

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2020  
**CHRISTMAS EVE**  
ST/JOHN'S



# CHRISTMAS EVE

Thursday, December 24, 2020

## INTRODUCTION

*In winter's deepest night, we welcome the light of the Christ child. Isaiah declares that the light of the long-promised king will illumine the world and bring endless peace and justice. The angels declare that Jesus' birth is good and joyful news for everyone. Filled with the light that shines in our lives, we go forth to share the light of Christ with the whole world.*

## PRELUDE

"Es ist ein Ros"

Johannes Brahms

## + Gathering +

## WELCOME

## RINGING OF THE BELL

## CHRISTMAS PROCLAMATION

Pastor Allison Bengfort

## GATHERING CAROL

Once in Royal David's City, ELW 269  
Mae Loesel, soloist



1 Once in roy - al Da - vid's cit - y stood a low - ly cat - tle shed,  
2 He came down to earth from heav - en who is God and Lord of all,  
3 And our eyes at last shall see him, through his own re - deem - ing love;  
4 Not in that poor low - ly sta - ble, with the ox - en stand - ing by,



where a moth - er laid her ba - by in a man - ger for his bed:  
and his shel - ter was a sta - ble, and his cra - dle was a stall;  
for that child so dear and gen - tle is our Lord in heav'n a - bove;  
we shall see him; but in heav - en, set at God's right hand on high;



Mar - y was that moth - er mild, Je - sus Christ, her lit - tle child.  
with the poor and meek and low - ly, lived on earth our Sav - ior ho - ly.  
and he leads his chil - dren on to the place where he is gone.  
there his chil - dren gath - er round, bright like stars, with glo - ry crowned.

## GATHERING WORDS

Jesus, the bright Morning Star, shines light in the world.  
By day and night he shines for all to see.  
Jesus was born in the midst of injustice and poverty  
that the world may see the justice and richness of God.  
God so loved the world that God sent Jesus,  
so that all who believe in him may not perish  
but have eternal life.  
Jesus is the light of the world.  
Jesus is the light of our lives.  
Sing to God a new song!  
A song of hope, joy, and peace around the world.

## OPENING PRAYER

Let us pray.  
Gracious God of heaven and earth,  
you have thrown a lifeline to us in our darkness—  
a beam of light that shines through Jesus.  
Though born in a manger, he is the firstborn of all creation.  
Though crucified on a cross, he is the Lord of life.  
Fill us with the wonder and joy of his presence in the world  
and in our hearts.  
**Amen.**

+ **Word** +

## FIRST LESSON

A reading from Isaiah.

Isaiah 11:1-4, 6-9

- <sup>1</sup>A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse,  
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.  
<sup>2</sup>The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him,  
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,  
the spirit of counsel and might,  
the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.  
<sup>3</sup>His delight shall be in the fear of the LORD.  
He shall not judge by what his eyes see,  
or decide by what his ears hear;  
<sup>4</sup>but with righteousness he shall judge the poor,  
and decide with equity for the meek of the earth;  
he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,  
and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.  
<sup>6</sup>The wolf shall live with the lamb,  
the leopard shall lie down with the kid,  
the calf and the lion and the fatling together,  
and a little child shall lead them.  
<sup>7</sup>The cow and the bear shall graze,  
their young shall lie down together;

and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.  
<sup>8</sup>The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp,  
and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den.  
<sup>9</sup>They will not hurt or destroy  
on all my holy mountain;  
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD  
as the waters cover the sea.

#### ANTHEM

“O Radiant Dawn”

James MacMillan

#### SECOND LESSON

Luke 1:26-38

A reading from Luke.

<sup>26</sup>In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, <sup>27</sup>to a maiden engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The maiden's name was Mary. <sup>28</sup>And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." <sup>29</sup>But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. <sup>30</sup>The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. <sup>31</sup>And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. <sup>32</sup>He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. <sup>33</sup>He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." <sup>34</sup>Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" <sup>35</sup>The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. <sup>36</sup>And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. <sup>37</sup>For nothing will be impossible with God." <sup>38</sup>Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

#### ANTHEM

“As Dew in Aprille”

Benjamin Britten

#### THIRD LESSON

Luke 1:39-47

A reading from Luke.

