

From Heaven Above

A Children's Christmas Service for All Ages



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Reflecting the joy within his family, Martin Luther wrote this hymn for his children's Christmas Eve celebration either in 1534 or 1535. The pattern of a pre-Reformation singing game gave Luther's simple hymn structure. Stanzas 1–5 report what the angels said. Stanzas 6 and 15 give voice to the family's response, while stanzas 7–14 make application of the angel's good news. Originally, Luther used the tune of the singing game, especially since the hymn was sung in the family. When the hymn began to be used in church services, Luther provided as a new tune the one used here.

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The Processional Hymn: Angels We Have Heard on High

LSB 368

Congregation and Children:

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

Refrain—All Sing:

Gloria in excelsis Deo.
Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Congregation:

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

Children:

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

The Invocation

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

All: Amen.

Responsive Reading

Leader: From heaven above,

People: The angels sing.

Leader: On earth below,

People: Our praises bring.

Leader: Our Lord has come,

People: With us to dwell.

Leader: Now we go out:

People: Good News to tell!

Hymn: What Child Is This

LSB 370

Congregation:

What child is this, who, laid to rest,
On Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet
While shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the king,
Whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
Haste, haste to bring Him laud,
The babe, the son of Mary!

Why lies He in such mean estate
Where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear; for sinners here
The silent Word is pleading.
Nails, spear shall pierce Him through,
The cross be borne for me, for you;
Hail, hail the Word made flesh,
The babe, the son of Mary!

So bring Him incense, gold, and myrrh;
Come, peasant, king, to own Him.
The King of kings salvation brings;
Let loving hearts enthrone Him.
Raise, raise the song on high,
The virgin sings her lullaby;
Joy, joy, for Christ is born,
The babe, the son of Mary!

The Christmas Meditation

Offering

The Message Presented by the Children

A Bible Reading: Luke 2:1–7

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered.

²This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³And all went to be registered, each to his own town. ⁴And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, ⁵to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child.

⁶And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

Hymn: *Away in a Manger* (*sung by children*)

The Message Presented by the Children Grades PK–K

Children: From heav'n above,

People: To earth in love!

Hymn: From Heaven Above to Earth I Come

LSB 358:1–2

Children:

“From heav'n above to earth I come
To bear good news to ev'ry home;
Glad tidings of great joy I bring,
Whereof I now will say and sing:

Congregation:

“To you this night is born a child
Of Mary, chosen virgin mild;
This little child of lowly birth
Shall be the joy of all the earth.”

A Bible Reading: Luke 2:8–14

⁸ And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. ¹⁰ And the angel said to them, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. ¹¹ For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹² And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.” ¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

¹⁴ “Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!”

Hymn: O Come, All Ye Faithful

LSB 379:1–3

Congregation:

O come, all ye faithful,
Joyful and triumphant!
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold Him
Born the king of angels:

Refrain

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! *Refrain*

Sing, choirs of angels,
Sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God
In the highest: *Refrain*

The Message Presented by the Children Grades 1–2

Children: From heav'n above,

People: To earth in love!

Hymn: From Heaven Above to Earth I Come

LSB 358:5–6

Children:

“These are the signs that you shall mark:
The swaddling clothes and manger dark.
There you will find the infant laid
By whom the heav'ns and earth were made.”

Congregation:

How glad we'll be to find it so!
Then with the shepherds let us go
To see what God for us has done
In sending us His own dear Son.

A Bible Reading: Luke 2:15–20

¹⁵ When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.” ¹⁶ And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. ¹⁷ And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. ¹⁸ And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹ But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. ²⁰ And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

Hymn: Joy to the World

LSB 387:1–2

Congregation:

Joy to the world, the Lord is come.
Let earth receive her king
Let every 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.

Continued on next page

Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!
Let men their songs employ,
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

The Message Presented by the Children Grades 3–4

Children: From heav'n above,

People: To earth in love!

Hymn: From Heaven Above to Earth I Come

LSB 358:13–14

Children:

Ah, dearest Jesus, holy Child,
Prepare a bed, soft, undefiled,
A quiet chamber set apart
For You to dwell within my heart.

Congregation:

My heart for very joy must leap;
My lips no more can silence keep.
I, too, must sing with joyful tongue
That sweetest ancient cradlesong.

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

The Message Presented by All Children

Children: From heav'n above,

People: To earth in love!

Hymn: From Heaven Above to Earth I Come

LSB 358:15

Children and Congregation:

Glory to God in highest heav'n,

Who unto us His Son has giv'n!

While angels sing with pious mirth

A glad new year to all the earth.

Responsive Reading

Leader: From heaven above,

People: The angels sing.

Leader: On earth below,

People: Our praises bring.

Leader: Our Lord has come,

People: With us to dwell.

Leader: Now we go out:

People: Good News to tell!

Leader: The angels gave

Children: Good News to tell!

Leader: The shepherds ran

Children: Good News to tell!

Leader: Now we go out:

People: Good News to tell!

Prayer

Pastor: We pray:

All: Father in heaven, You sent Your Son to earth to be our Savior. You sent the angels down to tell the Good News. You sent the shepherds out to tell the Good News. And You send us now to tell the Good News. Help us share the message of Your love throughout the world. In His name we pray. Amen.

Benediction

Recessional Hymn: Go Tell It on the Mountain

LSB 388

First refrain—5 and 6 Grade bells only.

Congregation:

Refrain

Go tell it on the mountain,
Over the hills and ev'rywhere;
Go tell it on the mountain
That Jesus Christ is born!

While shepherds kept their watching
O'er silent flocks by night,
Behold, throughout the heavens
There shone a holy light. *Refrain*

The shepherds feared and trembled
When lo, above the earth
Rang out the angel chorus
That hailed our Savior's birth. *Refrain*

Down in a lonely manger
The humble Christ was born;
And God sent us salvation
That blessèd Christmas morn. *Refrain*



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