

Christmas Eve Lovefeast

Trinity Moravian Church

BAND PRELUDE

THE ORGAN PRELUDE

O come, all ye faithful, (Adeste Fidelis)
 Joyful and triumphant, 39F
 O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
 Come and behold Him,
 Born the King of angels;

Refrain - O come, let us adore Him;
 O come, let us adore Him;
 O come, let us adore Him;
 Christ the Lord.

Sing choirs of angels,
 Sing in exultation,
 O sing, all ye citizens of heaven above;
 Glory to God, all
 Glory in the highest; [Refrain]

INVOCATION

ANTHEM

SCRIPTURE - The Christmas Story - Luke 2:1-20

THE SERVING OF THE LOVEFEAST

O Savior of our race, (West)
 Welcome indeed Thou art, 582C
 Blessed Redeemer, Fount of grace,
 To this my longing heart!

Light of the world, abide
 Through faith within my heart;
 Leave me to seek no other guide,
 Nor e'er from Thee depart.

Thou art the Life, O Lord!
 Sole Light of life Thou art!
 Let not Thy glorious rays be poured
 In vain on my dark heart.

Star of the East, arise!
 Drive all my clouds away.
 Guide me, till earth's dim twilight dies
 Into the perfect day.

Joy to the world! The Lord is come: (Antioch)

Let earth receive her King;
 Let ev'ry heart prepare him room,
 And heav'n and nature sing,
 And heav'n and nature sing,
 And heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.

Joy to the earth! The Savior reigns:
 Let us our songs employ;
 While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
 Repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy,
 Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

No more let sin and sorrow grow,
 Nor thorns infest the ground;
 He comes to make his blessings flow
 Far as the curse is found, far as the curse is found,
 Far as, far as the curse is found.

He rules the world with truth and grace,
 And makes the nations prove
 The glories of his righteousness
 And wonders of his love, and wonders of his love,
 And wonders, wonders of his love.

Softly the night is sleeping (Warner)
 On Bethlehem's peaceful hill; 151W
 Silent the shepherds watching,
 The gentle flocks are still.
 But hark! the wondrous music
 Falls from the op'ning sky;
 Valley and cliff re-echo, Glory to God on high!

Refrain: Glory to God! Glory to God!
 Glory to God! it rings again,
 Peace on the earth! good will to men!

Day in the east is breaking;
 Day o'er the crimsoned earth;
 Now the glad world is waking,
 Glad in the Savior's birth!
 See where the clear star bendeth
 Over the manger blest;
 See where the infant Jesus
 Smiles upon Mary's breast! [Refrain]

Come with the gladsome shepherds,
 Quick hastening from the fold;
 Come with the wise men, pouring
 Incense and myrrh and gold.
 Come to Him, poor and lowly,
 Around the cradle throng;
 Come with your hearts of sunshine,
 And sing the angels' song. [Refrain]

Angels from the realms of glory, (Regent Square)
 Wing your flight o'er all the earth; 585D
 Ye, who sang creation's story
 Now proclaim Messiah's birth:

Refrain: Come and worship, come and worship,
 worship Christ, the newborn king.

Shepherds, in the field abiding,
 Watching o'er your flocks by night,
 God with us is now residing;
 Yonder shines the infant light: [Refrain]

Sages, leave your contemplations,
 Brighter visions beam afar;
 Seek the great Desire of nations;
 Ye have seen his natal star: [Refrain]

The first Noel the angel did say (The First Noel)
 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: Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel,
 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]

Moravian Blessing:

Come Lord Jesus, our guest to be
 and bless these gifts bestowed by Thee
 Bless our loved ones everywhere
 and keep them in Thy loving care. Amen

ALL SHALL JOIN IN THE LOVEFEAST

ANTHEMS

COLLECTION OF THE CUPS

Hark! the herald angels sing, (Herald Angels)
 "Glory to the newborn King:
 Peace on earth, and mercy mild,
 God and sinners reconciled!"
 Joyful, all ye nations, rise,
 Join the triumph of the skies;
 With angelic hosts proclaim,
 "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

205R

Refrain: Hark! the herald angels sing,
 "Glory to the newborn King"

Lo, He lays His glory by!
 Born that man no more may die;
 Born to raise the sons of earth;
 Born to give them second birth.
 Sing we then, with angels sing:
 "Glory to the new-born King!
 Glory in the highest heaven,
 Peace on earth and man forgiven." [Refrain]

O little town of Bethlehem,
 How still we see thee lie;
 Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
 The silent stars go by.
 Yet in thy dark streets shineth
 The everlasting light;
 The hopes and fears of all the years
 Are met in thee tonight.

(St. Louis)

For Christ is born of Mary,
 And gathered all above,
 While mortals sleep, the angels keep
 Their watch of wondering love.
 O morning stars together,
 Proclaim the holy birth,
 And praises sing to God the king,
 And peace to all on earth!