<sup>39</sup>In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, <sup>40</sup>where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. <sup>41</sup>When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit <sup>42</sup>and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. <sup>43</sup>And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? <sup>44</sup>For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. <sup>45</sup>And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord." <sup>46</sup>And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, <sup>47</sup>and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior."



1 My soul cries out with a joy - ful shout that the  
 2 Though I am small, my . . . God, my all, you . . .  
 3 From the halls of pow'r to the for - tress tow'r, not a  
 4 Though the na - tions rage from . . age to age, we re -



God of my heart is great, and my spir - it sings of the  
 work great . . things in me, and your mer - cy will last from the  
 stone will be left on stone. Let the king be - ware for your  
 mem - ber who holds us fast: God's mer - cy must de -



won - drous things that you bring to the ones who wait.  
 depths of the past to the end of the age to be.  
 jus - tice tears ev - 'ry ty - rant . . . from his throne.  
 liv - er us from the con - quer - or's crush - ing grasp.



You fixed your sight on your ser - vant's plight, and my  
 Your ver - y name puts the proud to shame, and to  
 The hun - gry poor shall . . weep no more, for the  
 This sav - ing word that our fore - bears heard is the



weak - ness you did not spurn, so from east to west shall my  
 those who would for you yearn, you will show your might, put the  
 food they can nev - er earn; there are ta - bles spread, ev - 'ry  
 prom - ise which holds us bound, till the spear and rod can be



name be blest. Could the world be a - bout to turn?  
 strong to flight, for the world is a - bout to turn.  
 mouth be fed, for the world is a - bout to turn.  
 crushed by God, who is turn - ing the world a - round.



*Refrain*  
 My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Let the fires of your jus - tice burn.



Wipe a - way all tears, for the dawn draws near, and the world is a - bout to turn.

## FOURTH LESSON

Luke 2:1-7

A reading from Luke.

<sup>1</sup>In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered.  
<sup>2</sup>This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. <sup>3</sup>All went to their own towns to be registered. <sup>4</sup>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. <sup>5</sup>He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. <sup>6</sup>While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. <sup>7</sup>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.

## ANTHEM

“O Men from the Fields”

Arnold Cooke

## FIFTH LESSON

Luke 2:8-20

A reading from Luke.

<sup>8</sup>In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night.  
<sup>9</sup>Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. <sup>10</sup>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: <sup>11</sup>to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. <sup>12</sup>This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." <sup>13</sup>And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,  
<sup>14</sup>"Glory to God in the highest heaven,  
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"  
<sup>15</sup>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." <sup>16</sup>So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger.  
<sup>17</sup>When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; <sup>18</sup>and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. <sup>19</sup>But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. <sup>20</sup>The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.



1 O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant! O  
 2 The high - est, most ho - ly, light of light e - ter - nal,  
 3 Sing, choirs of an - gels, sing in ex - ul - ta - tion,  
 4 Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this hap - py morn - ing;



come ye, O come ye to Beth - le - hem;  
 born of a vir - gin, a mor - tal he comes;  
 sing, all ye cit - i - zens of heav - en a - bove!  
 Je - sus, to thee be . . . glo - ry giv'n!



come and be - hold him, born the king of an - gels:  
 Son of the Fa - ther now in flesh ap - pear - ing!  
 Glo - ry to God . . . in . . . the . . . high - est:  
 Word of the Fa - ther, now in flesh ap - pear - ing:

*Refrain*



Ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus, ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus,  
 O come, let us a - dore him, O come, let us a - dore him,



ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus Do - mi - num.  
 O come, let us a - dore him, Christ the Lord!

Text: attr. John Francis Wade, 1711–1786; tr. Frederick Oakeley, 1802–1880, sts. 1, 3–4; tr. unknown, st. 2  
 Music: ADESTE FIDELES, attr. John Francis Wade

CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

Pastor Allison Bengfort

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Margye Smith

## + Meal +

### OFFERING MUSIC

“My Lord is Come”

Will Todd

*We give thanks for your ongoing support of the ministry of St. John's! Gifts may be made online at [stjohnswilmette.org/give](http://stjohnswilmette.org/give). You may also write a check made out to St. John's Lutheran Church and mail it to 1235 Wilmette Avenue, Wilmette, IL 60091.*

### DIALOGUE

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

### THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

#### LORD'S PRAYER

**God our Mother, God our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name.**

**Your kingdom come, your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.**

**Give us today our daily bread.**

**Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those who sin against us.**

**Save us from the time of trial  
and deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,  
now and forever. Amen.**

### COMMUNION

#### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray.

