

*"For to you is born this day a Savior,
who is Christ the Lord."*



“THE SERVICE OF NATIVITY”

DECEMBER 20, 2008

Glendale City SDA Church

Order of Worship

10:50 am – 12:10 pm

(Please turn off all cell phones & pagers for the worship service)

Prelude	“It Came Upon a Midnight Clear” and “Silent Night” Monique McGuffin Newman & Duquessa McGuffin, <i>harp duet</i>	<i>Traditional</i>
Call to Worship	The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. And also with you. We come to worship the Savior born on Christmas Day. We come to greet the promised one—the child of Mary. We come to adore the King—born a servant in Bethlehem. We come to praise the Son of God—our Lord and our brother.	Cherise Gardner
Entering of the Light		
Opening Hymn	“Angels We Have Heard on High”	No. 142
Greeting & Prayers of the Congregation		Rudy Torres
Prayer Response	<i>Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus, Hear, oh hear us when we pray, Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus, Hear, oh hear us when we pray.</i>	
Call to Offering		Rosalyn Wortham
Offertory	“Ding Dong, Merrily on High” “O Come, Little Children” “The Holly and the Ivy” Jubilate and Sunshine Singers	<i>arr. Paul Stevens Bailey/Mayo Traditional</i>
Introduction		Leif Lind

Welcome to our Service of the Nativity. We have watched and waited these past four weeks of Advent, anticipating the Coming of the Christ. And now our wait is over as we celebrate the birth of the Christ-Child. But even as we celebrate a new act of God in history, we realize that this is not the end of our journey. It is only the beginning. There is much yet to come. And much to do. But here today, we come before God in praise and celebration, because of the newness and possibility that God has brought to us in the birth of this Child.

THE SERVICE OF THE NATIVITY

Narrator

Jason Schlatter

The Nativity brings together Mary, Joseph, the Christ Child, the Shepherds, and the Angels. And even though the wise men probably did not appear at the manger, they are an integral part of the Christmas story. And so we include them in the scene in order to tell the story of the birth of Jesus the Christ.

The Nativity is a visual proclamation of the Christmas story. Each piece of the Nativity unfolds the story of Christ's birth. As in the day of Jesus' birth, so today his coming brings joy and hope to many. It is a pictorial statement of faith, a uniquely Christian symbol of what we believe about God and His revelation of Himself in our world. In placing the Nativity in our yards and on our mantels we are declaring our hope in the God who invaded human history. In so doing, He revealed Himself to humanity, expressing the reach of His love as He chose to walk alongside those whom He created in His own image.

So, we have placed a Nativity in the front of our Church. It declares to those who attend that we have a wonderful story to tell. That story is how the Creator God became one with those He formed. It is a story of hope because God built a bridge of Divine Love from Himself to us. It is a story that shines through the birth of every child and resonates in the supportive ties of every family.

Today we begin Christmas with this Service of the Nativity. Through it we will again tell our story.

Congregational Hymn

“O Come, O Come, Immanuel”

No. 115

O come, O come, Immanuel,
And ransom captive Israel
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear.

Refrain:

Rejoice! Rejoice! Immanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel!

O come, Thou Wisdom from on high,
And order all things, far and nigh;
To us the path of knowledge show,
And cause us in her ways to go.

O come, Desire of nations, bind
All peoples in one heart and mind;
Bid envy, strife, and quarrels cease;
Fill the whole world with heaven's peace.

Mary's Story

Narrator

Jason Schlatter

It all began some time ago when Mary and Joseph were making wedding plans. They dreamed of their future together. The love that united them seemed indestructible. Then, unexpectedly, Mary was encountered by a heavenly visitor.

Reader

Pamela Kermgard

In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to visit me in the town of Nazareth in Galilee with a message. I was engaged to Joseph from the family of King David at the time. The angel greeted me and said, "You are truly blessed! The Lord is with you."

I was confused by the angel's words and wondered what they meant. But the angel assured me, "Mary, you have nothing to fear. God has a surprise for you: You will become pregnant and give birth to a son and call his name Jesus. He will be great. He will be called 'Son of the Highest.' The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David; He will rule Jacob's house forever with no end, ever, to his kingdom." Then I said to the angel, "But how? I've never slept with a man." The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, the power of the Highest hover over you; therefore, the child you bring to birth will be called Holy, Son of God. Did you know that your cousin Elizabeth conceived a son, old as she is? Everyone called her barren, and here she is six months pregnant! Nothing, you see, is impossible with God." Afterward I replied, "Yes, I see it all now: I'm the Lord's maid, ready to serve. Let it be with me just as you say." Then the angel left me. — Luke 1:26-38

Anthem

“African Noel”

André J. Thomas

Joseph's Story

Reader

Hugh Gardner

Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place under these circumstances: Mary and I were promised to each other in marriage but before we could come together, she was found to be pregnant by the Holy Spirit. As her promised husband and being a just and upright man I was not willing to expose her publicly and to shame and disgrace her so I decided to divorce her quietly and secretly. As I was thinking this over, an angel of the Lord appeared to me in a dream, saying, "Joseph, descendant of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins."

