

Christmas Eve
December 24, 2020



AS WE GATHER

“In Him was life” (John 1:4). If you have ever had the opportunity to witness the birth of a child, it’s difficult to not be in awe of a new life entering the world. A newborn baby is full of life! Yet the Christ Child born that first Christmas is full of life in an even greater way. This child, the Word made flesh, is born, lives, dies, and rises to give life to the world. “In Him was life.” In Jesus is life for Mary, life for Joseph, life for the shepherds, life for those in Bethlehem, life for the Jews, life for the Gentiles, life for all, life for you. This Christmas, when you see the babe wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger, rejoice that “in Him was life”!

+ PREPARATION +

PRE-SERVICE MUSIC

3 pm - “O Come, All Ye Faithful” (arr. Line), “Nativity Medley” (arr. Purifoy), “The First Noel” & “Silent Night” (arr. Line) Piano – Marlene Rieck

5 & 7 pm - “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” (arr. Larson) & “Still, Still, Still” (arr. Davis) Flute – Becky Pflughoeft Piano – Marlene Rieck

“Ding Dong Merrily on High” & “Silent Night” Piano - Naomi Kadlec

“Christmas Joy” (arr. Raney) Flute & Piano

“Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus”, “The First Noel”, “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing” JuBELLation Choir

HYMN “O Come, All Ye Faithful” LSB 379

1 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**

Refrain O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
Christ the Lord!

2 Highest, most holy,
Light of Light eternal,
Born of a virgin, a mortal He comes;
Son of the Father
Now in flesh appearing! **Refrain**

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

INVOCATION

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

G Amen.

OPENING SENTENCES

P And the Word became flesh

- C** and dwelt among us,
- P** and we have seen His glory,
- C** glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

John 1:9–13

- P** The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, yet the world did not know Him. He came to His own, and His own people did not receive Him. As we gather together this Christmas, let us confess our sins to God our Father.
- C** **Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. 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.**
- P** But to all who did receive Him, who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. Because of the Savior who is the Word made flesh and dwelt among us, I, by virtue of my office, as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce the grace of God to all of you, and in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C** **Amen.**

+ WORD +

PRAYER OF THE DAY

- P** Let us pray. Father in heaven, You sent Your only-begotten Son as a descendent of Jesse as You fulfilled Your promise of a Messiah;
- C** **grant that we joyfully receive Him as our Savior, the Word made flesh who dwelt among us;**
- P** through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C** **Amen.**

OLD TESTAMENT READING *Isaiah 52:7-10*

- P** The Old Testament Reading for the Nativity of Our Lord is from Isaiah, the fifty-second chapter.
⁷How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who publishes peace, who brings good news of happiness, who publishes salvation, who says to Zion, “Your God reigns.” ⁸The voice of your watchmen—they lift up their voice; together they sing for joy; for eye to eye they see the return of the LORD to Zion. ⁹Break forth together into singing, you waste places of Jerusalem, for the LORD has comforted his people; he has redeemed Jerusalem. ¹⁰The LORD has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

- P** This is the Word of the Lord.
- C** **Thanks be to God.**

EPISTLE *Hebrews 1:1-6*

- P** The Epistle is from Hebrews, the first chapter.

¹Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, ²but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. ³He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds

the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, ⁴having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs. ⁵For to which of the angels did God ever say, "You are my Son, today I have begotten you"? Or again, "I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son"? ⁶And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says, "Let all God's angels worship him."

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

SOLO "O Holy Night" (Adam, arr. Lanier) Jackie Pearce

HOLY GOSPEL

John 1:1–14

P The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the first chapter.

C Glory to You, O Lord.

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. ⁴In him was life, and the life was the light of men. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. ⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. ⁸He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light. ⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. ¹⁰He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. ¹²But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. ¹⁴And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ.

HYMN "O Little Town of Bethlehem" LSB 361 v. 1, 3

- 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.
- 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.

P In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. And all went to be registered, each to his own town. And 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, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. And 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" LSB 364 v. 1

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

P And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear. And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and 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 among those with whom He is pleased!"

HYMN "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**

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? **Refrain**

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

P 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." And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

G **Praise to You, O Christ.**

HYMN "A Great and Mighty Wonder" LSB 383

1 A great and mighty wonder,
A full and holy cure:
The virgin bears the infant
With virgin honor pure! **Refrain**

Refrain Proclaim the Savior's birth:

"To God on high be glory
And peace to all the earth!"

2 The Word becomes incarnate
And yet remains on high,
And cherubim sing anthems
To shepherds from the sky. **Refrain**

3 While thus they sing your Monarch,
Those bright angelic bands,
Rejoice, O vales and mountains,
And oceans, clap your hands. **Refrain**

4 Since all He comes to ransom,
By all be He adored,
The infant born in Bethl'em,
The Savior and the Lord. **Refrain**

5 All idols then shall perish
And Satan's lying cease,
And Christ shall raise His scepter,
Decreeing endless peace. **Refrain**

SERMON "Jesus, the Firstfruit of Jesse's Tree": John 1:1-14

CREED Sung to the tune of "God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen"

P Let us confess our faith in the Lord!

We all believe in one true God, the Father of great might,
Who formed all things on earth below and in the heavens' height.
In love He promised fallen man a rescue from sin's night.
Now praise we our God, the Three-In-One, Three-In-One,
Now praise we our God, the Three-In One!

We trust in Jess Christ, His Son, the babe of Bethlehem!
He died to free us from all sin and rose to life again.
He rules at God the Fathers' side, the Lord of earth and heav'n.
Now praise we our God, the Three-In-One, Three-In-One,
Now praise we our God, the Three-In One!

We now confess the Holy Ghost, Who fills with saving grace,
Shows faith within the hearts of men that we may see God's face.
He keeps us safe within His care till heav'n that blessed place.
Now praise we our God, the Three-In-One, Three-In-One,
Now praise we our God, the Three-In One!

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

(The pastor takes the light from the Christ candle and gives it to the acolyte and ushers. They pass the light on to the congregation. Lights are dimmed.)

P Jesus Christ is the Light of the world,
C **the light no darkness can overcome.** *John 1:5*

P The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. *Isaiah 9:2*

C **The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not overcome it.** *John 1:5*

P Those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined. *Isaiah 9:2b*

C **We have seen His glory, glory of the only Son from the Father.** *John 1:14b*

P For to us a child is born, to us a Son is given. *Isaiah 9:6*

C **In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.** *John 1:4*

HYMN "Silent Night" LSB 363 (Verse 1 in German, then verse 1-3 in English)

- 1 *Stille Nacht, Heilige Nacht! Alles schlaft, einsam wacht Nur dos traute, hochhilige Paar. Holder Knabe im lockigen Haar, Schlaf in himmlischer Ruh, Schlaf in himmlischer Ruh.*
- 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! Shepherd 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.

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"Beautiful Savior" LSB 537 v. 4

- 4 Beautiful Savior, Lord of the nations, Son of God and Son of Man! Glory and honor, Praise, adoration Now and forevermore be Thine!

THE LORD'S PRAYER

BENEDICTION

John 1:14

- P** And the Word became flesh
- C** and dwelt among us,
- P** and we have seen His glory,
- C** glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth
- P** The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.
- C** Amen.

HYMN "Joy to the World" LSB 387

- 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.
- 2 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.
- 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.

POSTLUDE “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing” (arr. Denton)

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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