Gracious and abundant God,  
you have done great things for us, and we rejoice.

In this bread and cup, you give us life forever.

In your boundless mercy, strengthen us  
and open our hearts to the world's needs,  
for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

**Amen.**

## + Sending +

### LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

On this day, we bear witness to the light of Christ with all the faithful of every time and place.

In 1973, Baptist pastor and Civil Rights activist, Howard Thurman penned these words of hope at the coming of the Christ child:

“I will light candles this Christmas,  
Candles of joy despite all the sadness,  
Candles of hope where despair keeps watch,  
Candles of courage for fears ever present,  
Candles of peace for tempest-tossed days,  
Candles of grace to ease heavy burdens,  
Candles of love to inspire all my living,  
Candles that will burn all year long.”

*Please light all the candles of your Advent wreath, including the Christ candle.*

From the prophet Isaiah:

“The people who walked in darkness  
have seen a great light;  
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—  
on them light has shined.  
<sup>6</sup> For a child has been born for us,  
a son given to us;  
authority rests upon his shoulders;  
and he is named  
Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”

Text prepared by Hannah McConnell and adapted by Pastor Allison Bengfort.



*Stil - le Nacht, hei - li - ge Nacht! Al - les schläft,*  
 1 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! All is calm,  
 2 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Shep - herds quake  
 3 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Son of God,



*ein - sam wacht nur das trau - te, hoch - hei - li - ge Paar.*  
 all is bright round yon vir - gin moth - er and child.  
 at the sight; glo - ries stream from heav - en a - far,  
 love's pure light ra - diant beams from your ho - ly face,



*Hold - er Kna - be im lok - ki - gen Haar, schlaf in himm - li - scher*  
 Ho - ly In - fant, so ten - der and mild, sleep in heav - en - ly  
 heav'n - ly hosts . . . sing, al - le - lu - ia! Christ, the Sav - ior, is  
 with the dawn of re - deem - ing grace, Je - sus, Lord, at your



*Ruh, schlaf in himm - li - scher Ruh.*  
 peace, sleep in heav - en - ly peace.  
 born! Christ, the Sav - ior, is born!  
 birth, Je - sus, Lord, at your birth.

Text: Joseph Mohr, 1792–1849; tr. John F. Young, 1820–1885  
 Music: STILLE NACHT, Franz Gruber, 1787–1863

CANDLELIGHT READING

John 1:1-5

A reading from the Gospel of John.

<sup>1</sup>In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup>He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup>All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being <sup>4</sup>in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. <sup>5</sup>The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

CAROL

Joy to the World, ELW 267



1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re -  
 2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their  
 3 No more let sin and sor - row grow nor thorns in -  
 4 He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the



ceive her king; let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare him  
 songs em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and  
 fest the ground; he comes to make his bless - ings  
 na - tions prove the glo - ries of his righ - teous -



room and heav'n and na - ture sing, and heav'n and na - ture  
 plains re - peat the sound - ing joy, re - peat the sound - ing  
 flow far as the curse is found, far as the curse is  
 ness and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his



sing, and heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.  
 joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.  
 found, far as, far as the curse is found.  
 love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748  
 Music: ANTIOCH, English melody, 18th cent.; arr. Lowell Mason, 1792–1872

BLESSING

May you be filled with the courage of Mary,  
 the excitement of Elizabeth,  
 the joy of the angels,  
 the eagerness of the shepherds,  
 and the radiance of the Christ child.  
 All-loving God, Creator, † Christ, and Holy Spirit,  
 bless you now and forever.  
**Amen.**

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Merry Christmas!  
**Thanks be to God! Merry Christmas!**

