



CHRISTMAS EVE



Thursday, December 24, 2020, 7:00 p.m.

THE SERVICE OF PREPARATION

PRELUDE

THE RINGING OF THE BELLS

WORDS OF WELCOME TO ONE AND ALL!

Pastor: God's love was promised and fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ. Despite ongoing sin and sinfulness by His human creatures, God loved us so much that our Lord was born as one of us so that He could die for us. When He appeared on the scene of human history, it marked the start of His fulfilling the very promises He had made centuries before. But His love was not finished for us until He was born in our hearts. That took the gracious gift of faith by which we receive His great love and are enabled to share it with others. We now celebrate the start of Christ's love at His birth in Bethlehem and His finishing it as He is born anew in our hearts in time and into eternity.

✠ PREPARATION ✠

(please stand)

HYMN

"O Come, All Ye Faithful" *LSB 379 vs 1, 2, 3*

O, come all ye faithful,

Joyful and triumphant!

Come ye, o, come ye to Bethlehem;

**Come and behold Him
Born the king of angels;
O, come, let us adore Him,
O, come, let us adore Him,
O, come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!
Highest, most holy,
Light of light eternal,
Born of a virgin, a mortal He comes;
Son of the Father
Now in flesh appearing!
O, come, let us adore Him,
O, come, let us adore Him,
O, come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!**

**Sing, choirs of angels,
Sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God
In the highest:
O, come, let us adore Him,
O, come, let us adore Him,
O, come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!**

INVOCATION

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: (spoken) **Amen.**

(please be seated or kneel for the confession and
absolution)

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION *1 John 4:9, 12b*

Pastor: Brothers and sisters, although ***“God abides in us and His love is perfected in us,”*** we sin every day and need the assurance of His forgiveness. Let us go to God, seeking His power to amend our sinful lives. Lord Jesus, the love of God made manifest among us,

People: we have not loved You with our whole heart, nor have we loved our neighbors as ourselves. Without Your help we cannot change. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.

Pastor: Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: (spoken) Amen.

(please be seated)

✠ WORD ✠

HYMN OF PRAISE

“Joy to the World” LSB 387 vs 1 & 4

Joy to the world, the Lord is come

Let earth receive its 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

**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**

(please stand)

SALUTATION

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: (spoken) **And also with you.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: Let us pray.

O God, with joy we remember the time when Your love started to be visible in the birth of Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

People: Strengthen our faith as He finishes His journey to rule our hearts and minds as Savior and Lord today and always;

Pastor: through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: (spoken) **Amen.**

CREED *Nicene Creed*

**People: I believe in one God,
the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth
and of all things visible and invisible.
And in one Lord Jesus Christ,**

**the only-begotten Son of God,
begotten of His Father before all worlds,
God of God, Light of Light,
very God of very God,
begotten, not made,
being of one substance with the Father,
by whom all things were made;
who for us men and for our salvation came
down from heaven
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the
virgin Mary
and was made man;
and was crucified also for us under Pontius
Pilate.
He suffered and was buried.
And the third day He rose again according
to the Scriptures
and ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of the Father.
And He will come again with glory to judge
both the living and the dead,
whose kingdom will have no end.
And I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord and giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the
Son,
who with the Father and the Son together
is worshiped and glorified,
who spoke by the prophets.
And I believe in one holy Christian and
apostolic Church,**

**I acknowledge one Baptism for the
remission of sins,
and I look for the resurrection of the dead
and the life ☩ of the world to come. Amen.**

SPECIAL MUSIC

“Infant Holy Infant Lowly”

&

“The Birthday of the King”

Sung by Choir

☩ LESSONS AND CAROLS ☩

LESSON Part 1: Prophecies of a Savior

Isaiah 11:1, 4a; Numbers 24:15b, 17a; Isaiah 7:14; Micah 5:2

Pastor: Our gracious God did not become one of us unexpectedly; rather, through the ages, He promised to enter human history to save us. Let us hear some of the prophecies and respond in song.

Lector: Isaiah wrote about a descendant of Jesse, David’s father: “There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit. With righteousness He shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth.”

HYMN

“Lo, How a Rose E’er Blooming” *LSB 359 vs 1*

**Lo, how a rose e’er blooming
From tender stem hath sprung
Of Jesse’s lineage coming
As prophets long have sung**

**It came a flow'ret bright
Amid the cold of winter
When half-spent was the night**

Lector: In Numbers, chapter 24, we read that the Savior would be royal. "The oracle of Balaam the son of Beor, . . . I see Him, but not now; I behold Him, but not near: a star shall come out of Jacob, and a scepter shall rise out of Israel."

HYMN

"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" LSB 357 vs 1
O, come, o, come, Emmanuel
And ransom captive Israel
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to you, O Israel!

Lector: Isaiah even wrote about our Lord's virgin birth. "The Lord Himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call His name Immanuel."

HYMN

"Savior of the Nations, Come" LSB 332 vs 1
Savior of the nations come
Virgin's Son make here Your home
Marvel now O heav'n and earth
That the Lord chose such a birth

Lector: Micah foretold where Jesus would be born. "But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come

forth for Me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days.”

