

# LIGHT

## CHRISTMAS WORSHIP SERIES

*Developed by Caleb French*  
*for Northwest Valley Baptist Church*  
*December 2020*

# LIGHT IN DARKNESS

SCRIPTURE		MUSIC
SERVICE	Isaiah 9:2; John 1:4-5 <sup>1</sup>	Come, Behold the Wondrous Mystery Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus O Come, O Come, Emmanuel O Little Town of Bethlehem Silent Night
COLLECTED	Isaiah 9:1-7 (2) Isaiah 42:7 Isaiah 60:1-5 (2) Luke 1:67-79 (79) John 1:1-5 (5) Matthew 4:12-17	<b>Come to the Light (Koerts) SATB</b> <b>Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming</b>



## INTRODUCING THIS THEME

*Why do we celebrate Christmas in the winter? Jesus was most likely born in the spring. Winter is the darkest time of the year. In the darkest times, we need light. As part of our Christmas traditions, we put lights on a tree and on the outside of our houses. The Jewish tradition of Hanukkah includes light as well. The lights show the aspect of beauty and comfort. This symbolizes Jesus as a light in darkness. As we see Christmas lights this season, remember Jesus, our great light*

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<sup>1</sup> Lengthen this in-service Scripture reading the next time around (2020).

# LIGHT TO THE GENTILES

SCRIPTURE		MUSIC
SERVICE	Isaiah 42:1-7	Across the Lands
COLLECTED	Isaiah 42:1-7 (6) Isaiah 49:5-7 (6) Isaiah 60:1-5 (3) Luke 2:25-35 (32)	Angels from the Realms of Glory <sup>2</sup> Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus <sup>3</sup> Hark! The Herald Angels Sing <sup>4</sup> Joy to the World <sup>5</sup> O Come, O Come, Emmanuel <b>Joy Has Dawned<sup>6</sup> (Getty/Townend) SATB</b>



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<sup>2</sup> Stanza 3

<sup>3</sup> Stanza 1

<sup>4</sup> Stanza 1, "Joyful, all ye nations rise"

<sup>5</sup> Stanza 4 "nations prove"

<sup>6</sup> "hope for every nation"

## INTRODUCING THIS THEME

*Imagine you are an only child, the favored one of your parents. You've been the recipient of their love and their discipline all your life. Then suddenly your parents sit you down and tell you that they are adopting twelve kids. They won't look like you, but they will be your brothers and sisters. Israel was the chosen one of the Father, like an only child. That was only temporary. Through Jesus He opens up salvation to the unexpected, rejected people, the Gentiles.*

Our theme this morning is "Light to the Gentiles," which is a name for the Messiah taken from several key passages in Isaiah as well as the prayer of Simeon in Luke 2:29-32.

If you remember the story, the Holy Ghost told Simeon that he would not die till he had seen the Messiah. Then He led Simeon to the temple on the day when Jesus was circumcised and somehow showed Simeon that Jesus was the Messiah.

We can imagine the scene as the old man approached the parents and asked them about the baby. At some point, Joseph and Mary must have offered for Simeon to hold baby Jesus, because the Bible says that he "took... him up in his arms" and prayed, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel."

Simeon certainly knew his Old Testament and that the Messiah would be for all people! But this truth was not so easy for many of the Jews to take. In fact, it became a major stumbling block to the Jewish people during the days of the apostles—and we can understand why!

Imagine that you are an only child, the favored one of your parents. You've been the recipient of their love and discipline all your life. Then suddenly your parents sit you down and tell you that they are adopting 12 kids. They won't look like you, but they will be your brothers and sisters. How would you respond?

That would be very difficult, wouldn't it? And yet, think of it from another perspective. Imagine that you are an orphan; you never knew your parents. You grew up in the foster care system and never experienced the committed love (including loving discipline) that a family brings. Then suddenly, your social worker sits you down and tells you are being adopted by a loving, caring, generous couple with one son. Not only that, they are also adopting 11 other children! You will all look very different, but you will be brothers and sisters. How would you respond?

