

THE  
SHEPHERD'S  
COTE

A NON-DENOMINATIONAL WEEKLY  
DEVOTION, WORSHIP AND SPIRITUAL  
RESOURCE FOR CHURCHES MINISTERING  
TO THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED.  
THIS IS A FREE SERVICE OF THE  
COVENANT CHAPEL AT THE J. IVERSON  
RIDDLE DEVELOPMENTAL  
CENTER, 300 ENOLA ROAD, MORGANTON, NC  
28655.

# ORDER OF SERVICE

## COVENANT CENTER CHAPEL SERVICES FOR THE WEEK OF *December 02, 2007*

(The congregation is asked to participate in all underlined responses and all hymns.)

### PRELUDE

### INVOCATION

“The Lord has done great things for us and we rejoice.”

Psalm 126:3

### SILENT PRAYER

### RESPONSIVE CALL TO WORSHIP

**Chaplain:** Did you come to worship God?

**Congregation:** Yes, we did!

**Chaplain:** Did you come to sing unto the Lord?

**Congregation:** Yes, we did!

**Chaplain:** Did you come to pray?

**Congregation:** Yes, we did!

**Chaplain:** Let us begin our service in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**Congregation:** Amen!

### HYMN: “Joy to the World”

Joy to the world, the Lord is come!  
Let earth receive her King;  
Let every heart prepare Him room,  
And heaven and nature sing, And heaven and nature sing,

And heaven and heaven and nature sing.

**READING OF THE PSALMS**

Luke 1

**“Let us praise the Lord, the God of Israel!  
He has come to help His people and set them free.  
He has provided us with a mighty Savior, a Son of David.  
Our God is merciful and tender, and He will cause salvation to come upon us.  
He will guide us in the paths of Peace.”**

**PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Dear God,

We are thankful in this Christmas time that You come to us. We thank You that You come to us in love. Help us to show this in the way that we worship and sing.

In Jesus Christ we pray, Amen.

**HYMN: “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.

**LITANY OF THANKS AND PRAISE**

For the beauty of the earth -  
Thank you, God  
For the glory of the skies -  
Thank you, God  
For the love which all around us lies -  
Thank you, God  
For the wonder of each hour, the day, the night -  
Thank you, God  
For hills, trees, flowers -  
Thank you, God  
For sun, moon and stars of light -  
Thank you, God  
For the joy of human love -  
Thank you, God  
For friends on earth and friends above

Thank you, God

**HYMN:** “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 ever lasting Light;  
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

**SCRIPTURE READING**

Matthew 1

**“Mary and Joseph had to go to Bethlehem. The only place they could find to spend the night was in a barn. That was when Jesus was born, and Mary laid Him in a box filled with hay.”**

**LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE OF PEACE**

**MESSAGE**

“Getting Ready for Jesus”

(Preparation for this sermon is very simple because poinsettias are so available this time of the year. One large enough to be seen by the entire congregation should be an important consideration. It can also be supplemented with objects associated with the nativity scene, especially a manger.)

I do not need to tell you what holiday is fast approaching. Everyone knows it is just a short time until it is Christmas Day. Some of the things here you know represent Christmas. You know that the manger is a prop for the nativity play, and many of you are in that play. You remember how Mary and Joseph had traveled all the way to Bethlehem, and how when they got there, the town was so crowded that they could not find any place to stay for the night. The only place available was the barn or stable.

It was that night and in that barn that Jesus was born. I have brought a manger, because the only cradle that Mary had to lay Baby Jesus was a manger, which is nothing but a box with food for the cows.

You know all of that.

And maybe you are also familiar with this flower. This is a poinsettia.

But I think I know something about this flower that you may not know. And I want to share it with you. Do you see how beautiful this plant is with all its red and green? Would it surprise you if I were to tell you that the red are NOT flowers?

They are not! I am telling you the truth. The red leaves are just leaves. The leaves of the poinsettias turn from green to red after a while. Actually, these little yellow things here are the flowers.

Now you also know something. The red leaves are not flowers, but the yellow things are. Are you surprised?

Well, in a way Jesus surprised a lot of people also. People thought a king should be

born in a palace, not a barn. They thought he ought to be the son of another king and not born to poor people.

Just like the parts of the poinsettia were different than we expected them to be, Jesus also surprises us.

End with a prayer: "Loving God, You always are surprising us. Thank You for sending Jesus to show us Your love and how we can love others. Amen."

**HYMN:** "O Come, All Ye Faithful"

O come, all ye faithful, Joyful and triumphant,  
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem!  
Come and behold Him, born the King of angels!  
O come, let us adore Him, O come let us adore Him,  
O come let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.

( Everyone greet one another)

## **PRAYER OF THE CHURCH**

God of Peace,

You are the Prince of Peace. We sing praises to You today because You loved us so much that You gave Your Son to be our Savior. Thank You for the peace that can be in our hearts today. Help us to share this peace with others by being kind and loving to them just the same way You are to us.

We pray this prayer in the name of Jesus Who taught us this prayer that we pray together saying :

**THE LORD'S PRAYER** (Spoken by everyone)

Our Father who art in heaven,  
Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come,  
Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day, our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses  
As we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into  
temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the Kingdom,  
The power, and glory, for ever and ever. AMEN.

**HYMN:** Jesus Loves Me

Jesus Loves me this I know  
For the Bible tells me so.  
Little ones to him belong

They are weak, but He is strong.  
Yes, Jesus loves me, yes, Jesus loves me.  
Yes, Jesus loves me, the Bible tells me so.

**THE BENEDICTION:**

O God, bless us and keep us safe and help us to be a blessing to others. Amen.

**Congregation:** Amen

**DOXOLOGY**

Praise God from whom all blessings flow,  
Praise Him all creatures here below.  
Praise Him above ye Heavenly Host.  
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen

**CHAPLAIN:** Go in peace; Serve the Lord

**CONGREGATION:** Thanks be to God

**MUSICAL POSTLUDE**