All this took place that it might be fulfilled which the Lord had spoken through the prophet, "Behold, the virgin shall become pregnant and give birth to a Son, and they will call His name Emmanuel — which, when translated, means, God with us." After this I was aroused from my sleep and did as the angel of the Lord commanded me and took Mary as my wife. But I had no union with her as her husband until she had borne her firstborn Son; and we called His name Jesus.

Worship in Music

“Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring”

J. S. Bach

Monique McGuffin Newman & Duquessa McGuffin, *harp duet*

Joseph and Mary in Bethlehem

Narrator

Jason Schlatter

And it came to pass in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This census first took place while Quirinius was governing Syria. So everyone went to their own towns to be registered. And Joseph also went, out of the city of Nazareth in Galilee, to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David. He went to be registered with Mary, his betrothed wife, who was expecting a child. — Luke 2:1-5

The Innkeeper's Story

Reader

Rachel Pereyra

It was a crowded city that night in Bethlehem, the city of David. Our inn was full of people from all over who had returned to the city of their fathers to register for Cæsar's tax census. My husband is a quiet and humble man, a man of deep feeling and compassion, so when the knock on the door came that night, the sight of a pregnant woman and her husband was heartbreaking. Our inn was bursting at the seams with travelers. We knew it would be impossible for the couple to find rest and shelter anywhere in town. And, judging by the look of anguish on that young girl's face, I knew she only had moments to spare before her baby came. With regret my husband whispered to me, "There's room in the stable; do what you can to make them comfortable." Mary and Joseph seemed frozen in exhaustion, yet their faces were filled with a holy expectancy. "Come," I said, "Follow me. There is room in our stable." There in the place we stabled our guests' beasts, and Mary and Joseph found warmth and protection. They would stay there until a new day brought light.

Congregational Hymn

"O Little Town of Bethlehem"

No. 135

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.

The Birth of Jesus

Narrator

Jason Schlatter

So it was that while Mary and Joseph were in Bethlehem, the days were completed for Mary to deliver her child. And she brought forth her firstborn Son, wrapped Him in bands of cloth, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. — Luke 2:6-7

Congregational Hymn

"Away In a Manger"

No. 124

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
The little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head.
The stars in the bright 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 side till the 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.

God Is with Us

Narrator

Jason Schlatter

All this took place to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet, "A young woman shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him 'Emmanuel,' which means 'God is with us.'" — Matthew 1:22-23

The Shepherds' Story

Reader

Mike Quishenberry

I am a shepherd by trade, living in the land of Bethlehem. One night some shepherds and I were living out in the fields, keeping watch over our flock, when suddenly an angel of the Lord stood before us, and the glory of the Lord shone all around us. We were terrified! Then the angel said to us, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy for all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Child wrapped in bands of cloth, lying in a manger."

No sooner had the angel spoken when all at once the angel was joined by a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will among all the people!" Now when the angels had gone away from us into heaven, we looked at each other in amazement and said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see for ourselves this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." So we quickly left and found Mary and Joseph, and the Child, who was lying in a manger. — Luke 2:8-16

Anthem

"Hallelujah Chorus"

G. F. Handel

The Magi's Story

Reader

David Ferguson

Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, I was among a group of wise men from the East who came to Jerusalem. We asked all around, "Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to pay Him homage." When King Herod learned of our inquiries, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. We heard that he called together all the chief priests and scribes of the people to question them about where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for it is written by the prophet: 'But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a Ruler who will shepherd My people Israel.'"

Then Herod secretly called for me and the other Magi to determine the exact time when the star had appeared. He sent us to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found Him, bring back word to me, that I may come and pay him homage also."

We departed as the King commanded. There in the night sky we saw a star. It went ahead of us until it came and stood over where the child was. When we saw the star, we rejoiced! We were filled with joy. We entered the house where we saw the child with Mary his mother and fell down and paid him homage. Then opening our treasure chests, we presented him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Afterwards, having been divinely warned in a dream not to return to Herod, we departed for our own country another way. — Matthew 2:1-12

Congregational Hymn

“We Three Kings of Orient Are”

No. 137

We three kings of Orient are;
Bearing gifts we traverse afar
Field and fountain, moor and mountain,
Following yonder star.

