

## *The Nativity of our Lord*

*Light and Joy*

*December 25, 2012*

### **As We Gather**

*In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. John 1:4-5 Paul E. Kretzmann writes that, "The true revelation of the Light took place with the incarnation of the Word. Then He, the Light, the Salvation, entered into the dark world, to give all men the benefit of His glorious illumination. He and His salvation were revealed to the world that all the people in the world might see Him and His redemption." The Popular Commentary of the Bible Having seen His redemption, we know that Jesus, our Redeemer, is our joy and delight. Isaiah writes that the watchmen "lift up their voice; together they sing for joy; for . . . they see the return of the LORD to Zion." Isaiah 52:8*

*Joy to the world, the Lord is come!*

The Popular Commentary of the Bible, Paul E. Kretzmann, 1883-1965. Copyright (c) 1924 Concordia Publishing House. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

### **Welcome**

**+ Preparation +**

### **Opening Hymn**

**"Oh, Come, All Ye Children"**

*Oh, come, all ye children, O come one and all,  
To Bethlehem haste, to the manger so small;  
God's Son for a gift has been sent you this night  
To be your Redeemer, your joy and delight.*

*He's born in a stable for you and for me,  
Draw near by the bright gleaming starlight to see,  
In swaddling clothes lying, so meek and so mild,  
And purer than angels---the heavenly Child.*

*Dear Christ Child, what gifts can we children bestow,  
By which our affection and gladness to show?  
No riches and treasures of value can be,  
But hearts that believe are accepted by Thee.*

*Our hearts, then, to Thee we will offer today,  
We offer them gladly; accept them we pray,  
And make them so spotless and pure that we may  
Abide in Thy presence in heaven for aye.*

## **Invocation and Opening Sentence**

*(Please rise)*

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

**People: Amen.**

*Pastor: The light and joy of Christ be with you all.*

**People: And also with you.**

### **Confession and Absolution**

*Pastor: Jesus, the Word made flesh, you dwell among us, but how can we continually abide in your dwelling?*

**People: For we are 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.**

*Pastor: For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us.*

**People: 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: Amen.**

### **Hymn of Praise #368 "Angels We Have Heard On High"**

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

*Gloria in excelsis De - O. Gloria in excelsis De - O.*

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

*Gloria in excelsis De - O. Gloria in excelsis De - O.*

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

*Gloria in excelsis De - O. Gloria in excelsis De - O.*

**Prayer of the Day**

*Pastor: Almighty God, grant that the birth of your only-begotten Son in the flesh may set us free from the bondage of sin; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.*

**People: Amen.**

*(Be seated)*

+ **Word** +

**Old Testament** *Isaiah 52:7-10 (The Salvation of Our God) How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, “Your God reigns!” Listen! Your watchmen lift up their voices; together they shout for joy. When the LORD returns to Zion, they will see it with their own eyes. Burst into songs of joy together, you ruins of Jerusalem, for the LORD has comforted his people, he has redeemed Jerusalem. The LORD will lay bare his holy arm in the sight of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth will see the salvation of our God.*

**Epistle** *Hebrews 1:1-6 (The Supremacy of God's Son) In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe. The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven. So he became as much superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is superior to theirs. For to which of the angels did God ever say, “You are my Son; today I have become your Father? Or again, “I will be his Father, and he will be my Son”? And again, when God brings his firstborn into the world, he says, “Let all God’s angels worship him.”*

**Anthem**

“Christmas Time”

Choir

*(Rise)*

**Holy Gospel** *John 1:1-14 (In the beginning was the Word. . .) In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it. There came a man who was sent from God; his name was John. He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all men might believe. He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. The true*

*light that gives light to every man was coming into the world. He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God. The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.*

*(Be seated)*

**Sermon Hymn #387**

**“Joy to the World”**

*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.*

*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.*

*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.*

*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.*

**Sermon**

**“Born of God”**

*John 1:1-14*

*(Rise)*

**Nicene Creed** *(found on the back cover of hymnal)*

*(Be seated)*

**Offerings** *As your offering is collected, please sign our attendance book located at the end of the pew. If you are a visitor, please leave your address and phone. After you are finished, please pass the book along to others in your pew, and return the book to the center aisle.*

*(Rise)*

**Prayer of the Church**

*Pastor: Let us pray to the God and Father of Jesus, God’s only Son, born to save us from sin and death: Father in heaven, we give you thanks and praise for the birth of your Son, the Savior of the World, who was born of woman that we might be born again.*