POSTLUDE

“Finale,” from *Symphony No. 2*

Louis Vierne

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## IN OUR PRAYERS

- † Ann Wagner, recovering after hospitalization
- † The family of John Genovese, father of Courtney Radde, who died 12/17/20
- † Barry and Hope Kellman, friends of Diane Kastman, for healing for Barry and comfort for Hope
- † Jeremiah Allen, student of Stephanie Abudayeh, recovering from injuries after being hit by a car
- † Norma Adkerson, stepmother of Courtney, diagnosed with COVID
- † The family of Doris Regan, who died 11/25/20
- † Stanley Smith, brother-in-law of Margye Smith, and his family, experiencing several cases of COVID
- † The family and friends of Carolyn Rasmussen, grandmother of Luke Rasmussen, who died 10/9/20
- † Art Garcia, friend of Chad Johnson, recovering from a heart attack and pneumonia
- † Tony & Alissandra Swanson, friends of the Abudayeh family, as they mourn the death of their 7-year-old son
- † Alan Williams, stepfather of Christi Wise, recovering from surgery
- † Frank Ziegler, in need of healing
- † Iden Nowlin, friend of the Abudayeh family, recovering from cancer surgery
- † The families of Salwa Sous and Kevin Anderson, family members of Stephanie & Elias Abudayeh, as they mourn the loss of their loved ones
- † The family and friends of Pastor Bob Stout, former pastor of the Abudayeh family, who died 9/12/20
- † Rachel Cordts, recovering from cancer surgery
- † Cam Wise, for physical and emotional health
- † The family and friends of Matt Dossa, nephew of Jim Dossa, who died 6/7/20
- † Sylvia Cushing, cousin of Olga Domchenko, in need of healing
- † Janet Witt, cancer diagnosis
- † Virginia Milnikel, broken arm
- † Lani Miller
- † Doug Peters, who died 11/19/20
- † Linda Bengfort, mother of Pastor Allison, ongoing back pain
- † Greyson Nester
- † Margaret (Maggie) Oxland
- † The family and friends of Marty Anderson, family friend of Dave & Lyn Brunn, who passed away 11/15/20
- † Ellie Basnik, mother-in-law of Chad Johnson, cancer diagnosis
- † Gil Basnik, father-in-law of Chad Johnson, in need of healing
- † The family of Paul Escamilla, friend of Elias & Stephanie Abudayeh
- † Sydney Johnson, her work
- † Mark Voosen
- † Margaux Tauszig, granddaughter of Wolf Peddinghaus
- † Ed Price, friend of Sarah Rink
- † Jodi Kretzman, friend of Peter Knobel
- † Jessica Sandoval, friend of the Radde family
- † Fred Rudolphi, friend of Bill Kaspar, in need of healing
- † The family and friends of Helene Tadros, Olga Domchenko's sister, who died 4/6/20, and especially for William Sciarrino, Helene's caretaker
- † Natalie Domchenko & Hilaire Sainson, sister of Olga Domchenko and sister's husband, in need of healing

## SERVING TODAY

*Preaching & Presiding Minister:* The Rev. Allison Bengfort  
*Music Director & Organist:* Dr. Robert McConnell  
*Cantor:* Hannah McConnell  
*Choir Section Leaders:* Lucy Evans, Zachary Kurtzenberger,  
Pablo Laucerica, Olivia Prendergast  
*Volunteer Singers:* Stephanie Abudayeh, Allison Bengfort,  
Linda Bengfort, William Kaspar,  
Peter Knobel, Mary Laut,  
Robert McConnell, Richard Rusz,  
Margye Smith  
*Vocal Soloist:* Mae Loesel  
*Harpist:* Benjamin Melsky  
*Ministers of the Word:* Joshua Flachsbart, Craig Gonder,  
Stephanie Abudayeh, Jason Shutters,  
Max Beck  
*Prayers of the People Writer:* Margye Smith  
*Video Production:* Robert McConnell  
*Cover Art:* "Mary's Song" by Lauren Wright Pittman

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### THURSDAY, CHRISTMAS EVE

12:00 PM Stories & Songs service becomes available online,  
Lessons & Carols service becomes available online  
3:00 PM Stories & Songs Watch Party on Zoom  
5:00 PM Lessons & Carols Watch Party on Zoom

### SATURDAY

5:00 PM Contemplative Service Online

### SUNDAY, DECEMBER 27

9:15-9:30 AM Children's Social Time  
9:30 AM Online Worship with Children's Message  
10:30-11:00 AM Virtual Coffee Hour

## ST/JOHN'S

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