



Beate Heinen, *Night of the Angels*

It was a time like this,  
War & tumult of war,  
a horror in the air.  
Hungry yawned the abyss –  
and yet there came the star  
and the child most wonderfully there.

It was a time like this  
of fear & lust for power,  
license & greed and blight –  
and yet the Prince of bliss  
came into the darkest hour  
in quiet & silent light.

And in a time like this  
How celebrate his birth  
When all things fall apart?  
Ah! Wonderful it is  
with no room on the earth  
the stable is our heart.

Madeleine L'Engle, "Into the Darkest Hour"

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## First Baptist Church on Fifth, Winston-Salem

CHRISTMAS EVE

Sunday, December 24, 2023 • 5:00 PM

PRELUDE: *Noël vosgien*

J. Bouvard

Jacob Hill, Organ

INVITATION TO WORSHIP

Emily Hull McGee

INTROIT: *Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming*

M. Praetorius

Jerry Bennett, Elmer Hayashi, Jacob Hill, Gary Knight,  
Steve Loftis, Jim Nelson, Mark Thompson, David Williamson

Lo, how a rose e'er blooming, from tender stem hath sprung! Of Jesse's lineage  
coming as men of old have sung. It came a floweret bright amid the cold of winter,  
when half-spent was the night. I saiah 'twas foretold it, the rose I have in mind, with  
Mary we behold it, the Virgin Mother kind. To show God's love aright she bore to  
men a Savior, when half-spent was the night.

THE PROPHECY: Isaiah 9:2-7

Wally Cox

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES AND CHRIST CANDLE Ann Phelps & Kenneth Townsend  
William and Abby Townsend

*(Please read silently)*

On this Christmas Eve, we face the night with Light. Because injustice and despair threaten to overwhelm us, we light the candle of Hope. Because so many swords have not yet been beaten into plowshares, we light the candle of Peace. Because grief and loss weigh so heavily, we light the candle of Joy. Because hatred is strong and suffering persists, we light the candle of Love. And in the midst of it all, a child comes to dwell among us. We light the Christ candle, trusting that this Light is one no darkness can overcome.

RESPONSE: *Christ, Be Our Light*

B. Farrell

Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts, Shine through the dark - ness.

Christ, be our light! Shine in your church gath-ered to - day.

PRAYER FOR CHRISTMAS EVE

David Williamson

*(Please read in unison.)*

**Eternal God,  
from the tabernacle of heaven to the poverty of a stable,  
your radiant light shines forth in a tiny baby wrapped in rags;  
such humble Love astounds us.  
In Jesus you have become one with us  
that we might become one with you.  
Open our hearts to joyfully receive his love  
that he may be born in us and we in him.  
Through Christ our Lord we pray. Amen.**

\*HYMN 104: *Once in Royal David's City*

IRBY

Stanza 1: Annabelle and Emily Hull McGee  
Stanzas 2-4: Congregation

\*PASSING OF THE PEACE

David Williamson

Leader: May the peace of Christ be with you.

**All: And also with you.**

A CHRISTMAS STORY: *"Holy Night and Little Star"*

Emily Hull McGee & Amy McClure

CAROL MEDLEY

**Away in a Manger**

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.

**O Little Town of Bethlehem**

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.

**Gentle Mary Laid Her Child**

Gentle Mary laid her child lowly in a manger;  
there He lay, the undefiled, to the world a stranger:  
such a Babe in such a place, can He be the Savior?  
Ask the saved of all the race who have found His favor.

**GOSPEL LESSON: Luke 2:1-20**

**Carlos Mir**

Leader: This is the word of the Lord.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

**RESPONSE: *Angels We Have Heard on High***

**arr. E. Barnes**

Jerry Bennett, Elmer Hayashi, Jacob Hill, Gary Knight,  
Steve Loftis, Jim Nelson, Mark Thompson, David Williamson

Angels we have heard on high sweetly singing o'er the plains, and the mountains in  
reply echoing their joyous strains. Gloria in excelsis Deo! Come to Bethlehem and  
see Him whose birth the angels sing; come, adore on bended knee Christ, the Lord,  
the new-born King. Gloria in excelsis Deo!

**MEDITATION: *"To Dwell Among Us: For Good News of Great Joy"***

**Emily Hull McGee**

**CELEBRATION OF COMMUNION**

**SHARING OF THE LIGHT**

**SENDING FORTH: *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,  
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.

**BENEDICTION**

**Emily Hull McGee**

**POSTLUDE: *Highland Cathedral***

**Roever and Korb**

Jacob Hill, Organ

\*Those who are able will please stand.

## WELCOME TO FIRST ON FIFTH!

If you are visiting with us tonight for the first time, we welcome you for this special Christmas Eve service! Please fill out a Connection Card located in the back of the pews, and give it to a minister after worship. This allows us to extend our hospitality and connect you deeply with our church. If you're visiting with young children, we welcome them in whatever way is best for your family! Creative resources for our little ones guide their experience of worship in the Sanctuary. The balcony continues to be reserved for those preferring extra distance. We're glad you're here, and merry Christmas!



### Supporting God's Work of Love through First on Fifth

Thank you for giving faithfully to God through the ministries of our church! Should you desire to give today, you can do so by

placing your gift in the offering plates or by scanning the QR code to give online.

### Mark Your Calendars

December 25-27 – Church offices closed  
December 31 – Christmastide Brunch, 9:30am  
January 1 – Church offices closed  
January 7 – Epiphany Sunday  
January 28 – Deacon Ordination and Installation  
February 4 – First Impressions  
February 14 – Ash Wednesday  
March 24 – Palm Sunday  
March 28 – Maundy Thursday  
March 29 – Good Friday Tenebrae  
March 31 – Easter Sunday

## CHURCH STAFF

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ON FIFTH

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BOLD LOVE. BOUNDLESS COMPASSION.