

CHRISTMAS DAY

Stir Up the Power of Promises Kept

December 25, 2015

AS WE GATHER

“Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah” (Jeremiah 33:14). The birth of Jesus is a day of promise fulfilled. In Jesus’ name, which means “God saves,” we are given confidence to live faithfully because our salvation comes not from ourselves but is the gift of God in Christ. Jesus’ birth give us confidence to live by faith, because it shows us how God kept the promise to send a Savior; God keeps His promises. Jesus’ title, Immanuel, also gives us confidence to live by faith, because it means “God with us.” Jesus has promised to be with us to the end of the age.

✠ PREPARATION ✠

OPENING HYMN #367 “Angels from the Realms of Glory”

Angels from the realms of glory, Wing your flight o’er all the earth;
Ye who sang creation’s story, Now proclaim Messiah’s birth.

Refrain **Come and worship, come and worship;
Worship Christ, the newborn King.**

Shepherds in the field abiding, Watching o’er your flocks by night,
God with us is now residing, Yonder shines the Infant Light. **Refrain**

Sages, leave your contemplations, Brighter visions beam afar;
Seek the great Desire of nations, Ye have seen His natal star. **Refrain**

Saints before the altar bending, Watching long in hope and fear,
Suddenly the Lord, descending, In His temple shall appear. **Refrain**

All creation, join in praising God the Father, Spirit, Son,
Evermore your voices raising To the eternal Three in One. **Refrain**

(Rise)

INVOCATION

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

People: Amen.

OPENING SENTENCES

Pastor: Worship Christ the newborn King! His name is Jesus.

People: He comes to save us from our sins.

Pastor: His title is Immanuel.

People: He is God with us.

Pastor: Today we rejoice!

People: For God has kept His precious promise to us.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Pastor: Amid our Christmas joy, let us confess our sins.

People: Mighty God, on this day of celebration, we confess our sin to you. We are by nature sinful. Without your help, we are powerless to overcome it. We confess our impatience with you and with others, our seeking after worldly passions, and our self-indulgent ways of life. By our sin, we have hurt others, ourselves, and you. We plead with you to forgive our sins for the sake of Christ and to transform our broken lives.

Pastor: In Jesus, God kept His promise to save us from our sins. In Jesus, God is present with us even to the end of the age. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

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 Beth’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**

SALUTATION

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: Let us pray. Almighty God, you sent your Son to be born into this world as a flesh-and-blood human being, so that we are now saved from the eternal consequence of sin through His cross. Help us to receive this amazing gift with gratitude, that our lives may be shaped by the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, who, with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, live and reign forever and ever.

People: Amen.

(Be seated)

✂ WORD ✂

OLD TESTAMENT READING *Jeremiah 33:14–16* (God's promise will be fulfilled in a "righteous branch.") " 'The days are coming,' declares the LORD, 'when I will fulfill the gracious promise I made to the house of Israel and to the house of Judah. " 'In those days and at that time I will make a righteous Branch sprout from David's line; he will do what is just and right in the land. In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. This is the name by which it will be called: The LORD Our Righteousness.'

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

GRADUAL *Isaiah 9:6; Psalm 98:1a*

Pastor: To us a child is born,

People: to us a son is given;

Pastor: and the government shall be upon His shoulder.

People: And His name shall be called

Pastor: Wonderful Counselor,

People: Mighty God,

Pastor: Everlasting Father,

People: Prince of Peace.

Pastor: Sing to the Lord a new song,

People: for He has done marvelous things!

EPISTLE *2 Peter 1:1–7* (That through God's precious promises, we will become partakers of His divine nature.) Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who through the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ have received a faith as precious as ours: Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires. For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

ANTHEM

"Christmas Hymn" Amy Grant & Michael W. Smith

St. Paul's Choir

VERSE *John 1:14*

Pastor: Alleluia!

People: The Word became flesh and dwelt among us,

Pastor: and we have seen His glory,

People: glory as of the only Son from the Father,

Pastor: full of grace and truth.

People: Alleluia!

(Rise)

HOLY GOSPEL *Matthew 1:18–25* (God's promise fulfilled)

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the first chapter.

People: Glory to you, O Lord.

This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. Because Joseph her husband was a righteous man and did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly. But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: "The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel"-- which means, "God with us." When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. But he had no union with her until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to you, O Christ.