HYMN

“O Little Town of Bethlehem” *LSB 361 vs 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**

Pastor: It is not enough to look back at the historical fact of Jesus’ birth; today we celebrate the love God showers on us daily, which we share, and about which we sing in later stanzas of these same hymns.

GRADUAL *Isaiah 9:6; Psalm 98:1a*

Pastor: To us a child is born,

People: to us a son is given;

Pastor: and the government shall be upon His shoulder.

**People: And His name shall be called Wonderful
Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince
of Peace.**

Pastor: Sing to the Lord a new song,

People: for He has done marvelous things!

LESSON Part 2: Love from Our Savior

1 John 4:7–9, 10–12, 15–16; Titus 2:11–14

Lector: In his First Epistle, John writes,

“Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent His only Son into the world, so that we might live through Him.”

HYMN

“Lo, How a Rose E’er Blooming” *LSB 359 vs 2*

**Isaiah ‘twas foretold it
The rose I have in mind
With Mary we behold it
The virgin mother kind
To show God’s love a right
She bore to us a Savior
When half-spent was the night**

Lector: John continues,

“In this is love, not that we have loved God but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and His love is perfected in us.”

HYMN

“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” *LSB 357 vs 7*

**O, come, Desire of nations, bind
In one the hearts of all mankind
Bid Thou our sad divisions cease,
And be Yourself our King of Peace
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to you, O Israel!**

Lector: And John concludes,

“Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.”

HYMN

“Savior of the Nations, Come” *LSB 332 vs 7*

**From the manger newborn light
Shines in glory through the night
Darkness there no more resides
In this light faith now abides**

Lector: Paul writes to Titus and us:

“For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession who are zealous for good works.”

HYMN

“O Little Town of Bethlehem” *LSB 361 vs 3, 4*

**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

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
Oh come to us
Abide with us
Our Lord Immanuel**

+ SERMON +

“From Start to Finish”

Numbers 24:15–17a; Isaiah 9:2, 6–7; 11:1–10; Micah 5:2–4; 1 John 4:7–16;

Titus 2:11–14; Matthew 1:18–25; Luke 2:1–20

Sermon Outline

1. The biblical narrative tells us the simple story of how the Savior was born.
2. But God didn't stop giving his gift of a Savior, for he *is* born for you!

A Savior Was Born, and the Savior *Is* Born.

SPECIAL MUSIC

“Mary Did You Know”

Guest Musician, Morgan Traywick

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

(responses will be sung using the refrain of “**Hark! The Herald Angels Sing.**”)

Pastor: God entered human history in the person of Jesus, who experienced all our joys and sorrows. He has promised that our heavenly Father will hear whatever we ask in His name. Let us bring our requests to Him in confident faith.

Wonderful Counselor, we pray that You will give empathy, wisdom, and compassion to all who seek to meet the needs of the people around them, providing food, clothing, and shelter, tending to the sick and injured, and responding to human crises and natural disasters. Remember, we pray, those with special needs and those known only to You. As You give us opportunity, grant that we may be part of Your answers to their petitions.

Mighty God, whose Word created all things in heaven and on earth, when storms rage, fires spread, or the earth trembles, give courage and skill

to those who would provide rescue, relief, and shelter. Bless those who till the soil and raise crops and all who manage and distribute the world's bounty, that the hungry be fed, the poor clothed, and the displaced given shelter.

Gracious God, receive our plea;

People: hear the prayers to You we bring, Father, Spirit, newborn King.

Pastor: Everlasting Father, shower Your grace on all families, enabling parents and children to grow in faith and love. In neighborhoods, communities, and cities where there is discord, open doors of peace; where there is discrimination, provide justice; where there is loneliness, provide companionship. Bless individuals and organizations to use the talents and resources You provide to restore dignity, health, and peace to everyone in their care.

Gracious God, receive our plea;

People: hear the prayers to You we bring, Father, Spirit, newborn King.

Pastor: Prince of Peace, use the earthly powers that be to put into positions of authority those who will work for justice within their nations and cooperation across their borders. Give protection and courage to police and first responders in their communities and to armed forces deployed. Where wars threaten, move leaders to seek calm; where long-term animosity gives rise to fear and hatred, open avenues of communication and understanding. Grant that Your Church stand as a beacon in this

troubled world to proclaim the Gospel and exhibit loving forgiveness in Your name. Grant that many find the peace they seek in You, our gracious Savior. Gracious God, receive our plea;

People: hear the prayers to You we bring, Father, Spirit, newborn King.

Pastor: Into Your hands, heavenly Father, we commend ourselves and all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy for the sake of Him whose birth we celebrate this day, Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

People: (spoken) Amen.

✠ SACRAMENT ✠

(please stand)

PREFACE *2 Timothy 4:22*

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: (spoken) And also with you.

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

People: (spoken) We lift them to the Lord.

