

NOT YOUR GRANDMA'S CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

CHRISTMAS EVE - FRIDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2021 6 PM

LIVE IN NEW PALTZ at St. Andrew's Episcopal,
New Paltz United Methodist, & Redeemer
Lutheran Churches

Or by ZOOM:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81927910840?pwd=YmZNcmdmQlk0bWRTbmh3bFZmOUU2Zz09>



Join us as we consider:

What might Mary and Joseph's journey have looked like at four points in history: as Huguenots fleeing persecution in France, as Cherokee people on the Trail of Tears, as Black residents of Tulsa in the 1921 Tulsa Massacre, and as Afghan refugees today?

WORDS OF WELCOME

Words of welcome are offered by the presiding minister at St. Andrew's

HYMN: O Come, All Ye Faithful (ELW 283)

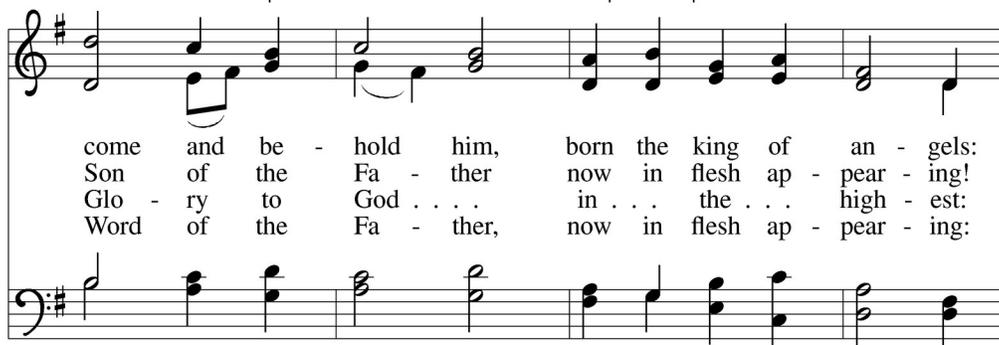
Led by the congregation of Redeemer Lutheran



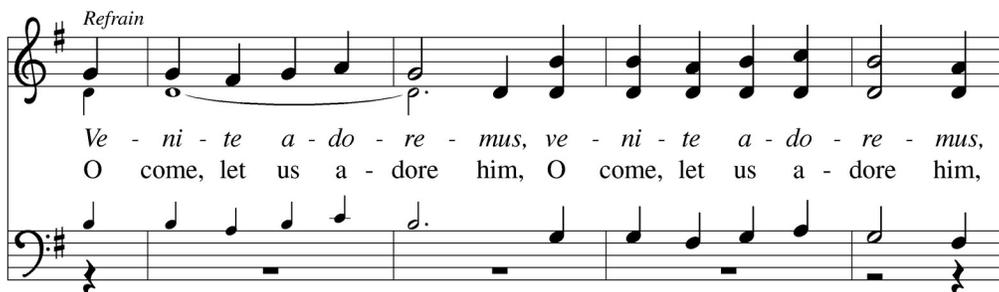
1 O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant! O
2 The high - est, most ho - ly, light of light e - ter - nal,
3 Sing, choirs of an - gels, sing in ex - ul - ta - tion,
4 Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this hap - py morn - ing;



come ye, O come ye to Beth - le - hem;
born of a vir - gin, a mor - tal he comes;
sing, all ye cit - i - zens of heav - en a - bove!
Je - sus, to thee be . . . glo - ry giv'n!



come and be - hold him, born the king of an - gels:
Son of the Fa - ther now in flesh ap - pear - ing!
Glo - ry to God . . . in . . . the . . . high - est:
Word of the Fa - ther, now in flesh ap - pear - ing:



Refrain
Ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus, ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus,
O come, let us a - dore him, O come, let us a - dore him,



ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus Do - mi - num.
O come, let us a - dore him, Christ the Lord!

CALL TO WORSHIP

The presiding minister of Redeemer Lutheran leads the Call to Worship, the assembly responds.

