

THE CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE

Friday, December 24, 2021

As We Gather: Most of us have heard the old carol “O Holy Night,” but we know none of us make it so. The Lord makes this night holy, and He needs no help from us. What He does ask of us is that we trust the truths and promises of Christmas, and that we live in reflection of what God has done to save us. We can keep this night holy with faith that kneels at the manger, heads bowed in prayer and adoration, and voices raised in a joyful song of thanksgiving and praise.

GREETING

THE OPENING HYMN: LSB #380

“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”, vv. 1-3

- 1 Hark! The herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn King;
Peace on earth and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled!”
Joyful, all ye nations, rise,
Join the triumph of the skies;
With the_angelic host proclaim,
“Christ is born in Bethlehem!” **Refrain**

**Ref Hark! The herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn King!”**

- 2 Christ, by highest heav’n adored,
Christ, the everlasting Lord,
Late in time behold Him come,
Offspring of a virgin’s womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see,
Hail the_incarnate Deity!
Pleased as Man with man to dwell,
Jesus, our Immanuel! **Refrain**

- 3 Hail, the heav’n-born Prince of Peace!
Hail, the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all He brings,
Ris’n with healing in His wings.
Mild He lays His glory by,
Born that man no more may die,
Born to raise the sons of earth,
Born to give them second birth. **Refrain**

(Please stand)

THE INVOCATION: (We invite God to be present among us)

P: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

P: For to us a child is born,

C: to us a son is given;

P: And His name shall be called

C: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,

P: Everlasting Father,

C: Prince of Peace. Isaiah 9:6

P: “Glory to God in the highest,

C: and on earth peace among those with whom He is pleased!”

Luke 2:14

THE CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION:

(We stand before God acknowledging our sin)

P: On this most holy night, we gather in reverence, preparing to worship Christ. As we consider the birth of our Savior so many years ago, we recognize our continuing great need for Him. We confess before God and to one another that we are by our nature sinful and imperfect.

In humble adoration, we bow before Jesus, the sinless Lamb of God, who was sent to be our substitute, sacrifice, and the rescue from sin for the whole world.

C: Eternal Jesus, You once left Heaven to become a child and then a Sacrifice for us. Since we could not perfectly fulfill the Father’s just and holy will, You fulfilled it for us.

We bow before You, humbly confessing our sinfulness. We repent of our sinful thoughts, words, and actions; shortcomings that oppose and neglect Your righteous ways. Forgive us our sins that we may be reconciled to You.

In Your holy name, Jesus, we pray. Amen.

P: In the baby Jesus born in Bethlehem, almighty God has joined Himself with human flesh to bring humanity into a relationship of love with Himself, and for the sake of Jesus forgives you all your sins. Therefore, as a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

(Please be seated)

HYMN OF PRAISE: LSB #387 “Joy to the World” (Vv 1,3,4)

- 1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her King;
Let ev'ry heart prepare Him room
And heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.
- 3 No more let sins and sorrows grow
Nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make His blessings flow
Far as the curse is found,
Far as the curse is found,
Far as, far as the curse is found.
- 4 He rules the world with truth and grace
And makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness
And wonders of His love,
And wonders of His love,
And wonders, wonders of His love.

THE OLD TESTAMENT READING: *Isaiah 7:10-14 NIV*

¹⁰ Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz, ¹¹ “Ask the LORD your God for a sign, whether in the deepest depths or in the highest heights.”

¹² But Ahaz said, “I will not ask; I will not put the LORD to the test.”

¹³ Then Isaiah said, “Hear now, you house of David! Is it not enough to try the patience of humans? Will you try the patience of my God also? ¹⁴ Therefore the Lord himself will give you^[a] a sign: The virgin^[b] will conceive and give birth to a son, and^[c] will call him Immanuel.^[d]

LSB #366 “It Came upon the Midnight Clear” (vv. 1, 4)

- 1 It came upon the midnight clear,
That glorious song of old,
From angels bending near the earth
To touch their harps of gold:
“Peace on the earth, goodwill to all,
From heav'n's all-gracious king.”
The world in solemn stillness lay
To hear the angels sing.