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: (spoken) It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

PROPER PREFACE

Pastor: It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, whose birth proclaims the fulfillment of Your promises and makes visible Your love for us and all people. Therefore with angels and

archangels and with all the company of heaven we
laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore
praising You and singing:

SANCTUS (sing) *LSB 195*

**Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth
Heav'n and earth are full of Thy glory**

Hosanna

Hosanna

Hosanna in the highest

Blessed is He

Blessed is He

Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord

Hosanna,

Hosanna

Hosanna in the highest

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Pastor: Blessed are You, Lord our God, for You have had
mercy on us and entered human history in the
person of Your Son so that we might enter Your
eternal kingdom. He fulfilled the prophecy and was
born of the Virgin so that He might die on a cross
and thereby give us eternal life. As we celebrate His
birth, we give thanks for our new birth, for His
abiding with us throughout our journey, and for the
assurance of heaven He won for us. Grant us now
that we may in true faith receive Him under bread
and wine, together with the blessings of forgiveness,
life, and salvation. To You—Father, Son, and Holy
Spirit—be all praise and glory, now and forever.

People: (spoken) **Amen.**

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

Matthew 26:26–28; Mark 14:22–24; Luke 22:19–20; 1 Corinthians 11:23–25

Pastor: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: “Take, eat; this is My ✠ body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me.”

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: “Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My ✠ blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”

PROCLAMATION OF CHRIST

1 Corinthians 11:26; Revelation 22:20

Pastor: As often as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the Lord’s death until He comes.

People: Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

Pastor: O Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, in giving us Your body and blood to eat and to drink, You lead us to remember and confess Your holy cross and passion, Your blessed death, Your rest in the tomb, Your resurrection from the dead, Your ascension into heaven, and Your coming for the final judgment. So remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

LORD'S PRAYER *Matthew 6:9–13*

People: **Our Father who art in heaven,
 hallowed be Thy name,
 Thy kingdom come,
 Thy will be done on earth
 as it is in heaven;
 give us this day our daily bread;
 and forgive us our trespasses
 as we forgive those
 who trespass against us;
 and lead us not into temptation,
 but deliver us from evil.
 For Thine is the kingdom
 and the power and the glory
 forever and ever. Amen.**

PAX DOMINI

Pastor: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

People: (spoken) **Amen.**

AGNUS DEI (Sung) *LSB 198*

**O Christ, Thou Lamb of God that takest away the sin of
 the world have mercy upon us
O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that takest away the sin of
 the world, have mercy upon us
O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that takest away the sin of
 the world, grant us Thy peace. Amen.**

(please be seated)

DISTRIBUTION HYMNS

“Angels We Have Heard on High” LSB 368

**Angels we have heard on high,
Sweetly singing o’er the plains
And the mountains in reply,
Echoing their joyous strains**

Glo----ria

In excelsis Deo

Glo----ria

In excelsis Deo

**Shepherds why this jubilee
Why your joyous strains prolong
What the gladsome tidings be
Which inspire your heav’nly song**

Glo----ria

In excelsis Deo

Glo----ria

In excelsis Deo

**Come to Bethlehem and see
Him whose birth the angels sing
Come, adore on bended knee
Christ the Lord, the newborn King**

Glo----ria

In excelsis Deo

Glo----ria

In excelsis Deo

POST-COMMUNION CANTICLE

(please stand)

THE POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

Pastor: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and preserve you in body and soul to life everlasting.

People: (spoken) **Amen.**

(please stand at the conclusion of the distribution for the blessing)

CANDLELIGHTING

(During the special music, a Gospel procession (pastor, crucifer, candle bearers) may form and move to the center of the sanctuary. Individual candles are lit from those of the candle bearers and on through the congregation.)

SPECIAL MUSIC

“O Holy Night”
Sung by Dave Brown

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the second chapter.

People: (spoken) **Glory to You, O Lord.**

HOLY GOSPEL *Luke 2:8–17 (KJV)*

Pastor: There were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in

swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child.

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: (spoken) **Praise to You, O Christ.**

(The Gospel procession continues toward the back of the sanctuary during the hymn.)

HYMN

“Silent Night, Holy Night” *LSB 363*

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

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**

**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**

COLLECT

Pastor: Let us pray.

O God, You make this most holy night to shine with the brightness of the true Light.

People: Grant that as we have known the mysteries of that Light on earth we may also come to the fullness of His joys in heaven;

Pastor: through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: (spoken) Amen.

BENEDICTION

Pastor: The blessing of God Almighty—the Father, the ☩ Son, and the Holy Spirit—be with you and fill you with Christmas peace and joy, now and forever.

People: (spoken) Amen.

THOSE SERVING IN GOD'S HOUSE

Rev. Paul Pollatz, Pastor

Marie Brown, Organist

Morgan Traywick, Guest Musician

Ken Kosmalski, Elder & Reader

Gary Mason, Glenn Cairns, & Kim Armstrong, Ushers



POINSETTIAS PROVIDED BY:

Jim & Karen Bumgarner (1)

Phyllis Dasher (1)

Joan Hafkesbrink (1)

Lori Wilson (2)

Pastor & Ruth Pollatz (2)

Cheryl Toms (1)

Bev Kero (1)

Carolyn Kimbrough (1)

Dave & Sis Hamilton (2)

Kathy King (1)

Patricia Gebbink (1)

(Don't forget to take your plant home with you after service.)