That, my friends, is what you and I have been given in Christ. We were strangers and without hope. “But now in Christ Jesus [we] who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ” (Eph 2:11-13).

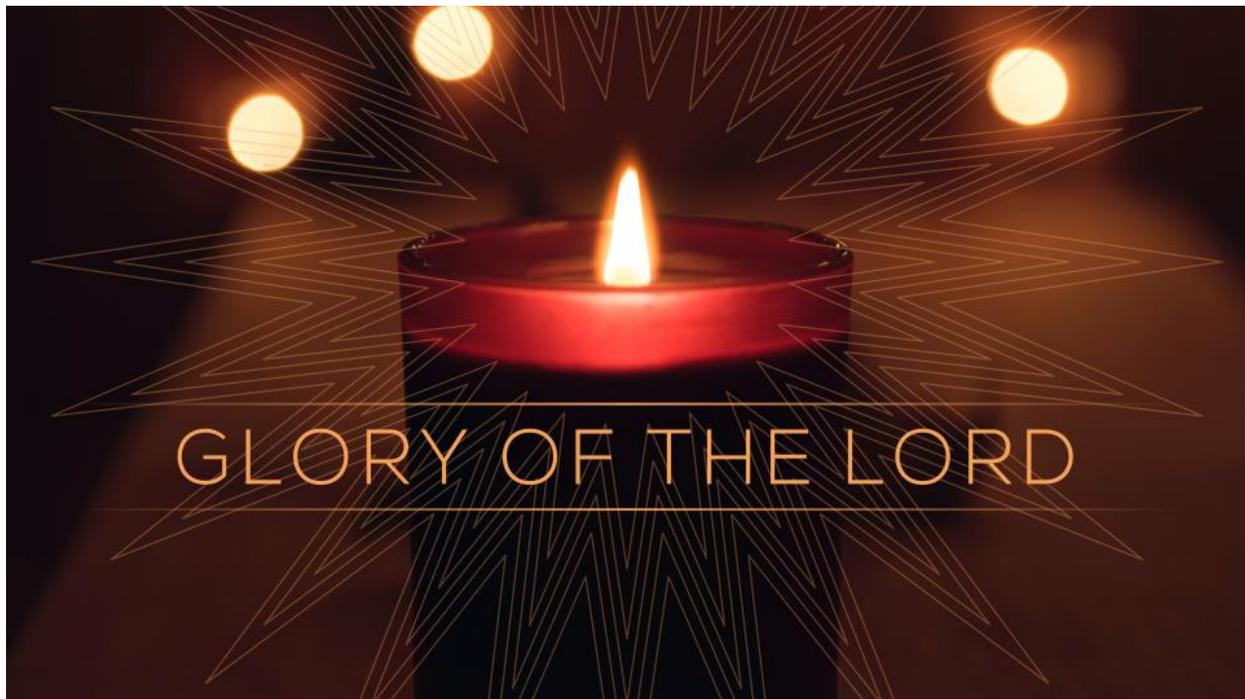
This theme should be precious to our hearts today, because most of us are Gentiles. Where would we be had if Jesus had not come and died to bring us near?

This theme should also remind us to love our brothers and sisters in Christ, who were adopted into His family from every tribe, tongue, people, and nation. There is no place for prejudice within the family of God! It doesn't even make sense, given the fact that we ourselves were grafted in!

I'm so thankful that Jesus is a Light to the Gentiles, which means He's a light to me.