4 For lo, the days have come to pass
By prophets seen of old,
When down into the circling years
Came Christ as was foretold.
His word of peace shall to the earth
God's ancient promise bring,
And all who take this gift will hear
The song the angels sing.

Text: Public domain

THE GOSPEL READING with Carol Responses: *Luke 2:1-20*

Luke 2:1-7

In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. ² (This was the first census that took place while^[a] Quirinius was governor of Syria.) ³ And everyone went to their own town to register.

⁴ So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. ⁵ He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. ⁶ While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, ⁷ and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

HYMN: LSB #367 “Angels from the Realms of Glory”, verse 1

1 Angels from the realms of glory,
Wing your flight o'er all the earth;
Ye who sang creation's story,
Now proclaim Messiah's birth. **Refrain**

**Come and worship, come and worship;
Worship Christ, the newborn King.**

Text: Public domain

Luke 2:8-15

⁸ And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. ⁹ An angel of the Lord appeared to 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. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. ¹¹ Today in the

town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”

¹³ Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

¹⁴ “Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.”

¹⁵ When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.”

HYMN: LSB #367 “Angels from the Realms of Glory”, verse 2

2 Shepherds in the field abiding,
Watching o’er your flocks by night,
God with us is now residing,
Yonder shines the Infant Light. **Refrain**

**Come and worship, come and worship;
Worship Christ, the newborn King.**

Text: Public domain

Luke 2:16-20

¹⁶ So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. ¹⁷ When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, ¹⁸ and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. ¹⁹ But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰ The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

HYMN: LSB #367 “Angels from the Realms of Glory”, verse 3

3 Sages, leave your contemplations,
Brighter visions beam afar;
Seek the great Desire of nations,
Ye have seen His natal star. **Refrain**

**Come and worship, come and worship;
Worship Christ, the newborn King.**

Text: Public domain

L: In recognition of the central role that Jesus holds in our life and salvation, we now light the center candle of our Advent wreath—in celebration of our King’s birthday!

HYMN: LSB #367 *“Angels from the Realms of Glory”*, verse 4
(please stand)

4 Saints before the altar bending,
Watching long in hope and fear,
Suddenly the Lord, descending,
In His temple shall appear. **Refrain**

**Come and worship, come and worship;
Worship Christ, the newborn King.**

Text: Public domain

HYMN OF CHRISTMAS: LSB #361 *“O Little Town of Bethlehem”*
(vv. 1-4)

1 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 everlasting light.
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee tonight.

2 For Christ is born of Mary,
And, gathered all above
While mortals sleep, the angels keep
Their watch of wond’ring love.
O morning stars, together
Proclaim the holy birth,
And praises sing to God the king
And peace to all the earth!

3 How silently, how silently
The wondrous gift is giv’n!
So God imparts to human hearts
The blessings of His heav’n.
No ear may hear His coming;
But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive Him, still
The dear Christ enters in.

4 O holy Child of Bethlehem,
Descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin, and enter in,
Be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels
The great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us,
Our Lord Immanuel!

Text: Public domain

CHRISTMAS EVE MESSAGE: Rev. Jerry McNamara

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE OF GOD:

(Please stand)

CHRISTMAS ORDER OF HOLY COMMUNION

CREEDAL HYMN:

(Tune: ST. LOUIS, "O Little Town of Bethlehem" LSB #361)

In God the Father we believe, He made the heav'ns and earth
And Jesus Christ, Our Lord, conceived; for us through Virgin birth
Upon the cross He died there; finished His father's will
But three days past, He rose at last, and lives triumphant still!

As we await our Lord's return, as he has promised us
We treasure every Holy gift He's given to His church.
His Spirit gives us new life—to greatest and to least
Baptism and the Bible and, the church's Holy Feast.

THE LORD'S PRAYER:

(Tune: CAROL, "It Came upon the Midnight Clear" LSB #366)

Our Father, who in Heav'n adored, Most holy be thy name
Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done; in Heav'n and earth the same.
Give us this day, our daily bread, forgive all debts and sin.
And lead us from each evil thing. All glory's Yours. Amen!