(Be seated)

HYMN OF THE DAY #384 "Of the Father's Love Begotten"

Of the Father's love begotten Ere the worlds began to be,
He is Alpha and Omega, He the source, the ending He,
Of the things that are, that have been,
And that future years shall see Evermore and evermore.

Oh, that birth forever blessed, When the virgin, full of grace,
By the Holy Ghost conceiving, Bore the Savior of our race,
And the babe, the world's Redeemer,
First revealed His sacred face Evermore and evermore.

This is He whom seers in old time Chanted of with one accord,
Whom the voices of the prophets Promised in their faithful word.
Now He shines, the long expected;
Let creation praise its Lord Evermore and evermore.

O ye heights of heav'n adore Him; Angel hosts, His praises sing.
Pow'rs, dominions, bow before Him And extol our God and King.
Let no tongue on earth be silent,
Ev'ry voice in concert ring Evermore and evermore.

Christ, to Thee, with God the Father, And, O Holy Ghost, to Thee
Hymn and chant and high thanksgiving And unending praises be,
Honor, glory, and dominion,
And eternal victory Evermore and evermore. Amen.

SERMON *"Conceived and Born of God's Promise"* Matthew 1:18-25

(Rise)
NICENE CREED *(found on the inside back cover of the hymnal)*
(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.

ANTHEM DURING OFFERING *"Christmas Gloria"* Susan & Lee Dengler St. Paul's Choir

(Rise)
PRAYER OF THE CHURCH
After each petition:

Pastor: Hear us, Lord,
People: as we rejoice in your promises kept.

THE LORD'S PRAYER
✠ 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 meet, 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 long ago you made great and precious promises and you fulfilled them in sending your only-begotten Son to be born into this world, so that the whole world may now see your love. 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 **"Holy, Holy, Holy"** Page 161
Holy, holy, holy Lord God of pow'r and might: Heaven and earth are full of Your glory,
Hosanna, Hosanna, Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING
Pastor: Blessed are you, Lord of heaven and earth, for you have had mercy on those whom you created and sent your only-begotten Son into our flesh to bear our sin and be our Savior. With repentant joy we receive the salvation accomplished for us by the all-availing sacrifice of His body and His blood on the cross. Gathered in the name and the remembrance of Jesus, we beg you, O Lord, to forgive, renew, and strengthen us with your Word and Spirit. Grant us faithfully to eat His body and drink His blood as He bids us do in His own testament. Gather us together, we pray, from the ends of the earth to celebrate with all the faithful the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom, which has no end. Graciously receive our prayers; deliver and preserve us. To you alone, O Father, be all glory, honor, and worship, with the Son and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

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."

THE PEACE OF THE LORD
Pastor: The peace of the Lord be with you always.
People: Amen.

AGNUS DEI **"Lamb of God"** Page 163
Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; grant us peace.

(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 #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!

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!

HYMN #396 “Arise and Shine in Splendor”

Arise and shine in splendor; Let night today surrender.
Your light is drawing near. Above, the day is beaming,
In matchless beauty gleaming; The glory of the Lord is here.

See earth in darkness lying, The heathen nations dying
In hopeless gloom and night. To you the Lord of heaven –
Your life, your hope – has given Great glory, honor, and delight.

The world's remotest races, Upon whose weary faces
The sun looks from the sky, Shall run with zeal untiring,
With joy Your light desiring That breaks upon them from on high.

Lift up your eyes in wonder – See, nations gather yonder
From sin to be set free. The world has heard Your story;
Her sons come to Your glory; Her daughters haste Your light to see.

Your heart will leap for gladness When from the realms of sadness
They come from near and far. Your eyes will wake from slumber
As people without number Rejoice to see the Morning Star.

COMMON DISMISSAL

(Rise)

POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING

Pastor: Loving Father, you gave us the greatest gift ever given in the birth of your Son. Having received the body and blood of Christ, help us to live in gratitude for your amazing gift and to be people who bring the Good News of Jesus to the people in our lives; through your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

BENEDICTION

Pastor: The Word became flesh and dwelt among us,
People: and we have seen His glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

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.

HYMN #388 “Go Tell It on the Mountain”

**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 blessed Christmas morn. **Refrain**

Preacher	Pastor Harold Bender
Liturgist	Pastor Gregg Stanton
Lector	Marty Osell
Acolyte	Aidyn Roska
Choir Director	Nancy Hoelke
Organist	Roger Gottschalk
Music Coordinator	Kim Woller

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