

Welcome to
MOUNT GRETNA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

A Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

December 24, 2025 ~ 11:00 p.m.

GATHERING AND PRAISE

RECITAL

beginning at 10:30 p.m.

WORDS OF WELCOME

***CALL TO WORSHIP:**

Leader: Beloved, on this night, we gather to enliven the story once again of
God who came to dwell among us as a vulnerable baby.

People: We rejoice in the day that all the earth awaits.

Leader: We remember the stable, the animals, and the manger that witnessed
the arrival of Emmanuel, God with us.

People: We rejoice in the day that all the earth awaits.

Leader: We recall the angels who announced the Messiah's birth to the
shepherds, those most unlikely witnesses of God's glory.

People: We rejoice in the day that all the earth awaits.

Leader: In our remembering and enlivening, we gather today as people of
God's promise, witnesses to God's glorious presence among us in the
vulnerable, forgotten, and tucked away places of the world.

People: We gather to rejoice in the day that all the earth awaits, the day
that has already come and will yet be. Thanks be to God! Amen.

***CAROL** "O Come, All Ye Faithful" No. 234

PROCLAMATION AND RESPONSE

THE FORETELLING OF CHRIST

FIRST LESSON: Isaiah 9:2, 6-7

The prophet announces the birth of a king to a people in darkness.

CAROL: "Come, Though Long-Expected Jesus" No. 196

SECOND LESSON: Isaiah 11:1 –4a, 6–9

The king is coming and will usher in a reign of justice for the poor and peace for all of God's creation.

CAROL: "What Child is This" (vs 1) No. 219

THE ANNUNCIATION

THIRD LESSON: Luke 1:26 –38

The angel Gabriel announces to the virgin Mary that she will give birth to God's promised Son whose kingdom shall never end.

CAROL: "O Little Town of Bethlehem" (vs 1) No. 230

THE NATIVITY

FOURTH LESSON: Luke 2:1 –7

Against a backdrop of emperors and taxes, Jesus is born.

CAROL: "He Is Born" No. 228
(The Christ Candle will be lit as we sing.)

THE ADORATION AND PROCLAMATION

FIFTH LESSON: Luke 2:8 –20

The shepherds go to see the Savior of the world, lying in a manger.

CAROL: "While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks" (vs 1) No. 236

SIXTH LESSON: John 1:1 –14

John unfolds the great mystery of the Incarnation.

CAROL: "The First Noel" (vs 1) No. 245

WE RESPOND

EVENING PRAYERS, *concluding with unison Lord's Prayer (trespasses)*

PRESENTATION OF OUR GIFTS TO THE CHRIST CHILD

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

WE GO FORTH

THE CELEBRATION

Candlelight Service: *The ushers will bring the Light to each worshiper. The person on the end of the row is asked to tip his/her unlit candle into the flame of the lighted candle and share that light with others in the row. Please, never tip a burning candle! During the fourth verse, lift your candles high!*

***SONG OF AWE** "Silent Night" *(back of bulletin)*

***PRAYER OF COMMITMENT:** Loving God, we thank you for sending Jesus into our world. We praise you for revealing to us your message of love, hope, and reconciliation. We stand in awe of your Word made flesh, which came to dwell among us, full of grace and truth. Speak to us in this moment of beauty and wonder. Speak through us as you send us into the world. Let our memories of the candlelight inspire and encourage us to let your Light shine through us, every day and in every place. All this we pray in the name of Jesus the Christ, who is the Light of the World. Amen!

***DISMISSAL WITH BLESSING**

Pastor: In all the places we go, in all the times we share, with all the people we encounter, remember this: God is with you!

People: GOD IS WITH US! Alleluia! Amen!

Pastor: Go forth now, with the Light of Christ before you, to know Christ and make him known, to help people become—and grow as followers of Christ, and to relieve suffering in our community and beyond. Amen.

People: Amen!

POSTLUDE

OUR THANKS to all who have sponsored the poinsettias that adorn our sanctuary.

Silent Night

Silent night, holy night, all is calm, all is bright
Round yon virgin mother and child. Holy infant, so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night, shepherds quake at the sight;
Glories stream from heaven afar, Heavenly hosts sing Alleluia!
Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born!

Silent night, holy night, Son of God, love's pure light;
Radiant beams from thy holy face, with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at the birth.

Silent night, holy night, wondrous star, lend thy light;
With the angels let us sing. Alleluia to our King;
Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born!

****Please stand, if able.***