



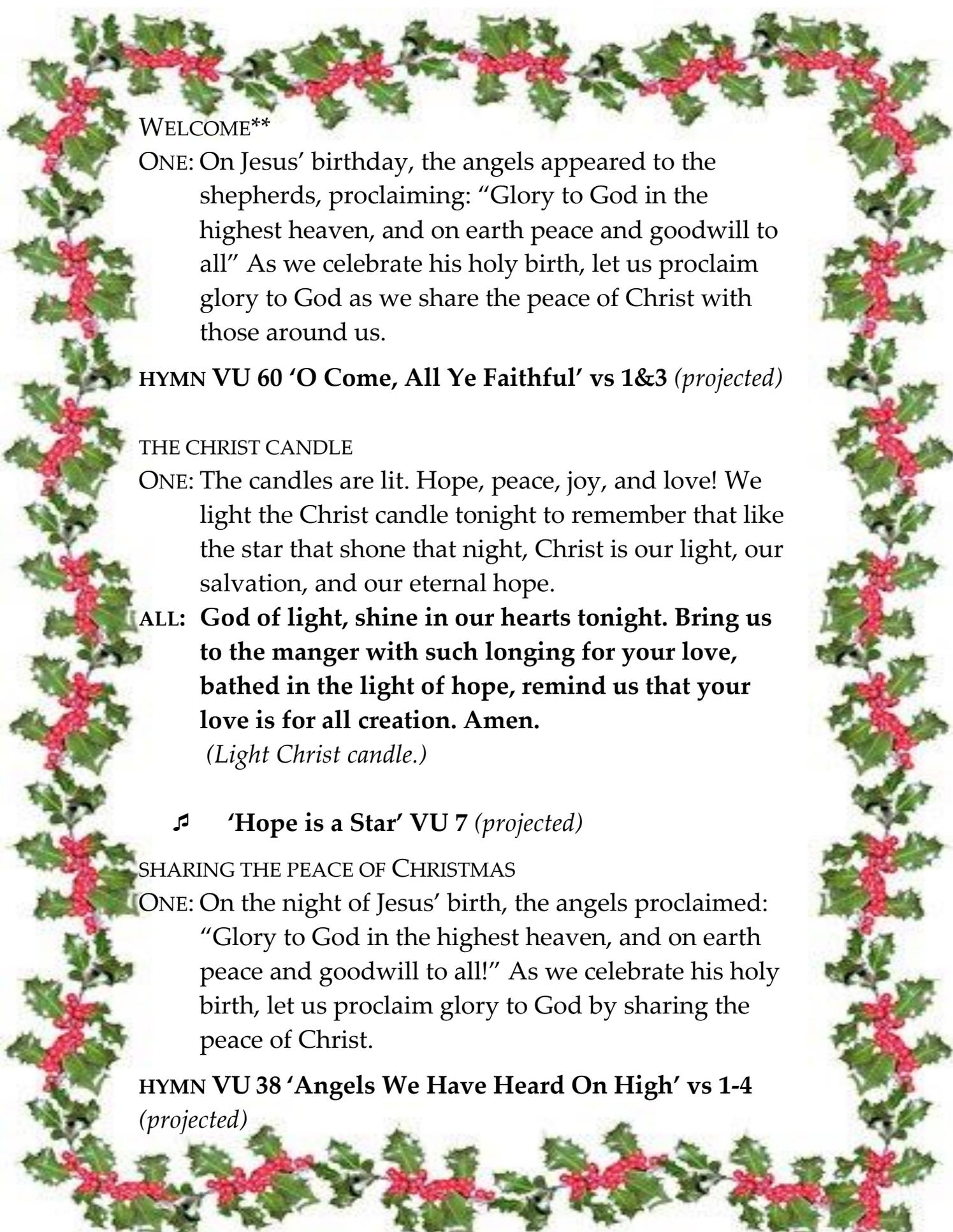
West River United Church

Rev. Barbara J. Cairns

Andrea Rogers

and all members of West River United Church

Christmas Eve Service, Holy Communion, December 24, 2018, 9:00 p.m.



WELCOME**

ONE: On Jesus' birthday, the angels appeared to the shepherds, proclaiming: "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace and goodwill to all" As we celebrate his holy birth, let us proclaim glory to God as we share the peace of Christ with those around us.

HYMN VU 60 'O Come, All Ye Faithful' vs 1&3 *(projected)*

THE CHRIST CANDLE

ONE: The candles are lit. Hope, peace, joy, and love! We light the Christ candle tonight to remember that like the star that shone that night, Christ is our light, our salvation, and our eternal hope.

