

**Order for the Public Worship of God
December 27, 2020
1st Sunday of Christmas
9:00AM & 11:00AM Worship Services**

WE COME TO WORSHIP

OPENING VOLUNTARY “God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen” arr. Kevin McChesney
Celestial Handbells

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP “Star Child” Carlton R. Young
Stephanie Carson, Soloist

*Star-Child, earth-Child, go-between of God,
Love Child, Christ Child, heaven’s lightning rod,*

*This year, this year let the day arrive
When Christmas comes for everyone, everyone alive!*

*Hope-for-peace Child, God’s stupendous sign,
Down-to-earth Child, Star of stars that shine,*

Text: Shirley Elena Murray (Matt. 2:1-12)

PRAYER OF THE DAY

CAROL #147 “The First Nowell” THE FIRST NOWELL
(stanzas 1,2,5)

**The first Nowell the angel did say
was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay,
in fields where they lay keeping their sheep,
on a cold winter’s night that was so deep.**

Refrain: Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, born is the King of Israel.

**They looked up and saw a star
shining in the east beyond them far;
and to the earth it gave great light,
and so it continued both day and night.**

Refrain

**Then entered in those wise men three,
full reverently upon their knee,
and offered there in his presence
their gold and myrrh, and frankincense.**

Refrain

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION *(Together)*

God of love, as we reflect back on this past year and look to live out our faith in the year upcoming, we confess our weaknesses, our broken promises, and our lack of faith in your goodness and grace. O Dear Lord, for our sins of commission and omission, may you show us mercy, grant us forgiveness and by your grace empower us to live faithful lives that make a difference for Jesus' sake for it is in his name that we pray. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE

REGENT SQUARE

**Sages, leave your contemplations; brighter visions beam afar;
seek the great desire of nations; you have seen his natal star:
come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ the newborn king!**

PRAISE SONG

"It's Christmas"
Voices in Praise & Horns in Praise
(Recorded December 16, 2018)

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

CALL TO OFFERING

QUARTET

"God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen"
Heather Wood, Lindsey Peterson, Robert Wood, David Hamilton
(Recorded December 24, 2019)

Molly Ijames

**God rest ye merry, gentlemen, let nothing you dismay,
for Jesus Christ our Savior was born upon this day,
to save us all from Satan's power when we were gone astray.
O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy, O tiding of comfort and joy.**

**From God our heavenly Father a blessed angel came,
and unto certain shepherds brought tidings of the same,
how that in Bethlehem was born the Son of God by name.
O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy, O tiding of comfort and joy.**

**"Fear not" then said the angel "let nothing you a fright",
this day is born a savior of a pure virgin bright,
to free all those who trust in him from satan's pow'r and might
O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy, O tiding of comfort and joy.**

**Now to the Lord sing praises, all you within this place,
and with true love and brotherhood each other now embrace;
this holy tide of Christmas all others doth deface.
O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy, O tiding of comfort and joy.**

WE GROW IN THE WORD

SCRIPTURE READING

Luke 2:22-40 NRSV

MESSAGE

**“The Staggering Declaration of Christmas”
Paul Means, Associate Pastor**

WE GO OUT TO SERVE

HYMN #136
(stanzas 1,3)

“Go Tell It on the Mountain”

GO TELL IT

Refrain **Go, tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere;
go, tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born.**

**While shepherds kept their watching o’er silent flocks by night,
Behold, throughout the heavens there shown a holy light. *Refrain***

**Down in the lowly manger the humble Christ was born,
And God sent us salvation that blessed Christmas morn. *Refrain***

BENEDICTION

CLOSING VOLUNTARY

“God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen”

Noel Goemanne

Stephanie Carson, Music Director
Tom Huffman, Organist and Associate Music Director

147

The First Nowell

1 The first Now-ell the an-gel did say was to cer-tain poor
 2 They look-ed up and saw a star shin-ing in the
 3 And by the light of that same star three wise men
 4 This star drew nigh to the north-west; o'er Beth-le-

shep-herds in fields as they lay, in fields where they lay keep-ing
 east be-yond them far; and to the earth it gave
 came from coun-try far; to seek for a king was their
 hem it took its rest, and there it did both stop

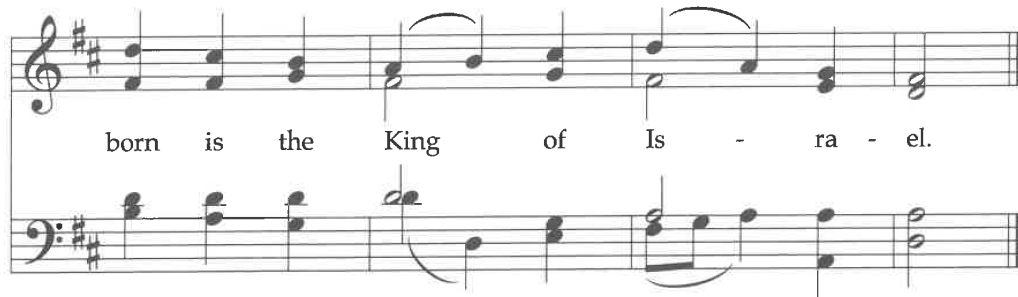
their sheep, on a cold win-ter's night that was so deep.
 great light, and so it con-tin-ued both day and night.
 in-tent, and to fol-low the star wher-ev-er it went.
 and stay, right o-ver the place where Je-sus lay.