We come to make an old story new

Grant us fresh eyes, ears and hearts, the newness of a baby's breath.

We come to make God-sense out of non-sense.

Grace us with holy understanding for how to be in your world.

We come to bring the story of the birth of the Christ to life in our hearts.

Grow in us a holy and everlasting fire for your peace and justice, born this night and nurtured eternally.

OPENING PRAYER

The assembly prays the following prayer

God of all, this night we celebrate your divine love made flesh among us, Emmanuel. Guide us through the journey to your peace, we pray. Guide us, not just to the babe in the manger, but help us to stay with him, God, through the terrible twos, the fabulous fours. Make us a people of lasting peace and childhood's wonder. Grant us clear sight to see those places where we have fallen short so we may be better in the year to come than the one behind. Amen.

HYMN: It Came Upon the Midnight Clear (ELW 282 v. 1, 3, & 4)

Led by the congregation of New Paltz Methodist (hymn found on following page).





1 It came up - on the mid - night clear, that glo - rious song of old,
2 Still through the clo - ven skies they come with peace - ful wings un - furled,
3 And you, be - neath life's crush - ing load, whose forms are bend - ing low,
4 For lo! The days are has - t'ning on, by proph - ets seen of old,



from an - gels bend - ing near the earth to touch their harps of gold:
and still their heav'n - ly mu - sic floats o'er all the wea - ry world.
who toil a - long the climb - ing way with pain - ful steps and slow:
when with the ev - er - cir - cling years shall come the time fore - told,



“Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heav'n's all - gra - cious king.”
A - bove its sad and low - ly plains they bend on hov - 'ring wing,
look now, for glad and gold - en hours come swift - ly on the wing;
when peace shall o - ver all the earth its an - cient splen - dors fling,



The world in sol - emn still - ness lay to hear the an - gels sing.
and ev - er o'er its ba - bel sounds the bless - ed an - gels sing.
oh, rest be - side the wea - ry road and hear the an - gels sing!
and all the world give back the song which now the an - gels sing.



The portion of text is narrated by the congregation of New Paltz Methodist.

Narrator: In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. Joseph went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to...

Be registered. When do we not 'register' people? Prove you are a Catholic. Or a Protestant, during the Reformation...Fraulien, show your papers, ah, why are you out without your Star of David, Jewess? During World War II...Mr. Jim Crow says you can vote when you can pass this here simple test, boy" In the bloodbath that was Rwanda, "You are too dark to be a Hutu. I think you are a Tutsi...on your knees!"

Joseph went out. He took Mary, so strong, with all they could carry, leaving so much behind. And they journeyed into the unknown. Tonight we will go with them, for they have been in every time, in every place, everywhere the doors are slammed, every time fear has ruled.

HYMN: He Is Born (Il Est Ne)

Led by the congregation of St. Andrew's (hymn found on following page).



Refrain (Unison)

(Il Est Né)

He is born, the ho - ly Child, play the o - boe and
Il est né, le di - vin En - fant, jou - ez haut - bois rè - son -

bag - pipes mer - ri - ly! He is born, the ho - ly Child,
nez mu - set - tes! Il est né, le di - vin En - fant,

Fine Optional S.A.

sing we all of the Sav - ior mild. 1. Thru long a - ges
chan - tons tous son a - vè - ne - ment! 2. O how love - ly,
 3. Je - sus, Lord of

of the past, proph - ets have fore - told his com - ing;
 O how pure is this per - fect child of heav - en;
 all the world, com - ing as a child a - mong us,

thru long a - ges of the past, now the time has come at last!
 O how love - ly, O how pure, gra - cious gift to hu - man - kind!
 Je - sus, Lord of all the world, grant to us thy heaven - ly peace.

The portion of text is narrated by the congregation of Redeemer Lutheran.

Narrator: If this night, like so many nights, when the Huguenots were pushed from their homes, had been Christmas Eve, would we be able to sing?

HYMN: The First Noel (ELW 300, v 1-3)

Led by the congregation of Redeemer Lutheran (hymn found on following page).