ALL: God of light, shine in our hearts tonight. Bring us to the manger with such longing for your love, bathed in the light of hope, remind us that your love is for all creation. Amen.

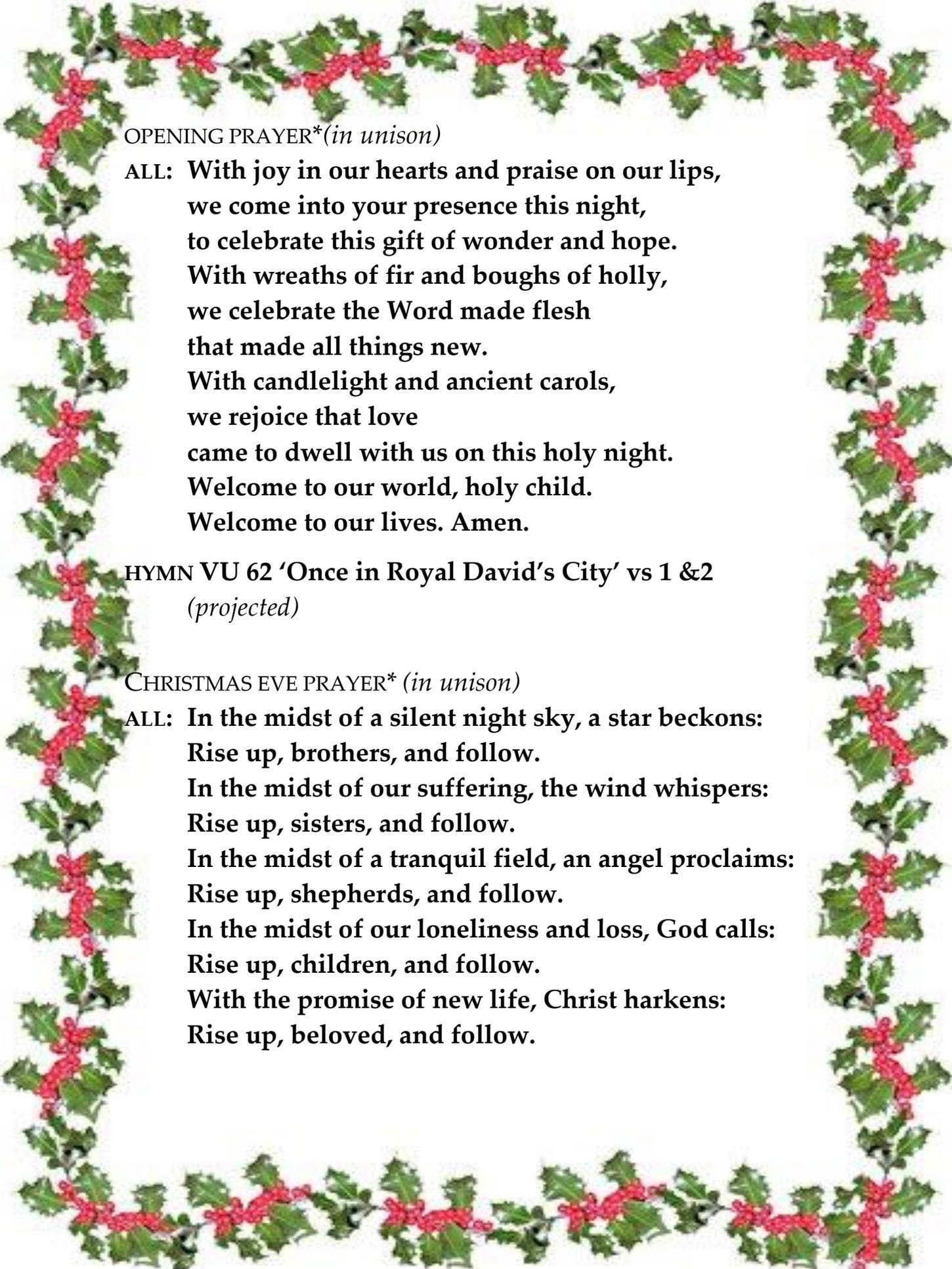
(Light Christ candle.)

♪ **'Hope is a Star' VU 7** *(projected)*

SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRISTMAS

ONE: On the night of Jesus' birth, the angels proclaimed: "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace and goodwill to all!" As we celebrate his holy birth, let us proclaim glory to God by sharing the peace of Christ.

