

CHRISTMAS DAY

The Life in the Light

December 25, 2017

AS WE GATHER

Christ is born in Bethlehem! O come, let us adore Him! Christmas has come. The waiting and preparations are over—today we join the whole Christian Church on earth in celebrating the birth of Jesus, born in a stable, in the little town of Bethlehem of Judea, the city of David. Even though His birth was over two thousand years ago, we continue to proclaim and rejoice, for He is the Savior of the nations. He is the light, the light that pierces the darkness of our lives and gives us life.

+ PREPARATION +

HYMN #376

“Once in Royal David’s City”

Once in royal David’s city Stood a lowly cattle shed,
Where a mother laid her baby In a manger for His bed:
Mary was that mother mild, Jesus Christ her little child.

He came down to earth from heaven, Who is God and Lord of all,
And His shelter was a stable, And His cradle was a stall;
With the poor and mean and lowly Lived on earth our Savior holy.

For He is our childhood’s pattern, Day by day like us He grew;
He was little, weak, and helpless, Tears and smiles like us He knew;
And He feels for all our sadness, And He shares in all our gladness.

And our eyes at last shall see Him, Through His own redeeming love;
For that child so dear and gentle Is our Lord in heav’n above;
And He leads His children on To the place where He is gone.

Not in that poor, lowly stable With the oxen standing by
Shall we see Him, but in heaven, Set at God’s right hand on high.
Then like stars His children, crowned, All in white, His praise will sound!

(Rise)

INVOCATION & OPENING SENTENCES

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

People: Amen.

Pastor: Joy to the world!

People: The Lord is come!

Pastor: Christ is born in Bethlehem.

People: O come, let us adore Him.

Pastor: The light of the world has come.

People: He shines in our darkness.

Pastor: In the light is life,

People: the life of all people.

Pastor: Joy to the world!

People: The Lord is come!

CONFESSION & ABSOLUTION

Pastor: As we gather together to worship Jesus and remember His wondrous incarnation, we remember that we were once lost in darkness and do not deserve the wondrous gift of the Savior God has sent us.

People: We have often chosen darkness over light. We have often failed to adore our Lord and Savior. We have often refused to reflect His light to those around us.

Pastor: We turn to God in repentance and implore Him for mercy. Lord, you have loved righteousness and hated wickedness.

People Let your light shine in our darkness.

Pastor: In many and various ways, God spoke to His people of old by the prophets. But now in these last days, He has spoken to us by His Son. Jesus Christ has brought the good news of peace, joy, and salvation into our world. That good news is the forgiveness of sins, salvation, and everlasting life in the light of Christ. These are yours because of Christ’s death and resurrection for you. Hear that good news: 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. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

HYMN OF PRAISE #368 “Angels We Have Heard on High”

Angels we have heard on high, Sweetly singing o’er the plains,
And 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.

SALUTATION & PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Let us pray. 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 READING *Isaiah 52:7–10* (All the ends of the earth will sing for joy as they see the good news of salvation.) How 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.” The 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. Break forth together into singing, you waste places of Jerusalem, for the LORD has comforted his people; he has redeemed Jerusalem. The 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.

CHOIR ANTHEM

“Messiah’s Lullaby”

EPISTLE *Hebrews 1:1–12* (God speaks to us through Jesus: the heir of all things, the radiance of the glory of God, and the imprint of His nature.) Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but 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. He 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, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs. For 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”? And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says, “Let all God’s angels worship him.” Of the angels he says, “He makes his angels winds, and his ministers a flame of fire.” But of the Son he says, “Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, the scepter of uprightness is the scepter of your kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions.” And, “You, Lord, laid the foundation of the earth in the beginning, and the heavens are the work of your hands; they will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like a garment, like a robe you will roll them up, like a garment they will be changed. But you are the same, and your years will have no end.”

CHOIR ANTHEM

“Glory to God in the Highest”

(Rise)

HOLY GOSPEL *John 1:1–18* (Jesus Christ, the light for all people, shines in our darkness.) In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. 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. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light. The true light, which gives light to 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. 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. And 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. (John bore witness about him, and cried out, “This was he of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me ranks before me, because he was before me.’”) For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father’s side, he has made him known.

(Be seated)

SERMON HYMN #370 **“What Child Is This?”**

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!

SERMON **“Truth in the Flesh”**

(Rise)

NICENE CREED

(Be seated)

OFFERING 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. You may check the register to see the names of those to greet after the service.

(Rise)

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Pastor: Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus and all people according to their needs. Lord Jesus Christ, you are the light of the world. Yet this world is still contaminated with darkness, sin, and evil. Deliver us from darkness by shining the light of your love to every corner of the world. Light of the world,

People: shine in our darkness.

Pastor: Lord, you are life for all people, both in this world and the next. Comfort those nearing the end of life with the hope of the resurrection from the dead, that they may face the enemy of death knowing that death has been defeated and will not have the final word. Light of the world,

People: shine in our darkness.

Pastor: Lord, death has temporarily claimed many of our friends and family members. During this Christmas season, it can be difficult to celebrate while there is an empty seat around our tables. Send hope to those who remember loved ones already in heaven with you, especially Jan as she remembers Bob. Light of the world,

People: shine in our darkness.

Pastor: Lord, you have given us grace upon grace, but we still struggle with disappointments in this world. Sing your grace into the lives of those who are struggling with stress and anxiety, unemployment and homelessness, infertility and miscarriage. Light of the world,

People: shine in our darkness.

