

Service of Worship
December 24, 2024
Christmas Eve

Luke 2:10-11: “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.’”

Welcome

Music for Preparation: *“A Stable Lamp Is Lighted”* John Oldham

Lighting of the Christ Candle Todd, Beth and Isaac

Hymn #110 *“Love Has Come”*

Prayer of Confession

Loving God, when the shepherds heard that you were born, they dropped their things and ran. They trusted the angels’ invitation. They believed that your love existed for them. We sometimes wish that we were more like that. Instead, somewhere between the angels’ song and the manger, we tend to lose our way. We doubt ourselves. We doubt the invitation. We doubt that love could know our names. Remind us that your love is personal and specific. Remind us that the good news of this day is for us. With hope we sing, we pray, and we run.

Silence

In the name of Christ, our home, we pray. **Amen**

Assurance of Pardon

The Christmas Story

Hymn #147 *“The First Nowell”* v. 1

Luke 2:1-5 Joseph and Mary Travel to Bethlehem
Hymn #121 *“O Little Town of Bethlehem”* v. 1

Luke 2:6-7 Jesus is Born
Hymn #115 *“Away in A Manger”* v. 1

Luke 2:8-15 Shepherds and Angels
Hymn #113 *“Angels We Have Heard On High”* v. 1

Luke 2:16-20 Shepherds Find Baby Jesus
Hymn #119 *“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”* v. 1

Meditation

Music: *“O Holy Night”* John Warriner

Prayers of the People/The Lord’s Prayer

Poem for Meditation: *“Hey Love”* Rev. Sarah Are Speed

Affirmation of Faith

We believe that on a night like this one, a baby was born and placed in a manger. We believe that baby was God’s love in the flesh, who grew up to love the outcast and change the world. We believe that Jesus’ love was so big and so personal that the world will never be the same. So despite the mystery of this holy night, we believe that a star shone, that the shepherds ran, that the angels sang, and that love was born. We believe it when the prophets say that unto you, unto *us*, a savior is born. Glory to God in the highest heaven! We believe.

Sharing The Light of God’s Love

Hymn #122 *“Silent Night, Holy Night!”* vs.1,3

Benediction

Hymn #134 *“Joy To The World”* vs. 1,3,4

“Hey Love”

My grandmother was strong. That’s what they tell me. She played piano and clipped coupons. She raised four kids. One was sick. One never would, never *could* grow up. But she loved them all. And when life fell apart in brand new ways, she bought books. She went back to school. She started over again. She was the kind of strong that reminds you of a live oak. The kind of woman, the kind of tree, you’d want to crawl up into and whisper, “Tell me how you did it. Tell me how you survived the storm.”

She was fifty-one when a vessel in her brain burst, blood coloring outside the lines, blood stealing large swathes of her strength with every pulse. After that, she never did play piano, read, or clip coupons. After that, she never could find the words. Nouns became things to point out. Names became numbers. Conversation creaked and slowed, but one word stayed.

The name of my baptism never crossed her lips, but when my grandmother saw me, she’d say—*Heeeey Love*.

My grandmother and God have this in common. Both know my name. Both call me Love.

By: Rev. Sarah Are Speed

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