Refrain

Now - ell, Now - ell, Now - ell, Now - ell,



"Nowell" is the English form of the French "noel," a shout of joy formerly used at Christmas (as in Chaucer's "Franklin's Tale"), a clue that the word is older than its first printing. It may have Latin and French roots related to "born" (*natus* / *né*) as well to "news" (*nova* / *nouvelle*).

JESUS CHRIST: BIRTH



- 5 Then entered in those wise men three, 6 Then let us all with one accord
full reverently upon their knee, sing praises to our heavenly Lord,
and offered there in his presence that hath made heaven and earth of nought,
their gold, and myrrh, and and with his blood our life hath bought.
frankincense. *Refrain*

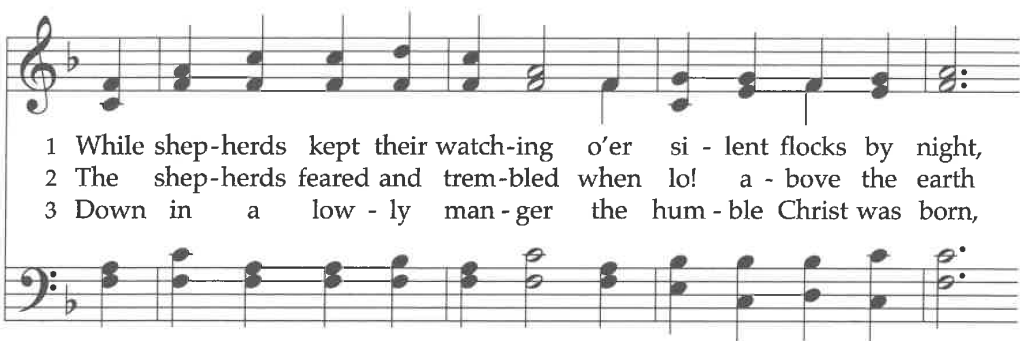
136 Go, Tell It on the Mountain

Refrain 


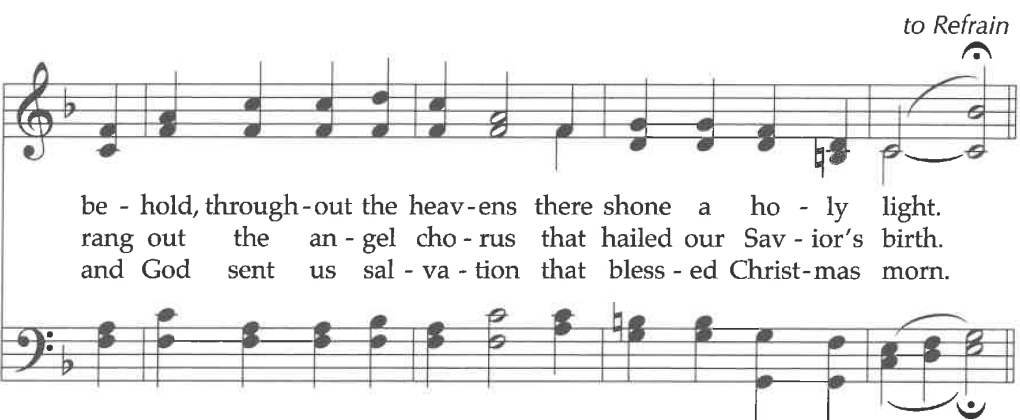
Go, tell it on the moun-tain, o-ver the hills and ev - ery - where;



go, tell it on the moun - tain that Je - sus Christ is born!



1 While shep-herds kept their watch-ing o'er si - lent flocks by night,
2 The shep-herds feared and trem-bled when lo! a - bove the earth
3 Down in a low - ly man - ger the hum - ble Christ was born,



be - hold, through-out the heav-ens there shone a ho - ly light.
rang out the an - gel cho - rus that hailed our Sav - ior's birth.
and God sent us sal - va - tion that bless - ed Christ-mas morn.

Like other material from oral traditions, 19th-century African American spirituals flourished without being written down. Their refrains were their most stable parts, and narrative stanzas were often improvised to fit. These Nativity stanzas attempt to recall that tradition.