Pastor: Lord, your Word declares the feet of those who bring good news to be beautiful. Raise up missionaries, pastors, teachers, and other ministers and leaders in your Church, so that the good news of salvation may be spread to all nations. Light of the world,

People: shine in our darkness.

Pastor: Lord, when you dwelt among us, you healed many who were weak and sick. We ask for healing for all those in our midst who are sick or recovering. Cheer their hearts and heal their bodies according to your perfect will. Light of the world,

People: shine in our darkness.

Pastor: Lord, you came to us as the ultimate gift of love at your incarnation. We rejoice today at your lavish love. We also join in rejoicing with those celebrating birthdays, anniversaries, and other special occasions. Light of the world,

People: shine in our darkness.

Pastor: Finally, Lord, as you are full of grace and truth, fill your Church with grace and truth so we may live according to your will and share your Gospel of forgiveness, life, and salvation with the world. Light of the world,

People: shine in our darkness. Amen.

+ SACRAMENT +

PREFACE

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them to the Lord.

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

People: 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; for in the mystery of the Word made flesh you have given us a new revelation of your glory that, seeing you in the person of your Son, we may know and love those things which are not seen. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify your glorious name, evermore praising you and saying:

SANCTUS (to the tune *Angels We Have Heard on High—LSB368*)
Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of hosts almighty,
Heav'n and all the earth are full
Of Your might and majesty.
Ho.....ly Lord, You alone are holy.
Ho.....ly Lord, ever-blessed Trinity.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

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."

PAX DOMINI

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

People: Amen.

AGNUS DEI (Tune=LSB359, "Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming")
O Lamb of God, our Savior, Our sins You take away.
O Lamb of God, our Savior, Our sins You take away.
Have mercy, Lord, we pray,
And grant us peace from heaven,
Grant peace to all we pray.

(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 #358 "From Heaven Above to Earth I Come" Stanzas 8-15

Welcome to earth, O noble Guest, Through whom the sinful world is blest!
You came to share my misery That You might share Your joy with me.

Ah, Lord, though You created all, How weak You are, so poor and small,
That You should choose to lay Your head Where lowly cattle lately fed!

Were earth a thousand times as fair And set with gold and jewels rare,
It would be far too poor and small A cradle for the Lord of all.

Instead of soft and silken stuff You have but hay and straw so rough
On which as King, so rich and great, To be enthroned in royal state.

And so it pleases You to see This simple truth revealed to me:
That worldly honor, wealth, and might Are weak and worthless in Your sight.

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

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:

Glory to God in highest heav'n, Who unto us His Son had giv'n!
While angels sing with pious mirth A glad new year to all the earth.

HYMN #359 “Lo, How a Rose E’er Blooming”

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.

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

This flow’r, whose fragrance tender With sweetness fills the air,
Dispels with glorious splendor The darkness ev’ry-where.
True man, yet very God, From sin and death He saves us
And lightens ev’ry load.

O Savior, child of Mary, Who felt our human woe;
O Savior, King of glory, Who dost our weakness know:
Bring us at length we pray To the bright courts of heaven,
And to the endless day.

COMMON DISMISSAL

(Rise)

POST-COMMUNION CANTICLE (Tune=“God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen”)

Lord, let Your servant go in peace. Your promise now fulfilled.
My eyes see Your salvation, Which for the world You willed.
The glory of Your chosen race, For all a light revealed.

**Refrain: Oh, tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy.
Oh, tidings of comfort and joy.**

Oh, thank the Lord and sing His praise, His gracious work proclaim!
His body giv’n, His blood received According to His name.
Our sins now washed away by grace He’s taken all our blame. **Refrain**

Oh, praise to God the Father, And praise to God the Son,
And praise to God the Spirit, Most blessed Three in One,
As ages past, so still today, Shall be for time to come. **Refrain**

Text: Rev. Keith L. Besel, ©2002; based on Luke 2:29-32.

POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING

Pastor: O God the Father, the fountain and source of all goodness, who in loving-kindness sent your only-begotten Son into the flesh, we thank you that for His sake you have given us pardon and peace in this Sacrament, and we ask you not to forsake your children but always to rule our hearts and minds by your Holy Spirit that we may be enabled constantly to serve you; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

BENEDICTION

Pastor: 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.

People: Amen.

CLOSING HYMN #373 “See Amid the Winter’s Snow”

See amid the winter’s snow, Born for us on earth below,
See, the gentle Lamb appears, Promised from eternal years.

**Refrain: Hail, O ever-blessed morn! Hail, redemption’s happy dawn!
Sing through all Jerusalem: “Christ is born in Bethlehem!”**

Lo, within a stable lies He who built the starry skies,
He who, throned in height sublime, Sits amid the cherubim. **Refrain**

Sacred Infant, all divine, What a tender love was Thine,
Thus to come from highest bliss Down to such a world as this! **Refrain**

Teach, O teach us, holy Child, By Thy face so meek and mild,
Teach us to resemble Thee In Thy sweet humility. **Refrain**

Preacher

Pastor Harold Bender

Liturgist

Pastor Gregg Stanton

Lector

Dan Vaclav

Organist

Michelle Prince

Choir Director

Nancy Hoelke

*Bulletin Sponsor: Jan Koehn in loving memory of Bob, husband, father,
grandpa & papa on his birthday.*