

Third Sunday of Advent

December 17, 2023

Spread the Light

Sunday, December 17, 2023
Third Sunday of Advent
Christmas Pageant, "Spread the Light"

Tolling of the Bells

Prelude

Forest Green

Wood

SCENE 1: Call to Worship

*Opening Hymn

Break Forth, O Beauteous Heavenly Light

Welcome and Announcements

Responsive Prayer of Invocation

ONE: The spirit of the Holy One is upon you, because God has anointed you:

LEFT: to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the broken-hearted,

RIGHT: to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners;

ONE: God has anointed you, O Church, to proclaim a year of the good news:
to comfort all who mourn:

All: to provide for those who mourn a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.

ONE: You will be called oaks of righteousness,
the planting of the Holy One, to display God's glory. Amen!

(Isaiah 61:1-3)

SCENE 2: Gabriel Appears to Mary

SCENE 3: Mary Prays

Junior Choir Anthem

The Song of Mary

Arnatt

Luke 2:1-5

SCENE 4: No Room at the Inn

Luke 2:6-7

Luke 2:8-18

Senior Choir Anthem

Listen, Children, Hear the Angels Sing

Johnson

Luke 2:19-20

* As the Spirit guides you, we encourage you to rise in body or spirit.

*Hymn *Bring a Torch, Jeanette, Isabella*

SCENE 4: The Magi Travel to Bethlehem

Matthew 2:1-12

Anthem *Three Wise Men* Benjamin

SCENE 5: Finale

Invitation to the Offering

Offertory *Swiss Noel* d'Aquin

Prayers of the People

Lighting the Advent Candle of Joy

God, light the way. We scramble and hurry things along. Remind us to be still and inhale deeply...(pause)...Restrain our frenzied spirits. Slow us down to linger longer here at the threshold of your arrival. In the fullness of time, may the light of your peace shine clearly before us.

Sung Response *He Came Down*

*Closing Hymn *Jesus the Light of the World*

Benediction

Postlude *Sussex Carol* Wood



Following the Closing Hymn, we encourage the congregation to remain risen, in body or spirit, to receive the Benediction, which is both blessing and commission. You may sit for the Choral Response and Postlude in quiet contemplation.

*All are invited to the Parish Hall for a special Thank-you luncheon.
All are welcome and invited!*

CHRISTMAS

140 Break Forth, O Beauteous Heavenly Light

Luke 2:8-14

St. 1, Johann Rist, 1641
 Transl. John Troutbeck, c. 1885; alt.
 St. 2, Fred Pratt Green, 1986

1 Break forth, O beau-teous heaven - ly light, and ush - er in the
 2 Come, dear - est child, in - to our hearts, and leave your crib be -

morn - ing; O shep - herds, shud - der not in fright, but
 hind you! Let this be where the new life starts for

hear the an - gel's warn - ing. "This child, now weak in
 all who seek and find you. To you the hon - or,

in - fan - cy, our con - fi - dence and joy shall be, the
 thanks, and praise, for all your gifts this time of grace; come,

power of Sa - tan break - ing, our peace e - ter - nal mak - ing."
 con - quer and de - liv - er this world, and us, for - ev - er.

Bring a Torch, Jeannette, Isabella

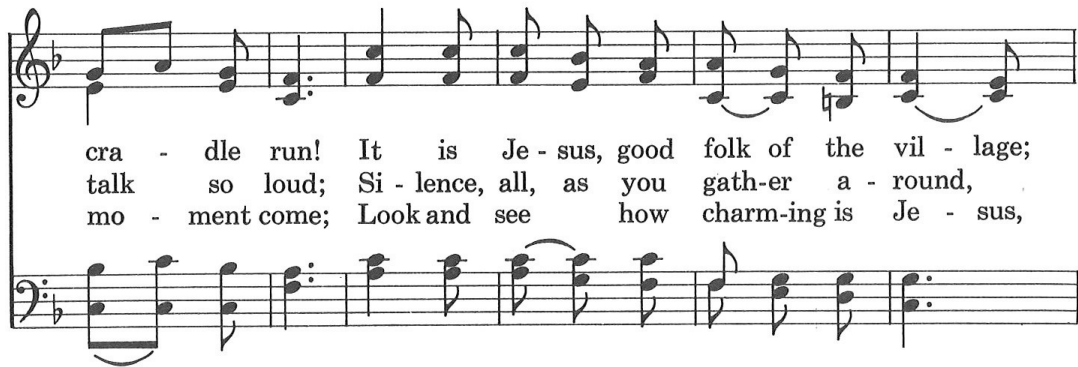
Traditional French Carol
Tr. E. Cuthbert Nunn, 1868-1914

