We did a service similar to this several years ago. After our study on Worship History, I thought it may be good to come back to it and incorporate what we had learned. This would especially be good this year, as Christmas Eve is on a Saturday and Christmas Days is on Sunday! I purposely didn't put much detail into the Christmas Day service as different denominations/church bodies have different orders of worship on Sundays.

Christmas Eve Service (Saturday Night)

Setting: Similar to what it may have been on that first Silent Night; lights dimmed; manger at the center of the stage, a star to show the way; music is very simple, acoustic guitar/piano/voices; musicians are off stage. The focus is the manger (and the screen).

On that night, there weren't big crowds of people or a lot of lights and decorations. There was no big commotion. Christ came humbly to this earth.

As people enter, there is soft music playing, lights dimmed, with a sense of expectancy.

At the start of the service, people are welcomed, open with prayer, and reminded of the time of silence, 400 years since they had heard from God through His prophets. They had been long awaiting...

Read Micah 5:2, NIV
"But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from old, from ancient times."

Congregational Song – O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

Read Isaiah 7:14, NIV
Therefore, the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel."

Congregational Song – Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus

Song – Breath of Heaven (expressing Mary's Song of the expectancy of the Savior's coming)[1]

Monologue – Joesph's Account

Congregational Song – Silent Night

Read Isaiah 9:6-7, NIV
"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be upon his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD almighty will accomplish this."

Message – Summarizing the events of the evening so far, the long expected King, and the simplicity of how He came. In reality, the world was not ready for the King that had come into the world, not to be an earthly king with worldly treasure, but our King of Kings, the Light of the World. Conclude by

taking the light that He brought to the earth and spread it to those around us.

While lighting candle, Read John 1:10-14. NIV
"He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize Him. Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God – children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God. The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth."

Candle Lighting – Song – Light of the World[2]

Read Isaiah 60:1-3, NIV
"Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD rises upon you. See, the darkness covers the earth and thick darkness covers the people, but the LORD rises upon you and his glory appears over you. Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn."

Congregational Song – O Holy Night

Closing Prayer– Leave with a sense of excitement and expectation for Sunday morning as we celebrate the birth of our Savior

On Christmas Morning, (Sunday)

Worship is very celebratory, full worship band (or orchestra); time of rejoicing, understanding our reason to celebrate.

Include songs such as:
Joy to the World
O Come All Ye Faithful
Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee
Angels We Have Heard on High

Message – What is so special about Christmas? What does it require from us? (Point toward Epiphany)

Closing Song – Go Tell It on the Mountain

Footnotes:
1. Breath of Heaven, Amy Grant & Chris Eaton, (1992, Age to Age Music, Inc.)
2. Light of the World, Stacey Yates (2004)