

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 23, 2007*

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

PRELUDE

INVOCATION

“God, send Your light and truth, and let them guide me.”

Psalm 43:3

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

Psalm 17

**“I pray to You, God because I know You will answer.
Please hear my words.
You protect people who are in danger!”**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Dear God,

We are thank You for showing us Your love. Help us also to show our love for others in the way we treat them.

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

John1: 7

"Mary and Joseph had to go to Bethlehem. They had to stay in a barn. While they were there, Jesus was born. People came to worship Him. They were shepherds and wise men and angels."

**LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE OF LOVE
AND THE CHRIST CANDLE**

MESSAGE

"The Most Important Part of Christmas"

(This object lesson, a nativity scene, is readily available in most homes and churches during this holiday season. One only needs it to be small enough to handle in front of the congregation but large enough to be seen. I have had one for many years and do this devotion each Christmas.)

I would bet that most all of you know what I am going to take from my box and put down here on this table. Just watch me.

First of all I have a very important figure. It is a woman, but a very special lady. (Take Mary out and put here first on the scene.) Who is she? (Most will remember Mary and pick up on the nativity scene to come.)

Then there is a man who is very important. (Take out the figure of Joseph, add him to the arrangement, and ask the congregation to identify him.) Yes, you are correct. This is Joseph.

(Continue doing the same with all the figures of the wise men, shepherds and angels purposely leaving out the Christ Child.)

(When that is completed, say something like ☺☺)☺ "Haven't we got ourselves a pretty manger scene. (By this time my higher functioning members will have perceived that the nativity scene is incomplete without the baby. They will often time dispute my assertion in protest."

"What do you mean there is something wrong? I think it looks like a nice manger scene."

(When they have really let me know that it is not complete without the Christ Child, I always relent and admit that I have made a mistake. Then I take the baby figure out of the box and add it to the scene.)

You are correct. The nativity scene is never finished until we put Jesus in it. And so it

is with life. Jesus is the most important part of Christmas.

End with a prayer: “We thank You, God, for sending Jesus. Help us always to remember how important He is to the whole world..”

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 Love,

We celebrate Your love for us today that was so great that You gave Your Son to be our Savior. Help us to love others just as You have loved 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:

The Lord bless you and keep you, the Lord cause His face to shine upon you and give you peace this day and all the days of your lives. 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