BRING A TORCH *Irregular*
Harm. by E. Cuthbert Nunn, 1868-1914, alt.

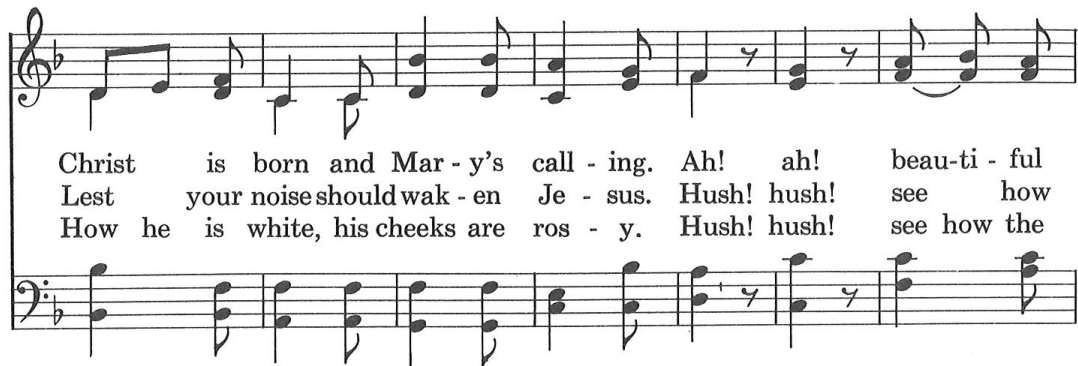
In unison



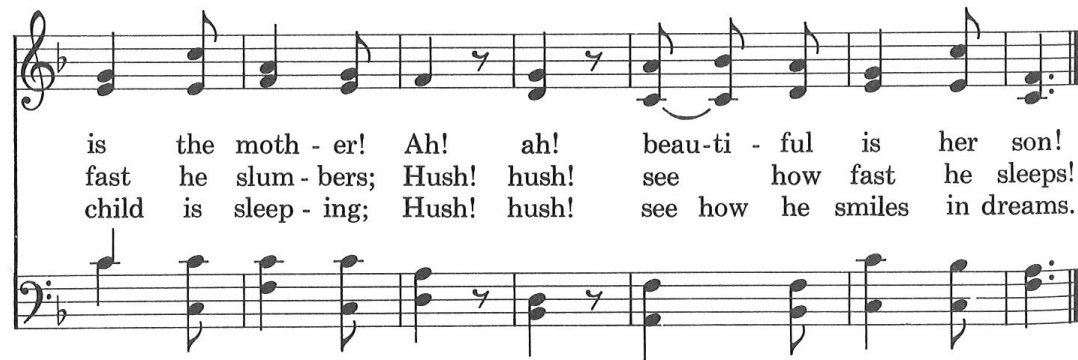
1 Bring a torch, Jean-nette, Is - a - bel - la! Bring a torch, to the
2 It is wrong when the child is sleep - ing, It is wrong to
3 Soft - ly to the lit - tle sta - ble, Soft - ly for a



cra - dle run! It is Je - sus, good folk of the vil - lage;
talk so loud; Si - lence, all, as you gath - er a - round,
mo - ment come; Look and see how charm - ing is Je - sus,



Christ is born and Mar - y's call - ing. Ah! ah! beau - ti - ful
Lest your noise should wak - en Je - sus. Hush! hush! see how
How he is white, his cheeks are ros - y. Hush! hush! see how the



is the moth - er! Ah! ah! beau - ti - ful is her son!
fast he slum - bers; Hush! hush! see how fast he sleeps!
child is sleep - ing; Hush! hush! see how he smiles in dreams.

