

Christmas Eve
11:00pm
Jesus Is the Root of Jesse
December 24, 2013

AS WE GATHER

Christmas is about an infant. He is called the Seed, the Lamb, the Alpha and Omega, the Vine, the Stem, the Branch, the Root of Jesse. Tonight, we rejoice in the family tree of Jesus. Of course, He—like us—is the offspring of Adam, the first man. Then we are offspring of Noah. The promise of a savior came, first, immediately to Adam and Eve. But the promise started to “take on flesh” in the promise to Abraham. The biblical genealogy of Jesus reaches a high moment in the appearance of the great King David. Jesus would be born “of the house and lineage of David.” Interestingly, however, the Bible also highlights David’s father, Jesse. Just like the Christmas story it seems to begin so quietly and normal. Yet the shoot or branch that comes from Jesse, Jesus, brings extraordinary joy, pleasure, love, and life to all who believe in Him. O come, Emmanuel.

+ PREPARATION +

OPENING HYMN #386 **“Now Sing We, Now Rejoice”**

Now sing we, now rejoice, Now raise to heav’n our voice;
He from whom joy streameth Poor in a manger lies;
Not so brightly beameth The sun in yonder skies.
Thou my Savior art! Thou my Savior art!

Come from on high to me; I cannot rise to Thee.
Cheer my wearied spirit, O pure and holy Child;
Through Thy grace and merit, Blest Jesus, Lord most mild,
Draw me unto Thee! Draw me unto Thee!

Now through His Son doth shine The Father’s grace divine.
Death was reigning o’er us Through sin and vanity
Till He opened for us A bright eternity.
May we praise Him there! May we praise Him there!

Oh, where shall joy be found? Where but on heav’nly ground?
Where the angels singing With all His saints unite,
Sweetest praises bringing In heav’nly joy and light.
Oh, that we were there! Oh, that we were there!

(Rise)

INVOCATION

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

People: Amen.

OPENING SENTENCES

Pastor: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,

People: and they shall call His name Immanuel.

Pastor: In this the love of God was made manifest among us,

People: that God sent His only Son into the world, so that we might live through Him.

CONFESSION and ABSOLUTION

Pastor: Let us prepare our hearts to welcome the infant Savior with faith in true repentance. I confess to almighty God,

People: that I have sinned and so have tried to live without you as if I didn’t need you. However, in the radiance of your love, dear Father, you have shown me my true need. For the sake of your only-begotten Son, Jesus, the incarnate Word, grant me the forgiveness that He gained for the whole world in His holy birth, life, suffering, death, and glorious resurrection.

Pastor: Come, Thou long-expected Jesus, Born to set Thy people free;

People: From our fears and sins release us; Let us find our rest in Thee.

Pastor: I declare 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.

People: Amen.

HYMN OF PRAISE #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. *Refrain*

SALUTATION & PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Almighty God, you have revealed your love in sending your only-begotten Son into our flesh: the royal Son of the house and lineage of David and the root of His father Jesse. Grant us the joy this night of the gift of your Son and the faith to receive Him in our heart and life, that your love may shine through our hearts renewed by faith to all the world; 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)

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+ **WORD** +

OLD TESTAMENT *Isaiah 11:1-10*

A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit. The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him— he Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD— and he will delight in the fear of the LORD. He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes, or decide by what he hears with his ears; but with righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth. He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth; with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked. Righteousness will be his belt and faithfulness the sash around his waist. The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them. The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox. The infant will play near the hole of the cobra, and the young child put his hand into the viper's nest. They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples; the nations will rally to him, and his place of rest will be glorious.

SOLO *"Once in Royal David's City"*

EPISTLE *1 John 4:7–16 (God is love)*

Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us. We know that we live 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. If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in him and he in God. And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him.

SOLO *"Jesu Bambino"*

(Rise)

HOLY GOSPEL *Matthew 1:18–25 (The birth of Jesus Christ)*

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

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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.

(Be seated)

SERMON HYMN #364 *"Away in a Manger"*

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.

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.

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.

SERMON *"God With Us"* *Matthew 1:18–25*

(Rise)

THE APOSTLES' CREED *(found on the inside back cover of the hymnal)*

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

After each prayer petition:

Pastor: . . . let us pray to the Lord:

People: Lord, have mercy.

At the conclusion of the prayers:

Pastor: . . . one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

(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.*

+ **SACRAMENT** +

(Rise)

PREFACE

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them to the Lord.

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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: the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star who took on our flesh to reveal your love in the offering of Himself on the cross. 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 HYMN #367 “Angels from the Realms of Glory” Stanzas 1 & 5

*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.

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

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.”

PROCLAMATION OF CHRIST

Pastor: As often as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the Lord’s death until He comes.

People: Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

THE LORD’S PRAYER

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 #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.

HYMN #366 “It Came Upon the Midnight Clear”

It came upon the midnight clear, That glorious song of old,
From angels bending near the earth To touch their harps of gold:
“Peace on the earth, good-will to all, From heav’n’s all gracious king.”
The world in solemn stillness lay To hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come With peaceful wings unfurled,
And still their heav’nly music floats O’er all the weary world.
Above its sad and lowly plains They bend on hov’ring wing,
And ever o’er its babel sounds The blessed angels sing.

All you, beneath your heavy load, By care and guilt bent low,
Who toil along a dreary way With painful steps and slow:
Look up, for golden is the hour, Come swiftly on the wing,
The Prince was born to bring you peace; Of Him the angels sing.

For lo, the days have come to pass By prophets seen of old,
When down into the circling years Came Christ as was foretold.
His word of peace shall to the earth God’s ancient promise bring,
And all who take this gift will hear The song the angels sing.

COMMON DISMISSAL

(Rise)

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Pastor: Let us pray. We thank you for the Light of salvation born this night in our world. Grant that by the Lord’s body and blood that light may be born in our hearts growing and blossoming into eternal life; 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: May the sign of Immanuel draw you ever closer to the God of love.

People: Amen.

Pastor: May the Root of Jesse bring you endless joy.

People: Amen.

Pastor: May God's great love for you be reflected in our love for one another.

People: Amen.

Pastor: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

People: Amen.

CANDLE LIGHTING CEREMONY

(Please keep lit candles upright and dip unlit candles into the flame of lighted candles.

Please do not let children 10 and under help light candles; they may share a candle with a parent.)

THE SPREADING OF THE LIGHT – DEVOTIONAL THOUGHTS

CLOSING 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.

Preacher & Liturgist

Pastor Gregg Stanton

Lector

Grant Gundersen

Acolyte

Sydney Kadolph

Organist

Roger Gottschalk

Soloist

Pastor Emeritus Thomas Hinz

Music Coordinator

Kim Woller

Bulletin Sponsor: *Judy Bergstrom for blessings received.*