HYMN VU 38 'Angels We Have Heard On High' vs 1-4
(projected)



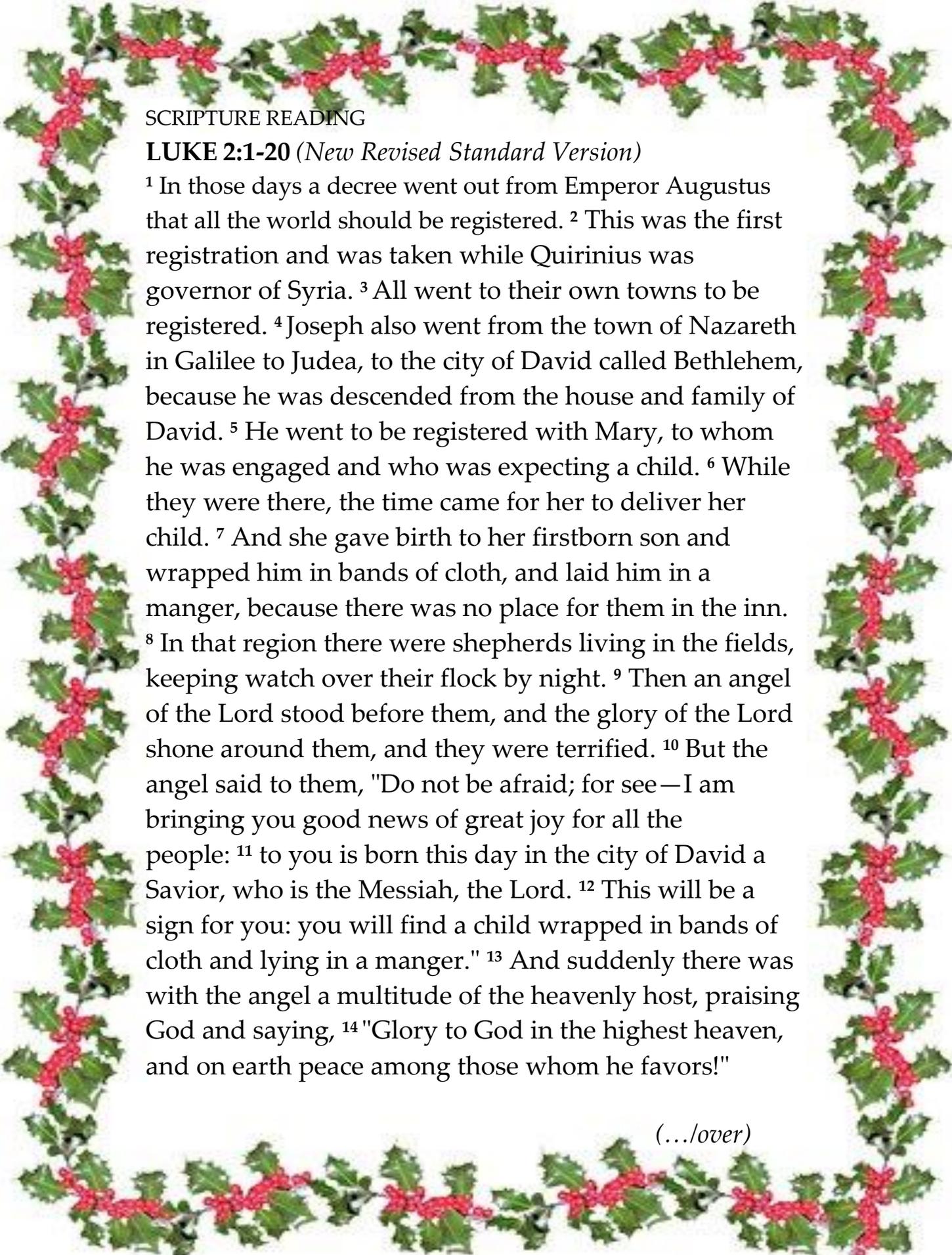
OPENING PRAYER* (*in unison*)

ALL: With joy in our hearts and praise on our lips,
we come into your presence this night,
to celebrate this gift of wonder and hope.
With wreaths of fir and boughs of holly,
we celebrate the Word made flesh
that made all things new.
With candlelight and ancient carols,
we rejoice that love
came to dwell with us on this holy night.
Welcome to our world, holy child.
Welcome to our lives. Amen.