BIRTH

He Came Down

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He came down that we may have love; he

came down that we may have love; he came down that we may

have love; hal-le-lu-jah for-ev-er-more.

Leader: Why did he come?

Additional stanzas:

- ... that we may have light
- ... that we may have peace
- ... that we may have joy

Because this traditional Cameroon piece begins with the refrain, it does not initially reveal that it is cast as a call-and-response song. Assigning the answers to the congregation rather than to the leader is a notable affirmation of the corporate wisdom of God's people.

Hark! the Herald Angels Sing

(Jesus, the Light of the World)

John 8:12; 9:5

Charles Wesley, 1739; alt.; adapt. George D. Elderkin; alt.

1 Hark! the her-ald an-gels sing, Je-sus, the light of the world;
 2 Joy-ful, all you saints a-rise, Je-sus, the light of the world;
 3 Christ, by high-est heaven a-dored, Je-sus, the light of the world;
 4 Hail the Bear-er of God's peace! Je-sus, the light of the world;

Glo-ry to the Christ-child bring, Je-sus, the light of the world.
 Join the tri-umph of the skies, Je-sus, the light of the world.
 Christ, the ev-er-last-ing Word, Je-sus, the light of the world.
 Hail the Sun of righ-teous-ness! Je-sus, the light of the world.

Refrain

We will fol-low the light, beau-ti-ful light, come where the
 dew-drops of mer-cy are bright, Shine all a-round us by
 day and by night, Je-sus, the light of the world.

The original version of Charles Wesley's hymn has received various alterations throughout the years. This adaptation by George Elderkin utilizes a repeated ascription, "Jesus, the light of the world," and a refrain to create a rousing carol of praise.

Tune: ELDERKIN 7.7.7.7. with refrain
 George D. Elderkin
 Arr. Jeffrey Radford, 1993



Bulletin Reminders

After worship, Rev. Morisse is available for conversation in the Parish Hall.

THE SONG OF MARY

Arnatt

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
 my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
 for he has looked with favor on his lowly servant.
 From this day all generations will call me blessed;
 the Almighty has done great things for me, and holy
 is his Name.
 He has mercy on those who fear him in every
 generation.
 He has shown the strength of his arm,
 he has scattered the proud in their conceit.
 he has cast down the mighty from their thrones,
 And has lifted up the lowly.
 He has filled the hungry with good things,
 and the rich he has sent away empty.
 He has come to the help of his servant Israel,
 For he has remembered his promise of mercy
 the promise he made to our fathers,
 to Abraham and his children forever.

THREE WISE MEN

Benjamin

Caspar, Melchior, Balthazar:
 Three wise men who saw the star.
 Traveling, traveling, traveling far
 Following the light of the Christmas star.
 Shine bright holy light,
 Lead the way to the Christ tonight.

LISTEN, CHILDREN, HEAR THE ANGELS SING!

Johnson

Listen, children, hear the angels sing!
 Glory hallelujah to the newborn king!
 Hear the song the angels sing
 Hear their voices with praises ring.
 Sing joy to the world, the lord is come
 Let heaven and earth receive her King
 Let every heart prepare him room
 And heaven and nature sing, O hear them sing!

upcoming
EVENTS

<p>DECEMBER 21 6:00 p.m. The Longest Night</p>	<p>DECEMBER 24 10:00 a.m. The Fourth Sunday of Advent</p>	<p>DECEMBER 24 5:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Lessons & Carols</p>
<p>DECEMBER 31 10:00 a.m. Breakfast Church Parish Hall</p>	<p>JANUARY 7 10:30 a.m. Worship at First Congregational Church, Natick</p>	