# GLORY OF THE LORD

SCRIPTURE		MUSIC
SERVICE	Isaiah 40:4–5; John 1:14; Hebrews 1:3	Angels from the Realms of Glory Angels We Have Heard on High Go, Tell It on the Mountain Hark! The Herald Angels Sing Infant Holy, Infant Lowly <sup>7</sup> Joy Has Dawned Joy to the World O Come, All Ye Faithful While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks...
COLLECTED	Isaiah 40:1-5 Isaiah 60:1–5 (1-2) John 1:14–18 (14) Luke 2:8–14 (9) Hebrews 1:1–4 (3)	<b>Glorious Light (Getty/Arr. Shackley) SATB</b>



## INTRODUCING THIS THEME

Play a recording of “And the glory of the Lord” from Handel’s *Messiah*. **Isaiah** foretold God’s glory would be revealed in the future. God then showed it to the **shepherds** (the “glory of the Lord” shown round about them”). **Jesus is the glory**—the brightness and beauty—of the Lord revealed in the flesh. God foretold it, He did it, and Jesus is it. One day when Jesus returns, every person shall see it together. The Glory of the Lord, Jesus Himself, shall be revealed to all flesh.

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<sup>7</sup> Stanza 2, “saw the glory, heard the story”

# STAR OF JACOB

SCRIPTURE		MUSIC
SERVICE	Isaiah 60:1–3; Matthew 2:1–2	Angels from the Realms of Glory Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus O Holy Night Silent Night <sup>8</sup> The First Noel We Three Kings <b>Never a Brighter Star (Forrest) SATB</b>
COLLECTED	Numbers 24:17 Isaiah 60:1–6 (3) Daniel 9:24–27 Matthew 2:1–2ff	



## INTRODUCING THIS THEME

*How did the wise men know to follow the star to find the Messiah? Numbers 24:17 links the “Star of Jacob” to a “Scepter rising out of Israel.” Isaiah seems to associate this “rising star” to Jesus Himself (“the brightness of thy rising”). The magi knew the chronology from Daniel 9 and were looking for the Anointed One, to be heralded by a star. They took these prophecies literally. The star was the sign of the Messiah, the promised King. We all are still longing for a righteous, worthy ruler—the “Scepter” of Numbers 24:17—to whom we can give our loyalty. He appeared in His first coming just as predicted; and in His second coming, He will come as predicted. We look forward to that day.*

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<sup>8</sup> “Wondrous star, lend thy light.”

## SELECTED SCRIPTURE READING

**Numbers 24:17; Isaiah 60:1, 3, 6b; Matthew 2:1-2, 11**

I shall see him, but not now; I shall behold him, but not nigh. There shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Scepter shall rise out of Israel and shall smite the corners of Moab and destroy all the children of Sheth. / Arise, shine! For thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee. ... And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of Thy rising. ... They shall bring gold and incense; and they shall shew forth the praises of the LORD.

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, "Where is he that is born King of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him." ... And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him; and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.

# LIGHT OF THE WORLD

SCRIPTURE		MUSIC
SERVICE	2 Corinthians 4:3–6	Come, Behold the Wondrous Mystery Hark! The Herald Angels Sing <sup>9</sup> Good Christian Men, Rejoice <sup>10</sup>
COLLECTED	John 1:1–9 (4–5; 9) John 8:12 John 9:1–7ff (5) 2 Corinthians 4:1–6 (4, 6) Ephesians 5:8–14	

[theme image]

## INTRODUCING THIS THEME

*As Jesus grew into an adult, He began to call himself what the prophecies had all foretold about Him: the Light of the World. Imagine you are in a cave, and the light gets turned off. If you are in utter darkness, it is impossible to find the things you need for survival. You can't move forward to find water or food. Without light, you can't get anything else. You need light first. Light is a key part of our existence. Jesus is the Light of the World. He is the only true light for every man. There is no other light, no other hope. Our task in the Great Commission is to hold up the Light—to lead those in spiritual blindness to the Light of the World.*



**NORTHWEST VALLEY BAPTIST CHURCH**

nwvbc.org | 623-581-3115 | 4030 W Yorkshire Drive, Glendale, AZ 85308

<sup>9</sup> Stanza 3

<sup>10</sup> “calls you one and calls you all”