HYMN VU 62 'Once in Royal David's City' vs 1 & 2
(*projected*)

CHRISTMAS EVE PRAYER* (*in unison*)

ALL: In the midst of a silent night sky, a star beckons:
Rise up, brothers, and follow.
In the midst of our suffering, the wind whispers:
Rise up, sisters, and follow.
In the midst of a tranquil field, an angel proclaims:
Rise up, shepherds, and follow.
In the midst of our loneliness and loss, God calls:
Rise up, children, and follow.
With the promise of new life, Christ harkens:
Rise up, beloved, and follow.

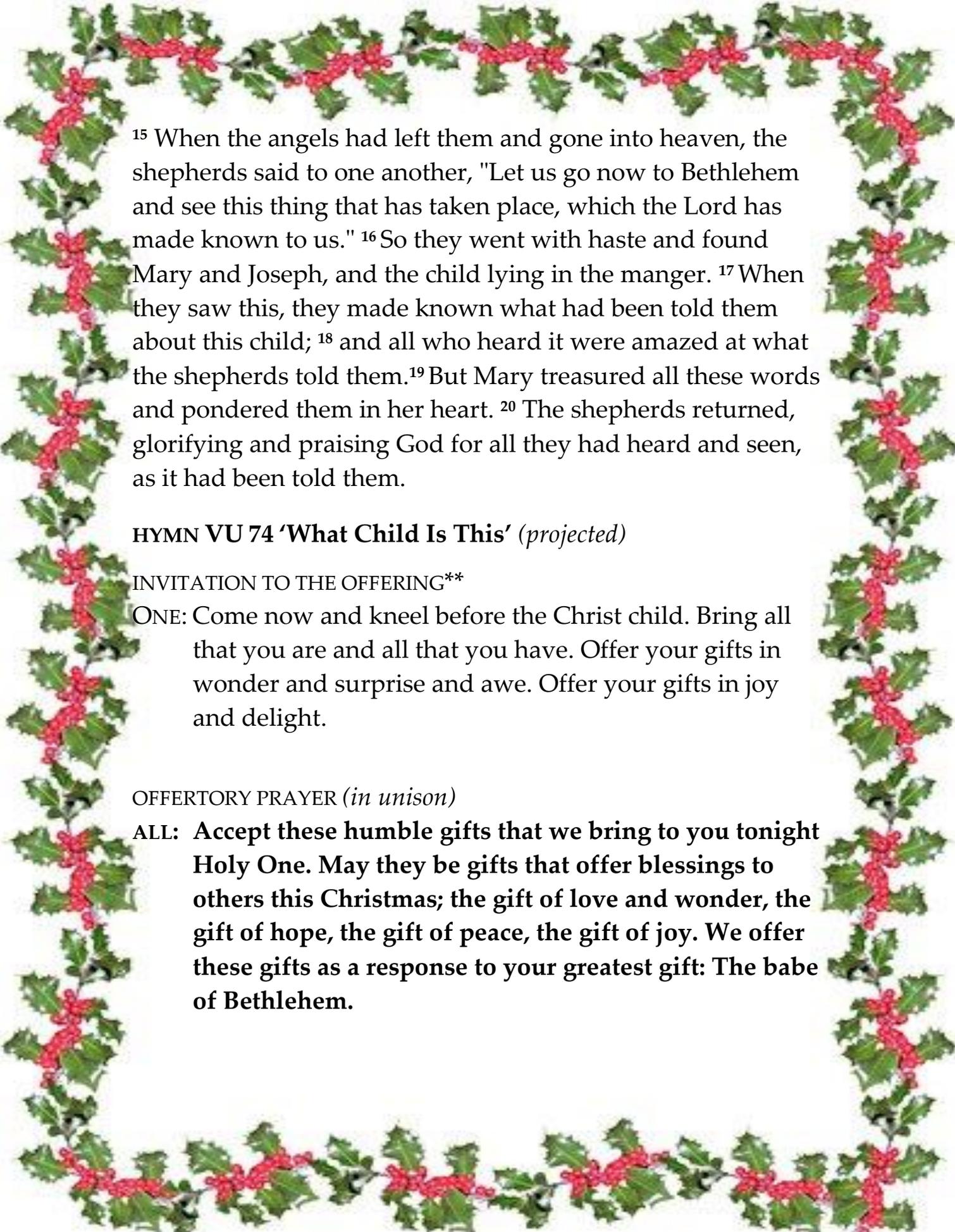


SCRIPTURE READING

LUKE 2:1-20 (*New Revised Standard Version*)

¹ In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ² This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³ All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴ Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. ⁵ He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶ While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷ And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. ⁸ In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹ to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." ¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, ¹⁴ "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

