

## **Christmas Eve in your Living Room**

A short service of prayer, singing, and scripture reading for families

(Credit to Jennifer Gamber and Timothy Seamans for the prayers from their book, *Common Prayer for Children and Families*, and Sharon Ely Peterson for the order of service for worship at home, printed in her book *Faithful Celebrations: Advent through Epiphany*).

*Light candles and gather around your Nativity set. Encourage children to place the pieces in the creche as the story is read aloud.*

*Pray:*

God of dreamers and hope,  
as we prepare for the coming of Jesus, we ask for your blessings.  
Give us grace to make room  
in our hearts to welcome Jesus  
as we make our journey  
with Mary and Joseph, prophets and shepherds, sheep and angels a  
toward the joy of Christmas morning.  
*Amen.*

## **The Christmas Story in Four Parts**

*Read:* Luke 2:1–4

At that time Emperor Augustus ordered a census to be taken throughout the Roman Empire. When this first census took place, Quirinius was the governor of Syria. Everyone, then, went to register himself, each to his own hometown. Joseph went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to the town of Bethlehem in Judea, the birthplace of King David. Joseph went there because he was a descendant of David.

*Sing:* “O, Little Town of Bethlehem”

*Read:* Luke 2:5–7

He went to register with Mary, who was promised in marriage to him. She was pregnant, and while they were in Bethlehem, the time came for

her to have her baby. She gave birth to her first son, wrapped him in cloths and laid him in a manger—there was no room for them to stay in the inn.

*Sing:* “Silent Night, Holy Night”

*Read:* Luke 2:8–14

There were some shepherds in that part of the country who were spending the night in the fields, taking care of their flocks. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone over them. They were terribly afraid, but the angel said to them, “Don’t be afraid! I am here with good news for you, which will bring great joy to all the people. This very day in David’s town your Savior was born—Christ the Lord! And this is what will prove it to you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.” Suddenly a great army of heaven’s angels appeared with the angel, singing praises to God: “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace on earth to those with whom he is pleased!”

*Sing:* “Go, Tell It On the Mountain”

*Read:* Luke 2:15–20

When the angels went away from them back into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us.” So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph and saw the baby lying in the manger. When the shepherds saw him, they told them what the angel had said about the child. All who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said. Mary remembered all these things and thought deeply about them. The shepherds went back, singing praises to God for all they had heard and seen; it had been just as the angel had told them.

*Sing:* “O Come, All Ye Faithful”

*Walk together to your Christmas Tree.*

*Pray:*

Creator God, we gather around this evergreen tree  
in thanksgiving for creation and your love.

We wait with joy for the coming of your Son, Jesus.

Bless this tree of light, that it may brighten our night  
and remind us that Jesus is a light for all people.

Bless us also, that we may give the gift of light others.

*Amen.*