WORDS OF INSTITUTION:

(Tune: IN DULCI JUBILO, "Good Christian Men, Rejoice" HWC # 151)

Sung by Pastor:

Good Christian friends rejoice with heart and soul and voice.
On the night he was betrayed, Jesus to the Father prayed:
Bless this bread we are to eat, let it bring forgiveness sweet.
My body dwells therein, My body dwells therein.

Good Christian friends rejoice with heart and soul and voice.
Next he took the blessed cup, praying as he raised it up:
In the wine forever more is the way to Heaven's door.
My blood was shed for you, My blood was shed for you.

Sung by all:

**Good Christian friends rejoice with heart and soul and voice.
Eat his body drink his blood, share the peace that's from above.
Angels sing of heaven's bliss, as we here share this Eucharist.
Christ was born for this, Christ was born for this.**

COMMUNION SONG: *Joy Has Dawned* (Getty)

1. Joy has dawned upon the world,
Promised from creation:
God's salvation now unfurled,
Hope for ev'ry nation.
Not with fanfares from above,
Not with scenes of glory,
But a humble gift of love:
Jesus born of Mary.
2. Sounds of wonder fill the sky
With the songs of angels,
As the mighty Prince of Life
Shelters in a stable.
Hands that set each star in place,
Shaped the earth in darkness,
Cling now to a mother's breast,
Vuln'erable and helpless.
3. Shepherds bow before the Lamb,
Gazing at the glory;
Gifts of men from distant lands
Prophecy the story.
Gold, a King is born today;
Incense, God is with us;
Myrrh, His death will make a way,
And by His blood He'll win us.
4. Son of Adam, Son of heaven,
Given as a ransom;
Reconciling God and man,
Christ, our mighty champion!
What a Savior, What a Friend,
What a glorious myst'ry:
Once a babe in Bethlehem,
Now the Lord of hist'ry.

THE PRAYER OF THANKS: *(Please stand)*

P: Let us pray. Gracious God and Father, thank You for the gift of Your Son and for the message of the angels that announced His arrival. Lord Jesus, thank You for caring so much for us that You came to be one of us.

Holy Spirit, thank You for carrying the song of the angels to our ears, that we might be lifted up in hope and joy. For all the blessings of this night, the life and eternity You give to us, O God: Father Son and Holy Spirit we praise and glorify You.

C: Amen.

BENEDICTION:

(Tune: GLORIA, "Angels We Have Heard on High" LSB # 368)

P: May the good Lord bless and keep,
cause His face on you to shine
Look on you with favor deep,
offering His peace divine

ALL: Gloria.....in excelsis Deo! Gloria.....in excelsis Deo!

THE CANDLE LIGHTING CEREMONY

From the Christ candle, which symbolize Christ, the Light of the World, the pastor will light his candle, and then the candles of the ushers. They will light the candle of the first worshiper in each pew, who will pass it on to the others in that pew.

PLEASE DO NOT TILT A LIGHTED CANDLE.

Hold burning candles upright. Tip only unlighted candles to receive the flame from your neighbor.

P: Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. Jesus said: "I am the light of the world; whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

We declare the praises of Him who called us out of darkness into His marvelous light. Live as children of light, for the fruit of light consists in all goodness, righteousness, and truth. So receive His Light now and share His Holy Love!

CLOSING HYMN: LSB #363 “Silent Night, Holy Night”

(First three stanzas in English; then a final stanza in silent reflection.

As per our heritage, the first stanzais also available in German)

- 1 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.

- 2 Silent night, holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight;
Glories stream from heaven afar,
Heav'nly hosts sing, Alleluia!
Christ, the Savior, is born!
Christ, the Savior, is born!

- 3 Silent night, holy night!
Son of God, love's pure light
Radiant beams from Thy holy face
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth,
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.

- 1g Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht!
Alles schläft, einsam wacht
Nur das traute, hochheilige Paar.
Holder Knabe im lockigen Haar,
Schlaf in himmlischer Ruh,
Schlaf in himmlischer Ruh.