(...lover)



¹⁵ When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." ¹⁶ So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷ When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸ and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹ But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰ The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

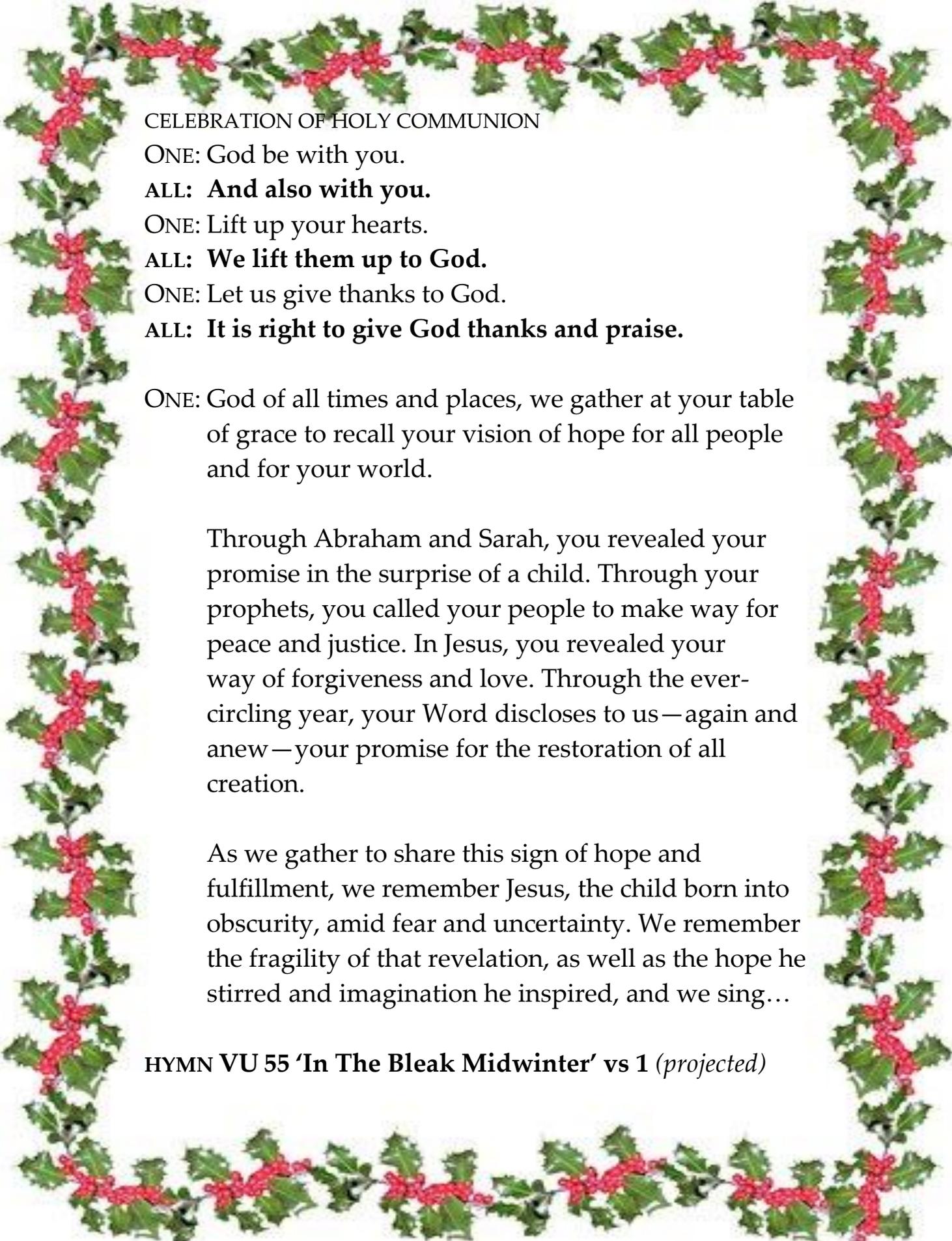
HYMN VU 74 'What Child Is This' (projected)

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING**

ONE: Come now and kneel before the Christ child. Bring all that you are and all that you have. Offer your gifts in wonder and surprise and awe. Offer your gifts in joy and delight.

OFFERTORY PRAYER (*in unison*)

ALL: Accept these humble gifts that we bring to you tonight Holy One. May they be gifts that offer blessings to others this Christmas; the gift of love and wonder, the gift of hope, the gift of peace, the gift of joy. We offer these gifts as a response to your greatest gift: The babe of Bethlehem.



CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION

ONE: God be with you.

ALL: And also with you.

ONE: Lift up your hearts.

ALL: We lift them up to God.

ONE: Let us give thanks to God.

ALL: It is right to give God thanks and praise.

ONE: God of all times and places, we gather at your table of grace to recall your vision of hope for all people and for your world.

Through Abraham and Sarah, you revealed your promise in the surprise of a child. Through your prophets, you called your people to make way for peace and justice. In Jesus, you revealed your way of forgiveness and love. Through the ever-circling year, your Word discloses to us—again and anew—your promise for the restoration of all creation.

As we gather to share this sign of hope and fulfillment, we remember Jesus, the child born into obscurity, amid fear and uncertainty. We remember the fragility of that revelation, as well as the hope he stirred and imagination he inspired, and we sing...

HYMN VU 55 'In The Bleak Midwinter' vs 1 *(projected)*



ONE: We remember Jesus, the One who blazed a new and risky path of extravagant generosity and of passionate concern: temple-shaker, world-maker, rule-breaker, risk-taker; the author and finisher of our faith. We remember Jesus' self-giving love and the offer of himself for others, even those who gave him over to death, and we sing...

HYMN VU 55 'In The Bleak Midwinter' vs 2 *(projected)*

ONE: On that night, in the midst of great confusion and fear, Jesus broke bread with friends, saying, "This is my body, which I give for you and for all. When you do this, remember me."

With a blessing, he took the cup and offered it to them saying: "This cup is God's covenant which is given for all. When you drink this, remember me."

HYMN VU 55 'In The Bleak Midwinter' vs 3 *(projected)*

ONE: Come to us, life-giving Spirit of God. Bless us, these gifts, and what we do here, so that we might sing your song of love for your people and for your world.

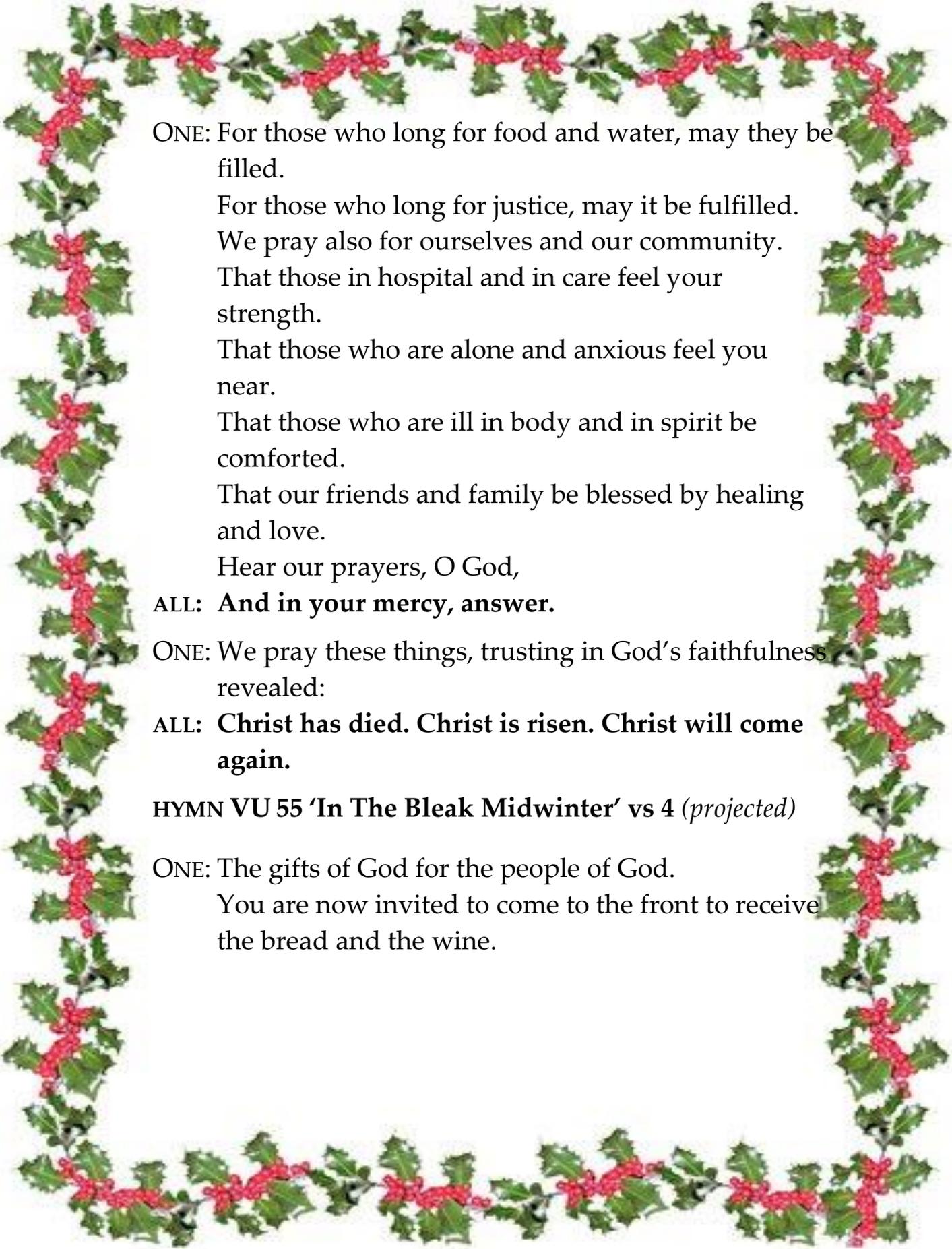
PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