**People:** *Grant us joy and peace through the grace and mercy He came to bring us. Free us from our sins and grant us to live according to righteousness.*

**Pastor:** *Almighty God, Father of the child born of Mary, we give you all glory, honor, and praise for the gift of Jesus. Grant us to know better that perfect love that drives away all fear. When we face things in life that cause us to fear, grant us to face those things with faith in Jesus Christ, who came to dwell among us and within us.*

**People:** *May His love enfold us in His arms, day by day, that we may be free from fear to live in peace all our days.*

**Pastor:** *Almighty God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, we acknowledge you to be the One True God and the only hope of salvation for our dying world. We pray for those who do not yet know you, here in our community and throughout the world.*

**People:** *Bless those who proclaim your word of Truth, that they may share the gospel of Christ with boldness and conviction. Bless your people with a zeal for lost souls, that many more may come to know the Babe of Bethlehem as their personal Lord and Savior.*

**Pastor:** *Father in heaven, your Son came to show compassion to those who were downcast, to lift up the humble, to bring hope to the hopeless. Bless and be with all those who are sick and afflicted, those who are grieving, those who are lonely, and those who face difficult days.*

**People:** *By the love and grace of the Christ Child, lift their spirits and bring them the hope and peace only He can give.*

**Pastor:** *Dear heavenly Father, your Son took on flesh and blood that He might bleed and die on the cross to bring us the gift of your salvation. As many of us will partake of His Holy Supper this day, where He feeds us with His body and gives us to drink of His blood, grant us to eat and drink in a worthy manner.*

**People:** *Grant us true sorrow and contrition over our sins, true repentance of them, and fill us with the joy of His salvation.*

**Pastor:** *Father in heaven, as we have come this morn to worship our newborn King, filled with awe and amazement at your precious gift of love, grant Jesus to be enthroned on each person's heart. Accept our offerings of praise and thanksgiving, our offerings of our treasures, our offerings of our very lives.*

**People:** *Accept all of our thanks, praise, and offerings, accepting them in the name and for the sake of the Child born of Mary and laid in a manger, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.*

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**Pastor:** *Into your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy through Jesus, the Christ, the Babe of Bethlehem, our Savior and our Lord.*

**People:** *Amen.*

**The Lord's Prayer**

+ **Sacrament** +

**Words of Institution**

**The Peace of the Lord**

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

**People:** *Amen.*

**Agnus Dei**

*(sung to tune #361 "O Little Town of Bethlehem")*

*Lord Jesus, holy Lamb of God, You take our sins away;*

*Lord Jesus, holy Lamb of God, You take our sins away.*

*We who are gathered here now Ask peace for all the earth;*

*Grant Christmas peace to one and all, And heav'nly joy and mirth.*

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*(Be seated)*

**Distribution** *Those guests who desire to commune who are members of another LCMS congregation may do so; if you are coming from another church background, please see the pastor or an elder first.*

**Hymn #383 "A Great and Mighty Wonder"**

*A great and mighty wonder, A full and holy cure:*

*The virgin bears the infant With virgin honor pure!*

**Refrain**

**Proclaim the Savior's birth:**

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

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

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

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

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

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**Hymn #393 "Infant Holy, Infant Lowly"**

*Infant holy, Infant lowly, For His bed a cattle stall;  
Oxen lowing, Little knowing Christ the child is Lord of all.  
Swiftly winging, Angels singing, Bells are ringing, Tidings bringing:  
Christ the child is Lord of all! Christ the child is Lord of all!*

*Flocks were sleeping, Shepherds keeping Vigil till the morning new  
Saw the glory, Heard the story, Tidings of a Gospel true.  
Thus rejoicing, Free from sorrow, Praises voicing, Greet the morrow:  
Christ the child was born for you! Christ the child was born for you!*

**Common Dismissal**

*(Rise)*

**Post-Communion Thanksgiving**

*Pastor: Gracious Lord, source of light eternal, we thank you for having fed us at  
your table once again. Strengthen us through this gracious gift that we  
may walk in your light all our days and live with you as our almighty  
King until we come to your glorious presence where we shall serve you  
forevermore. In the name of Jesus we pray.*

**People: Amen.**

**Benediction**

*Pastor: May you be filled with light and joy of the incarnate Christ child. Almighty  
God, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.*

**People: Amen.**

**Closing Hymn #380 "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"**

*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 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 the incarnate Deity!  
Pleased as Man with man to dwell, Jesus, our Immanuel! **Refrain***

*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.  
**Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"***

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