Refrain:

O star of wonder, star of night,
Star with royal beauty bright,
Westward leading, still proceeding,
Guide us to Thy perfect light.

Glorious now behold Him arise,
King and God and sacrifice;
Alleluia, Alleluia!
Sounds through the earth and skies.

We Gather at the Manger

Narrator

Jason Schlatter

Heaven looked down on that Holy Night as a manger became an altar and a stable became a cathedral. History now looks back to that moment in time when God came in Jesus to reveal Himself to people everywhere. The humble shepherds were there. The Wise Men bowed before Him. And today you and I join them as we gather around the manger. What a night! A holy night! A night of hope for today and tomorrow.

Congregational Hymn of Response

No. 140

Thou didst leave thy throne and thy kingly crown
When thou camest to earth for me;
But in Bethlehem’s home was there found no room
For thy holy nativity

Refrain:

O come to my heart, Lord Jesus,
There is room in my heart for thee.

Closing Prayer

Adapted from *The Book of Common Prayer*

Oh God, you have caused this Holy Night to shine with the illumination of the true Light. You have given us your only-begotten Son to take our nature upon Him to reveal to us your glory and grace. As you have given this gift in love, may we receive it with joy. Grant that we, your children by adoption and grace may daily be renewed by your Holy Spirit. Grant us, we pray, that as we have known the mystery of the Light upon the earth, so may we also reflect that light to a darkened world; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Postlude

“Symphony V — Toccata”

Widor

City Church Announcements

The **Glendale City Church staff** wish each of you the blessings of this Christmas season, and pray for God’s continued guidance on your life throughout the coming year. Please be sure to let us know how we can better serve your needs in the months ahead.

Poinsettias. Please pick up a poinsettia after the worship service — first come, first serve. They are a great way to share with shut-ins. We suggest a donation of \$6, marked on a tithe envelope. Merry Christmas!

Church Board members: Please plan to meet in the Youth Center today immediately after the worship service for an important meeting. Lunch will be provided.

Water for Life: Glendale City Church has frequently chosen special projects to help those in need. As individuals, we might afford a pump or a well. But as a church family, think what we could do if we pooled our resources. Imagine how many people we could bring water to! A lack of clean water and sanitation causes 1.8 million preventable child deaths each year. If you’d like to donate to this project, please make a donation to City Church preferably by today, December 20. Mark "ADRA water project" on your check or envelope.

Petting Zoo. Plan on visiting our petting zoo today. It is a great opportunity to bring your neighbors and friends to church!

The City Church **Friends of Music** program sponsors many musical items, including brass for the Christmas concert and other musical programs and concerts. We are currently planning another spring Hymn Festival with Dr. Melvin West. Much of this is made possible because of the Friends’ special support. Please consider being a part of the Friends of Music with a specially marked gift this Christmas season.

If you are interested in joining the Choir or watching a rehearsal, you are welcome to come and visit! Rehearsals are each Sabbath morning at 9:15 a.m. downstairs in the Choir Room. If you would like to talk to Brenda, please call her at 818-209-6795 or email brendamohr@hotmail.com.

We invite you to read **City Church’s website, www.glendalecitysda.com**, which includes congregation news as well as world Adventist news. You may also subscribe on the site for our email *GCC News* bulletin.

Upcoming Sermons: December 27 Rudy Torres; January 3 Cherise Gardner; January 10 Rudy Torres; January 17 Leif Lind.

Sabbath School Options

<u>Class</u>	<u>Location/Symbols/</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>Location/Symbols</u>
Beginners–0-3 yrs	Room 3 /Elephant	Teen–14-18 yrs	Room 10b/Fish
Kindergarten–3-5 yrs	Room 4/Giraffe	Armenian	Room 11
Primary–6-9 yrs	Room 2/Eagle	Romanian	Room 13
Junior–10-13 yrs	Room 1/Lion	Pastor	Fellowship Hall
		SS Quarterly	Chapel

Church Directory

Pastors: Rudy Torres, Interim Senior Pastor – Cherise Gardner, Family & Children Ministries – Hovik Sarrafian, Armenian Senior Pastor – Vartkes Azadian, Armenian Associate Pastor – Dorin Lataeanu, Romanian Senior Pastor – Leif Lind, Church Administrator

Church Office Hours

Monday-Thursday 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.; Friday 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.
610 E. California • Glendale, CA 91206 • (818) 244-7241 • Fax: (818) 240-9485
E-Mail: secretary@glendalecitysda.com • Website: www.glendalecitysda.com

Sunset tonight – 4:47 p.m. Sunset next Friday – 4:51 p.m.