1 The first No - el the an - gel did say was to
 2 They look - ed up and saw . . . a star shin - ing
 3 And by the light of that . . . same star three . . .
 4 This star drew near to the . . . north - west, o'er . . .
 5 Then en - tered in those wise . . . men three, full . . .

cer - tain poor shep - herds in fields as they lay; in fields where
 in . . . the east . . . be - yond . . . them far; and to the
 wise . . . men came . . . from coun - try far; to seek for a
 Beth - le - hem . . . it took . . . its rest; and there it
 rev - 'rent - ly . . . up - on . . . their knee, and of - fered

they lay, keep - ing their sheep, on a cold win - ter's
 earth it gave . . . great light, and . . . so it con -
 king was their . . . in - tent, and to fol - low the
 did both stop . . . and stay right . . . o - ver the
 there in his . . . pres - ence their . . . gold, . . . and

Refrain

night that was so deep.
 tin - ued both day and night.
 star wher - ev - er it went. No - el, No - el, No -
 place where Je - sus lay.
 myrrh, and frank - in - cense.

el, No - el! Born is the King of Is - ra - el.

After the conclusion of the hymn, the assembly responds.

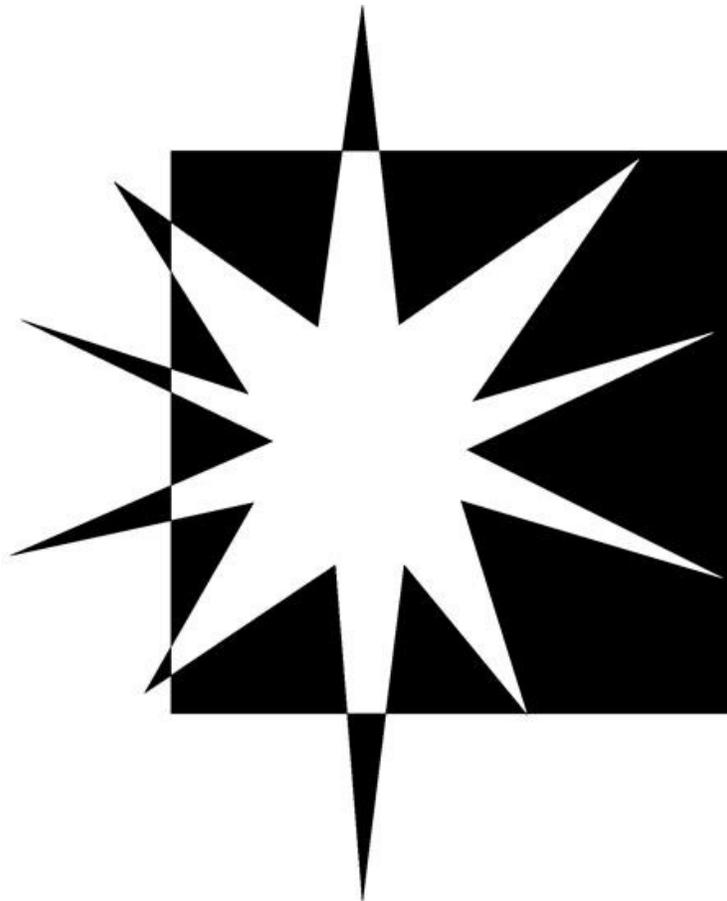
But it was Christmas Eve then. And it is now.

The portion of text is narrated by the congregation of St. Andrew's.

Narrator: If this twilight on the Trail of Tears had been Christmas Eve, and Mary with nowhere to have the baby, would we be able to sing?

HYMN: 'Twas in the Moon of Wintertime

Led by the congregation of St. Andrew's (hymn found on following page).



