

CHRIST, the LIGHT of the WORLD

A CHRISTMAS CANDLELIGHT SERVICE

COMPILED BY

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PUBLISHED BY

Eldridge Publishing Company
PO Box 14367
Tallahassee, FL 32317
95church.com

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To those in charge of the Christmas Pageant:

Recently we were asked by our ministers to assume the responsibility of producing the dramatic portions of the annual Christmas Eve carol service. We accepted most happily, but soon became alarmed when, in nearly three weeks of frantic searching, we found no vehicle which would meet two demands: (1) it must adjust to an existing format of music alternating with scripture; and (2) it must fill our desire for material that would tell the oldest story of Christianity in a new way.

Neither of us felt talented enough to write a script from our imagination, so the only thing left for us was to assemble what we wanted from available sources.

It was a labor of love, and we enjoyed working with the results. The Christmas Eve service was held on Christmas Night for those who braved the blizzard, so perhaps we will have the pleasure of using it again in our church. We hope this collection of Christmas verse will be helpful in your worship, and that it will be useful in some way that is appropriate for your own particular situation.

*Eleanor H. and James R. Green
Millersville, Pennsylvania*

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The materials included here are intended for use in a candlelighting ceremony for the Christmas season. They have been assembled with the following points in mind:

1. The program may be presented with an absolute minimum of time spent on rehearsals.
2. There need not be a great deal of memory work. Some portions may be read.
3. We wanted a presentation that would be new and different in order to interest those who have become bored with the same message heard in the same way.
4. The service must adhere to the traditions associated with the Christmas story as related in the Bible, but without an image of "bathrobe drama."
5. The entire work may be accomplished with a minimum of expense.

The service should be divided in two main parts:

Part I: The texts, in verse, were selected from traditional sources. You may use these in a way that suits your needs, perhaps with music in places where you decide it is appropriate.

Part II: Includes suggestions for the mechanics of the ceremony drawn from our experience with the script. Information on costuming and properties is included, also a possible order of worship. You may wish to use some, all, or none of our ideas; by all means simplify or enlarge the concept. This collection represents only a starting point. You know what will work best in your own worship situation.

PART 1: TEXTS

CALL TO WORSHIP

Hark! The glad sound! The Savior comes,
The Savior promised long:
Let every heart prepare a throne,
And every voice a song. (*Philip Doddridge*)

PROLOGUE

Long hath the night of sorrow reigned;
The dawn shall bring us light:
God shall appear, and we shall rise
With gladness in His sight.

Our hearts, if God we seek to know,
shall know Him, and rejoice;
His coming like the morn shall be,
like morning songs His voice. (*Scottish Psalter*)

THE VOICE OF PROPHECY

The people that in darkness sat
A glorious light have seen;
The light has shined on them who long
In shades of death have been.

For unto us a Child is born,
To us a Son is given,
And on His shoulder ever rests
All power on earth and heaven.

His name shall be the Prince of Peace,
The everlasting Lord.
The Wonderful, the Counselor,
The God by all adored.

His righteous government and power
Shall over all extend;
On judgment and on justice based,
His reign shall have no end. (*John Morison*)

THE ANNUNCIATION

The Angel Gabriel from God
Was sent to Galilee,
Unto a virgin fair and free,
Whose name was called Mary.
And when the Angel thither came,
He fell down on his knee,
And looking up in the virgin's face,
He said, "All hail, Mary":

Mary anon looked him upon,
And said, "Sir, what are ye?
I marvel much at these tidings

Which thou hast brought to me.
Married I am unto an old man,
As the lot fell unto me;
Therefore, I pray, depart away,
For I stand in doubt of thee”:

“Blessed Mary, be not afraid,
But do believe in me:
The power of the Holy Ghost
Shall overshadow thee;
Thou shalt conceive without any grief
As the Lord told unto me:
God’s own dear Son from Heaven shall come,
And shall be born of thee.” *(Traditional)*

THE MAGNIFICENT

My soul and spirit, filled with joy,
My God and Savior praise,
Whose goodness did from poor estate
His humble handmaid raise.
The blessed of God, the God of might.
All ages shall proclaim:
From age to age His mercy lasts,
And holy is His name.

Strength with His arm the Almighty showed;
The proud His looks abased;
He cast the mighty to the ground,
The meek to honor raised.
The hungry with good things were filled,
The rich with hunger pined;
He sent His servant Israel help,
And called His love to mind;
Which to our fathers’ ancient race
His promise to ensure,
To Abraham and His chosen seed,
For ever to endure. *(Scottish Psalter)*

End of Freeview

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