ONE: God of All, we pray for your people.

For those who are afraid and oppressed, may you give courage.

For those suffering conflict and fear, may you bring peace.

(...lover)



ONE: For those who long for food and water, may they be filled.

For those who long for justice, may it be fulfilled.

We pray also for ourselves and our community.

That those in hospital and in care feel your strength.

That those who are alone and anxious feel you near.

That those who are ill in body and in spirit be comforted.

That our friends and family be blessed by healing and love.

Hear our prayers, O God,

ALL: And in your mercy, answer.

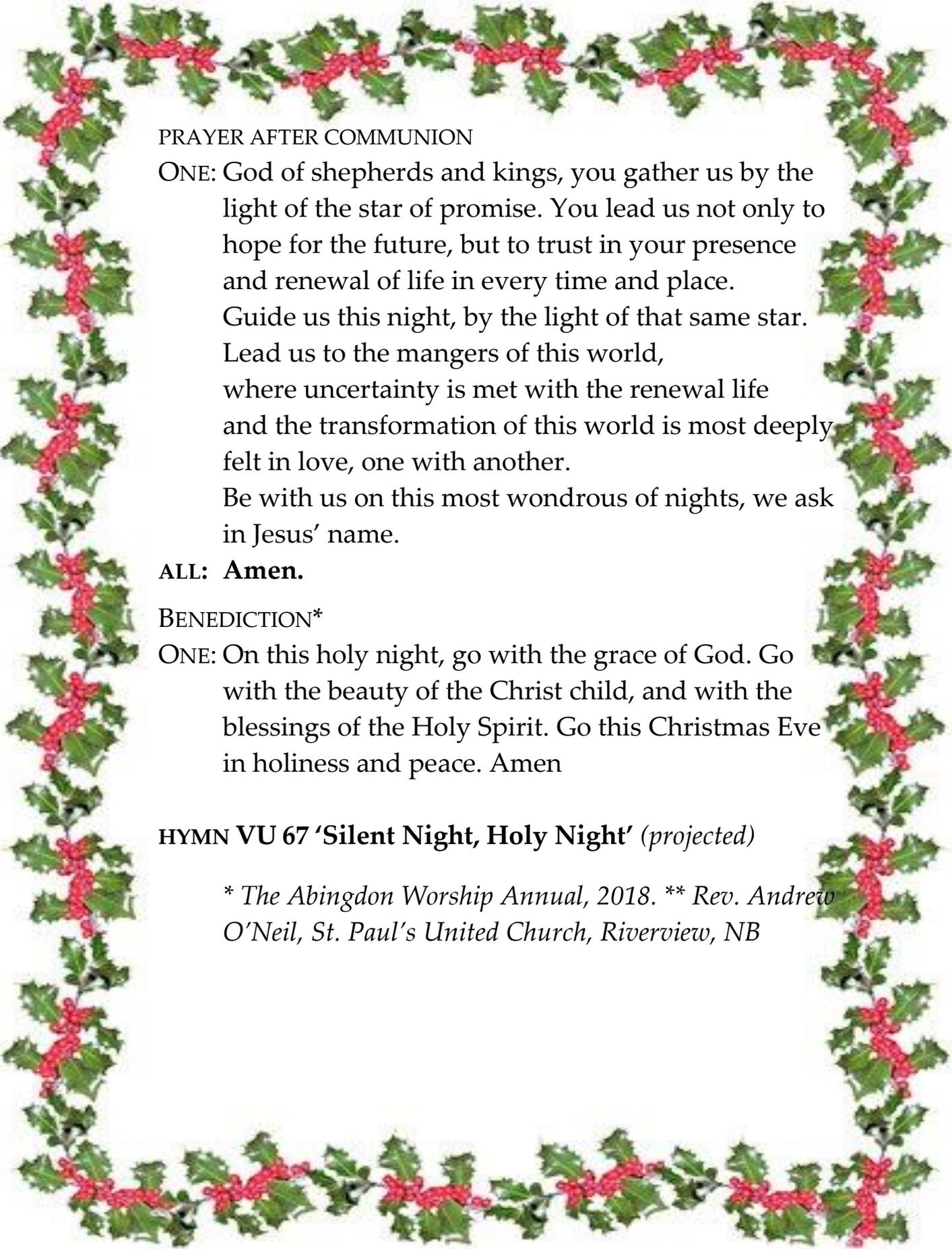
ONE: We pray these things, trusting in God's faithfulness revealed:

ALL: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

HYMN VU 55 'In The Bleak Midwinter' vs 4 *(projected)*

ONE: The gifts of God for the people of God.

You are now invited to come to the front to receive the bread and the wine.



PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

ONE: God of shepherds and kings, you gather us by the light of the star of promise. You lead us not only to hope for the future, but to trust in your presence and renewal of life in every time and place. Guide us this night, by the light of that same star. Lead us to the mangers of this world, where uncertainty is met with the renewal life and the transformation of this world is most deeply felt in love, one with another. Be with us on this most wondrous of nights, we ask in Jesus' name.

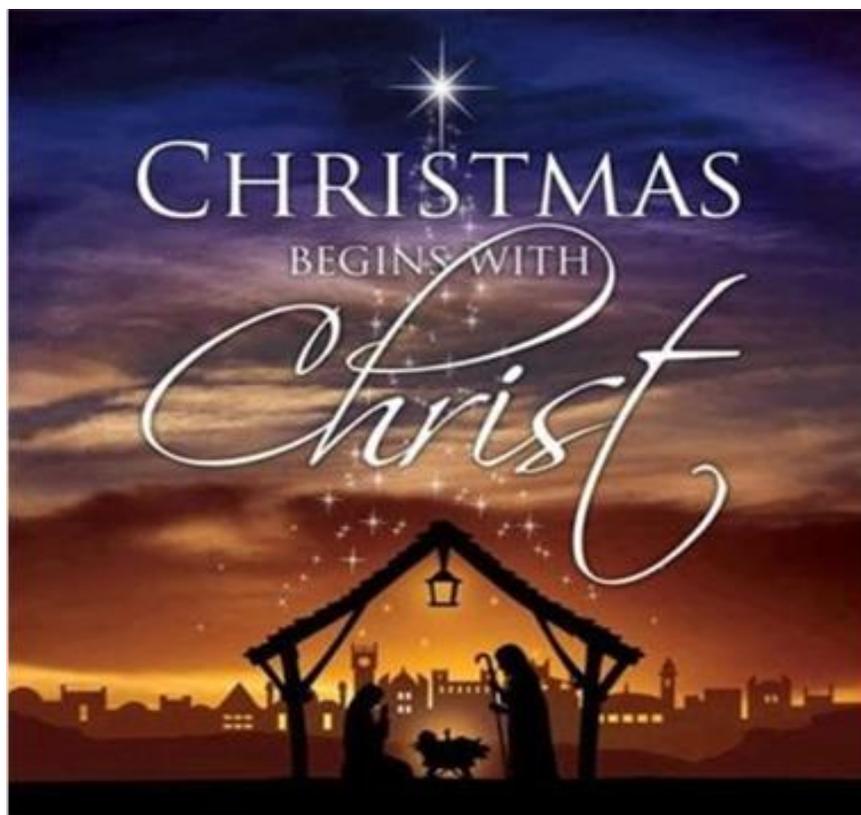
ALL: Amen.

BENEDICTION*

ONE: On this holy night, go with the grace of God. Go with the beauty of the Christ child, and with the blessings of the Holy Spirit. Go this Christmas Eve in holiness and peace. Amen

HYMN VU 67 'Silent Night, Holy Night' (*projected*)

** The Abingdon Worship Annual, 2018. ** Rev. Andrew O'Neil, St. Paul's United Church, Riverview, NB*



*May the light of His love
shine brightly on you this
Christmas
and carry you through the New
Year.*

Merry Christmas