Unison

1. 'Twas in the moon of win-ter-time, when all the birds had fled, that
 2. With - in a lodge of bro-ken bark the ten-der babe was found; a
 3. The ear-liest moon of win-ter-time is not so round and fair as
 4. O chil-dren of the for-est free, O seed of Man-i - tou, the

might-y Git-chi Man-i - tou* sent an - gel choirs in - stead; be -
 rag - ged robe of rab - bit skin en-wrapped his beau-ty round; but
 was the ring of glo - ry on the help-less in - fant there. The
 ho - ly Child of earth and heaven is born to - day for you. Come

fore their light the stars grew dim, and won-dering hunt-ers heard the hymn:
 as the hunt-er braves drew nigh, the an - gel song rang loud and high:
 chiefs from far be - fore him knelt with gifts of fox and bea-ver pelt.
 kneel be - fore the ra-diant boy, who brings you beau-ty, peace, and joy.

Refrain

Je - sus your King is born, Je - sus is born, in ex-cel-sis glo - ri - a.

*Gitchi Manitou = Great God

WORDS: Jean de Brebeuf, ca. 1643; trans. by Jesse Edgar Middleton, 1926
 MUSIC: French Canadian melody

Trans. by permission of Frederick Harris Music Co. Ltd.

After the conclusion of the hymn, the assembly responds.
But it was Christmas Eve then. And it is now.

The portion of text is narrated by the congregation of St. Andrew's.

Narrator: if the Tulsa Massacre had been Christmas Eve, Mary and Joseph might have been shot or burned to death, and we would not be able to sing . . .

HYMN: Virgin Mary Had a Baby Boy

Led by the congregation of St. Andrew's (hymn found on following page).





1. The vir - gin Ma - ry had a ba - by boy, the
 2. The an - gels sang when the ba - by was born, the
 3. The shep - herds came where the ba - by was born, the
 4. The Wise Men came where the ba - by was born, the



vir - gin Ma - ry had a ba - by boy, the
 an - gels sang when the ba - by was born, the
 shep - herds came where the ba - by was born, the
 Wise Men came where the ba - by was born, the



vir - gin Ma - ry had a ba - by boy, }
 an - gels sang when the ba - by was born, } and they
 shep - herds came where the ba - by was born, }
 Wise Men came where the ba - by was born, }

Refrain



say that his name is Je - sus. He come from the glo - ry,



he come from the glo - rious king - dom. He come from the



glo - ry, he come from the glo - rious king - dom. Oh,



yes! be - liev - er! Oh, yes! be - liev - er! He come from the

WORDS: West Indian carol (Matt. 2:1-12; Luke 2:1-20)

MUSIC: West Indian carol

Arr. © 1945 Boosey & Co., Ltd., admin. by Boosey & Hawkes, Inc.

THE VIRGIN MARY
 10 10.10 9 with Refrain

After the conclusion of the hymn, the assembly responds.

We need the songs of glad tidings, God! We need a room at the inn for your son, most precious to us all. Where, God? When?

The portion of text is narrated by the congregation of New Paltz Methodist.

Narrator: It is what you do when you do not know...when you care for the least of these, you care for me, says the Lord.

The assembly responds.

The baby is born. This night. Unto us. And our loving arms will enfold him.

HYMN: Silent Night, Holy Night (ELW 281)

Led by the congregation of New Paltz Methodist (hymn found on following page).



Stil - le Nacht, hei - li - ge Nacht! Al - les schläft,
 1 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! All is calm,
 2 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Shep - herds quake
 3 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Son of God,

ein - sam wacht nur das trau - te, hoch - hei - li - ge Paar.
 all is bright round yon vir - gin moth - er and child.
 at the sight; glo - ries stream from heav - en a - far,
 love's pure light ra - diant beams from your ho - ly face,

Hol - der Kna - be im lok - ki - gen Haar, schlaf in himm - li - scher
 Ho - ly In - fant, so ten - der and mild, sleep in heav - en - ly
 heav'n - ly hosts . . . sing, al - le - lu - ia! Christ, the Sav - ior, is
 with the dawn of re - deem - ing grace, Je - sus, Lord, at your

Ruh, schlaf in himm - li - scher Ruh.
 peace, sleep in heav - en - ly peace.
 born! Christ, the Sav - ior, is born!
 birth, Je - sus, Lord, at your birth.