How silently, how silently,
 The wondrous gift is given;
 So God imparts to human hearts
 The blessings of his heaven.
 No ear may hear his coming,
 But in this world of sin,
 Where meek souls will receive him, still
 The dear Christ enters in.

O holy Child of Bethlehem,
 Descend to us, we pray;
 Cast out our sin, and enter in,
 Be born in us today.
 We hear the Christmas angels
 The great glad tidings tell;
 O come to us, abide with us,
 Our Lord Emmanuel!

OFFERING

DISTRIBUTION OF CANDLES

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)

Silent night, holy night,
 Darkness flies, all is light
 Shepherds hear the angels sing,
 "Alleluia! Hail the King!
 Christ the Savior is born,
 Christ the Savior is born!"

Silent night, holy night,
 Guiding Star, lend thy light;
 See the eastern wise men bring
 Gifts and homage to our King;
 Christ the Savior is born
 Christ the Savior is born.

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!

(Mueller)

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
 the little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head;
 the stars in the sky looked down where He lay,
 the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing, the Baby awakes,
 but little Lord Jesus, no crying He makes.
 I love Thee, Lord Jesus, look down from the sky
 and stay by my cradle until morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask Thee to stay
 close by me forever and love me, I pray.
 Bless all the dear children in Thy tender care,
 and fit us for heaven, to live with Thee there.

(The next hymn is sung antiphonally by the congregation and soloist, the congregation singing the words in *bold italics*.)

Solo – Morning Star, O cheering sight (Hagen)
 Ere thou cam'st, how dark earth's night! 310B
 All – *Morning Star, O cheering sight!*
Ere thou cam'st, how dark earth's night!
 Jesus mine, *In me shine;*
 In me shine, *Jesus mine;*
fill my heart with light divine.

Morning Star, thy glory bright
 far excels the sun's clear light.
Morning Star, thy glory bright
far excels the sun's clear light.
 Jesus be, *Constantly,*
 Constantly, *Jesus be*
more than thousand suns to me.

Thy glad beams, thou Morning Star,
 cheer the nations near and far.
Thy glad beams, thou Morning Star
cheer the nations near and far.
 Thee we own, *Lord alone,*
 Lord alone, *Thee we own*
man's great Savior, God's dear Son.

Morning Star, my soul's true light,
 tarry not, dispel my night.
Morning Star, my soul's true light,
tarry not, dispel my night.
 Jesus mine, *In me shine;*
 In me shine, *Jesus mine;*
fill my heart with light divine.

Christ the Lord, the Lord most glorious, (Christ the Lord)
 Now is born; O shout aloud! Leinbach
 Man by Him is made victorious;
 Praise your Savior, hail your God.

Praise the Lord. Whose saving splendor
 Shines into the darkest night;
 O what praises shall we render
 For this never-ceasing light.

All hail the power of Jesus' name, (Coronation)
 Let angels prostrate fall; No. 14R
 Bring forth the royal diadem;
 And crown Him Lord of all
 Bring forth the royal diadem,
 And crown Him Lord of all.

Let every kindred, every tribe,
 On this terrestrial ball,
 To Him all majesty ascribe;
 And crown Him Lord of all
 To Him all majesty ascribe,
 And crown Him Lord of all.

*Oh, that with yonder sacred throng
 We at his feet may fall!
 We'll join the everlasting song,
 And crown Him Lord of all.
 We'll join the everlasting song,
 And crown Him Lord of all.

(*DURING THE LAST STANZA, ALL SHALL LIFT THEIR CANDLES HIGH)

BENEDICTION

THE ORGAN POSTLUDE

THE MORAVIAN LOVEFEASTS

The early Christians met and broke bread together to signify their union; they referred to these meetings as *agape* meals, or love meals. In 1727, after a powerful spiritual renewal experience, the Moravian Church revived this practice, and has established the custom of celebrating great church festivals by joining in a singing service which includes a simple meal, or "lovefeast." The first lovefeasts of the Moravian Church in America were held in Savannah, Georgia in 1735; the first lovefeast in North Carolina was held on the arrival of the first Moravian settlers in Bethabara, on November 17, 1735.

The Christmas Eve Lovefeast, with its lighted beeswax candles, is one of the most beautiful services of the Moravian Church. The custom originated as a children's service in Marienborn, Germany in 1747, and soon spread throughout the Moravian world. The first Christmas Eve Lovefeast was held at Bethabara in 1753, and at Salem in 1771; the candles were added at the children's lovefeast of Bethabara and Bethania in 1762. Every person is given a lighted candle as a reminder that Christ said, "I am the light of the world" and "You are the light of the world -- let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven."