bethlehem* 121** (1st verse)
Luke 2: 5-7
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.

***What Child is This* 145** (1st verse)
Luke 2: 8-10
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:

***The First Nowell* 147** (1st verse)
Luke 2: 11-14 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!”

***Angels We Have Heard On High* 113** (1st verse)
Luke 2: 15-20
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, and 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, just as it had been told them.

✧***Away in a Manger* 115** (1st verse)
O Holy Night
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Til He appeared and the soul felt its worth
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✧***Silent Night* 122** (verses 1, 2, 3)

✧**Postlude** ~ Tippe Musicians