The portion of text is narrated by the congregation of New Paltz Methodist.

And so the Prince of Peace, comes once more into uncertain times. Let us rejoice at his arrival!

Amen!

ABOUT THIS SERVICE

We have borrowed from two Christmas traditions in creating this service, the Christmas Pageant and Las Posadas. Los Posadas is a traditional Mexican worship event running nine evenings (for the nine months of Mary's pregnancy) during which a family plays Mary and Joseph, visits houses of the congregation in turn seeking room at the inn and is turned away in song until the last night, Christmas Eve, when finally room is made. Each night is a community celebration with food and singing. Each stop is, most of all, an opportunity to ask how, when and why we welcome the stranger, the outcast, the other...and how, when and why we do not, and what the consequences or blessings of our choices are, as Christians.

As our collective denominations are institutions which were founded on social justice and mission, and have taken a stand for welcoming refugees in this most current moment of a seemingly endless wave of human forced migration, it seemed like an opportunity to make the Christmas story one that had meaning and resonance throughout time and space. Great liberties were taken with the original idea of a Las Posadas. It became a starting point. Please consider this service to be an experiment, something akin to what might happen if a Las Posadas service were to get tangled up with A Christmas Carol. And perhaps Dr. Who for good measure. Liberties were taken. We beg both indulgence and forgiveness. In a longer version, such things would be remedied, clarified, nuanced. Prayerfully, this piece might instill a hunger to know more.

The Huguenots were French Protestants who flourished in the century prior to 1685. While there had been tension between Catholics and Protestants before, in that year the Edict of Fountainbleu decreed that all Huguenots should either be forced to convert to Catholicism, or killed. Of the more than two million Huguenots in France, only roughly five hundred thousand managed to emigrate or escape in time, a significant number becoming founders of this community.

The Trail of Tears is the name given to the forced migration of Native Americans of many tribes across the southern United States into the then territories farther west following the Indian Removal Act of 1830. Over 20,000 Native peoples walked the trail, most in forced marches overseen by U.S. soldiers. These same soldiers were ordered to hand out blankets infested with small pox, to which native populations have no natural immunity, thereby ensuring the death of thousands. In some cases, whole villages were lost at a time. Protestant churches aggressively worked to Anglicize Native peoples through schools which separated children from parents, removed names, and forbid use of native languages, to name a few techniques. Please note: Gitchi Manitou is a native name for God that would NOT have been used by those on the trail of tears. This is creative license and complete geographic inaccuracy, largely to give a clear reason to sing the remarkable French Canadian hymn in which the name appears.

Greenwood, the Tulsa neighborhood that was known as 'Black Wall Street,' was a thriving community in 1921. There were hotels, doctors, banks, educational and entertainment facilities, all by and for Black people. It took very little to incite white Tulsans to riot - rumor of a young Black man riding an elevator alone with a white woman. Literally overnight 35 square blocks were burned and destroyed. Every Black Tulsan who did not flee the city was interned, without charges, over 800 were treated for

injuries, and historians believe over 300 people were murdered in the massacre. No redress has been made and until recently, virtually no white Americans were aware of this part of our history.

Home to a rich and ancient wealth of art, culture and learning, the capital city of Kabul was known as the Paris of Central Asia. This came to an abrupt end in 1979, when Afghanistan found itself a battle ground in a proxy war between the U.S. and the former Soviet Union. The decades of instability since created a perfect incubator for extremists, leading to the rise of the Taliban. As the U.S. pulled troops from the longest overseas occupation in our nation's history the 40 million Afghans left behind scrambled to leave, find safety or otherwise protect themselves from the violent interpretation of Islam espoused by the terrorist Talibani. Of note for us, after having written this piece, we have learned of a family, much like the one we portray, fleeing their home and looking to rebuild their lives here in New Paltz

*Inshallah – if/as God/Allah wills it.