

# Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

## December 24, 2020

Choral Introit                    “Rejoice and Sing”

Opening Hymn                    “Away in a Manger”                    *LSB 365*

1        Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,  
          The little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head.  
          The stars in the [bright] sky looked down where He lay,  
          The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

2        The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,  
          But little Lord Jesus, no crying He makes.  
          I love Thee, Lord Jesus! Look down from the sky,  
          And stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.

3        Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask thee to stay  
          Close by me forever and love me, I pray.  
          Bless all the dear children in Thy tender care,  
          And take us to heaven to live with Thee there.

### Invocation

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

C:        **Amen.**

P:        O God, because You once caused this holy night to shine with the  
          brightness of the true Light, grant that we who have known the  
          mystery of that Light here on earth may come to the full measure of  
          its joys in heaven; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C:        **Amen.**

Lighting of the Advent Wreath                    “Christ be our Light”

### Choir and Congregation:

*Many the gifts, many the people, many the hearts that yearn to belong.  
Let us be servants to one another, making your kingdom come.  
Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts, Shine through the darkness.  
Christ, be our light! Shine in your Church gathered today.*

P:        Our Savior’s birth is celebrated with bold faith.

C:        **May our hearts be willing.**

P: Like Mary, who showed humble surrender:

**C: May our hearts be willing.**

P: Like Joseph, who exhibited unconditional trust:

**C: May our hearts be willing.**

P: Like the shepherds, who displayed awestruck wonder:

**C: May our hearts be willing.**

P: Like the angels who sang glorious praise:

**C: May our hearts be willing.**

P: For all who are willing to receive the gift of the Savior born in Bethlehem:

**C: Grant that we might have the peace of Christ as we wait, the love of Christ as we act, and the grace of Christ as we speak.**

P: Tonight, we light all the candles. The **first candle** is the hope shining for those worn thin by times of waiting. The **second candle** is the hope shining for those worn down with wearied souls. The **third candle** captures the hopeful expectation of those eagerly watching for God's glory in our day. The **fourth candle** is the hope of a new tomorrow shining for those seeking freedom from the wounds of this world. Tonight, we light the **Christ candle**. This candle radiates the hope of Jesus Christ to all who are willing to receive it.

**Choir and Congregation:**

*Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts, Shine through the darkness.*

*Christ, be our light! Shine in your Church gathered today.*

*Christ, be our light!*

P: Oh, sing to the Lord a new song;

**C: sing to the Lord, all the earth!**

*LSB 379*

**Oh, come, all ye faithful, Joyful and triumphant!**

**Oh, come ye, oh, come ye to Bethlehem;**

**Come and behold Him**

**Born the king of angels:**

**Oh, come, let us adore Him, Oh, come, let us adore Him,**

**Oh, 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!  
Oh, come, let us adore Him, Oh, come, let us adore Him,  
Oh, 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:  
Oh, come, let us adore Him, Oh, come, let us adore Him,  
Oh, come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!

P: Oh, sing to the Lord a new song;

C: **sing to the Lord, all the earth!**

P: O God, as You make us glad by the yearly festival of the birth of  
Your only-begotten Son Jesus Christ, grant that we, who joyfully receive  
Him as our Redeemer, may with sure confidence behold Him when He  
comes to be our judge; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**People: Amen.**

*LSB 380*

Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King;  
Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled."  
Joyful, all you nations, rise; Join the triumph of the skies;  
With angelic hosts proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"  
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

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, incarnate deity!  
Pleased as man with us to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel!  
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

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 we no more may die,  
Born to raise each child of earth, Born to give us second birth.  
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

P: Oh, sing to the Lord a new song;

**C: sing to the Lord, all the earth!**

P: O God, our Maker and Redeemer, who wonderfully created us and in the incarnation of Your Son yet more wondrously restored our human nature, grant that we may ever be alive in Him who made Himself to be like us; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**C: Amen.**

## **Bell Duet: "A Quite Christmas"**

### **Old Testament**

Isaiah 7:10-14

Again, the Lord spoke to Ahaz,

"Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven."

But Ahaz said, "I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test."

And he said, "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary men, that you weary my God also?"

Therefore, the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

**Hymn** 'Gentle Mary Laid Her Child'

LSB 374

1 **Gentle Mary laid her child**  
**Lowly in a manger;**  
**There He lay, the Undeiled,**  
**To the world a stranger.**  
**Such a babe in such a place,**  
**Can He be the Savior?**  
**Ask the saved of all the race**  
**Who have found His favor.**

2 **Angels sang about His birth,**  
**Wise Men sought and found Him;**  
**Heaven's star shone brightly forth**  
**Glory all around Him.**  
**Shepherds saw the wondrous sight,**  
**Heard the angels singing;**  
**All the plains were lit that night,**  
**All the hills were ringing.**

**3 Gentle Mary laid her child  
Lowly in a manger;  
He is still the Undeified  
But no more a stranger.  
Son of God of humble birth,  
Beautiful the story;  
Praise His name in all the earth;  
Hail the King of glory!**

Text (sts. 1–3) and Music: Public domain

### **Epistle**

I John 4:7-16

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. 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.

By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. 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.

### **Choral Anthem** “Christmas Sanctus ”

### **Gospel**

Luke 2:1-20

And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.

And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her

firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

And 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 Saviour, 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. And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

*LSB 388*

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

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

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

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

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

Pastor: Down in a lonely manger  
The humble Christ was born;  
And God sent us salvation  
That blessed Christmas morn.

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

**Sermon**

**Offering**

**Prayer for the Church**

P: Father, on this night we recall how great is Your love for us, sending Your Son into our world as a tiny child to forgive our sin.

**People: Thank You, Lord, for this Christmas gift.**

P: Jesus, on this night we recall how great is Your love for us, You gave up heaven to live on earth as one of us, one with us, to forgive our sin.

**People: Thank You, Lord, for this Christmas gift.**

P: Holy Spirit, on this night we recall how great is Your love for us, gathering us together through the waters of Baptism and nourishing us through the body and blood of Jesus for the forgiveness of our sin.

**People: Thank You, Lord, for this Christmas gift.**

*(Prayers of thanks and petitions for mercy.)*

P: Gracious God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, we commend all our cares and concerns to Your mercy, trusting to Your will and providence on behalf of all for whom we pray.

**People: Amen.**

**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**

## Lighting of the Candles

*(During the singing of the following carol, the worship assistants will come down with their candles lit from the Christ candle. Please share the light with the next person in your pew by allowing them to dip their candle into your light. Care must be taken not to tip a lit candle as it might drip wax on clothing or skin.)*

**Carol**      “Angels We Have Heard on High”      *LSB 368*

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

*Refrain:*      Gloria in excelsis Deo.  
                  Gloria in excelsis Deo.

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

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

## Benediction

Pastor:      The Lord bless you and keep you.  
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.  
The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and + give you peace.

**People:**      **Amen.**

**Carol**      Silent Night      *LSB 363*

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.