

NATIVITY OF OUR LORD

God Come to Earth

December 24, 2013

4:00 & 6:00

AS WE GATHER

There are few nights which can rival Christmas Eve—the familiar carols, the sparkling lights of the tree, the family gatherings, and the precious story all combine to fill us with special joy and peace. This night has become so identified with Christianity that a whole world pauses to celebrate. The only problem is that we easily forget what we are celebrating. The celebration becomes the focus instead of the good news of God come to earth in the flesh and blood of our humanity to redeem us sinners from our sin and death and to lead us home to our Father in heaven. Tonight, let us pause to read, sing, and give honest reflection to what makes this night different from all the rest!

PRE-SERVICE MUSIC

4:00

“Prince of Peace” “Joy to the World”

Bell Choir

WELCOME

+ PREPARATION +

OPENING 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.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674-1748, alt. Public domain. Tune: ANTIOCH, George Frederic Handel, 1685-1759 CCLI License #1443048

(Rise)

INVOCATION and OPENING PRAYER

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

People: Amen.

Pastor: Heavenly Father, with joy we enter into the contemplation of the holy mystery of your Son’s incarnation for us and our salvation. Open our minds to understand, our hearts to believe, and our mouths to proclaim the glory of Him who took our human flesh and

blood through the blessed virgin in order to suffer and die in our place. Prepare our hearts to be fitting managers to cradle your Son that He may dwell in us and we in Him today and throughout all eternity; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

CONFESSION and ABSOLUTION

Pastor: Let us confess our sins to God our Father.

People: Merciful Father, we admit and confess our sinfulness. We have done the evil you forbid and have not done the good you desire. We do repent and are truly sorry for these our sins. Have mercy on us for the sake of Jesus Christ, who paid for our sin with His own life on the cross. Forgive us for our past and grant us your Holy Spirit that we may serve you in holiness and righteousness from this moment on. Set our feet upon the way of Christ that we do not depart from it but be found faithful when He comes again in His glory.

Pastor: Upon this your confession, I, by virtue of my office as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce the grace of God unto all of you, and in the stead and by the command of our 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.

(Be seated)

6:00 SOLO

“Once in Royal David’s City”

INTROIT PSALM *Psalm 96*

Pastor Stanton: Oh sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth!

Pastor Bender: Sing to the LORD, bless His name; tell of His salvation from day to day.

Women: Declare His glory among the nations, His marvelous works among all the peoples!

Men: For great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; He is to be feared above all gods. For all the gods of the peoples are worthless idols, but the LORD made the heavens.

Pastor Bender: Splendor and majesty are before Him; strength and beauty are in His sanctuary.

Women: Ascribe to the LORD, O families of the peoples, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength!

Men: Ascribe to the LORD the glory due His name; bring an offering, and come into His courts!

Pastor Stanton: Worship the LORD in the splendor of holiness; tremble before Him, all the earth.

Pastor Bender: Say among the nations, “The LORD reigns! Yes, the world is established; it shall never be moved; He will judge the peoples with equity.”

Women: Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; let the sea roar, and all that fills it; let the field exult, and everything in it!

Men: Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy before the LORD, for He comes, for He comes to judge the earth.

Pastor Bender: He will judge the world in righteousness, and the peoples in His faithfulness.

All: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now and will be forever. Amen.

FESTIVE GLORIA

“Angels from the Realms of Glory” (LSB #367 Stanzas 1-2)

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*

(Interlude)

“Angels We Have Heard on High” (LSB #368 Stanzas 1 & 3)

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

Refrain: Gloria in excelsis Deo. Gloria in excelsis Deo.

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

(Interlude)

“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing” (LSB #380 Stanzas 1-3)

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!”

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*

(Interlude)

(The congregation stands.)

“Angels from the Realms of Glory” (LSB #367 Stanza 5)

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

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

Text: James Montgomery, 1771-1854, public domain CCLI License #1443048

Text: French, tr. *The Crown of Jesus, Part 2*, London 1862, alt. Public domain Tune: GLORIA, French, public domain CCLI License #1443048 Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-88, alt. Public domain CCLI License #1443048

Text: Salisbury Hymn Book, Salisbury, 1857, alt, public domain CCLI License #1443048

SALUTATION and COLLECT

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Let us pray. O God, because you once caused this holy night to shine with the brightness of the true Light, grant that we who have known the mystery of that Light on earth may come to the full measure of its joys in heaven; through Jesus Christ, 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 9:2–7 (*The prophet proclaims the birth of Him who sits on David’s throne and who will be known as the Prince of Peace.*)

The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned. You have enlarged the nation and increased their joy; they rejoice before you as people rejoice at the harvest, as men rejoice when dividing the plunder. For as in the day of Midian’s defeat, you have shattered the yoke that burdens them, the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor. Every warrior’s boot used in battle and every garment rolled in blood will be destined for burning, will be fuel for the fire. For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David’s throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.

4:00 ANTHEM

“A Little Child of Love” Price/Besig

Choir

6:00 RESPONSE HYMN #366 “It Came Upon the Midnight Clear”

Stanzas 1 & 2

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, goodwill 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.

Text: Edmund H. Sears, 1810–76, alt. Public domain. Tune: CAROL, Richard S. Willis, 1819–1900 CCLI License#1443048

EPISTLE Titus 2:11–14 (*The grace of God that has appeared for the salvation of all people.*)

For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope—the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.

6:00 RESPONSE HYMN #366 “It Came Upon the Midnight Clear”

Stanzas 3 & 4

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.

Text: Edmund H. Sears, 1810–76, alt. Public domain. Tune: CAROL, Richard S. Willis, 1819–1900 CCLI License #1443048

(Rise)

HOLY GOSPEL Luke 2:1-20 (*The birth of our Lord Jesus Christ.*)

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the second chapter.

People: Glory to you, O Lord.

(The Gospel is read.)

In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) And everyone went to his own town to register. So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.” Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests.” When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.” So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to you, O Christ.

(Be seated)

SERMON HYMN #379 “O Come, All Ye Faithful”

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: O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!*

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

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

Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, Born this happy morning; Jesus, To Thee be glory giv’n!
Word of the Father Now in flesh appearing! *Refrain*

Text: John F. Wade, 1711-86, alt, Public domain Tune: ADESTE FIDELES, John F. Wade, 1711-86 CCLIC License #1443048

SERMON

“The Birth That Brings Us Together”

Luke 2:1-20

(Rise)

NICENE CREED (*found on the inside cover of the 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.

4:00 BELL ANTHEM DURING OFFERING *“Bright and Glorious Is the Sky”*

(Rise)

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.

THE LORD’S PRAYER

4:00 ANTHEM

“Still, Still, Still” Kenneth T. Kosche

Choir

4:00 BENEDICTION

Pastor: The Almighty and merciful God, the Father, the + Son and the Holy Spirit bless you
now and forever.

People: Amen! Glory to God in the Highest! And peace to His people on earth!

6:00 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 #363 “Silent Night”

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.

Silent night, holy night! Shepherds quake at the sight; Glories stream from heaven afar,
Heavenly hosts sing, Alleluia! Christ, the Savior, is born! Christ, the Savior is born!

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.

Text: Franz Joseph Mohr, 1792-1848, alt. Public domain Tune: STILLE NACHT, Franz Xaver Gruber, 1787-1863 CCLI License #1443048

(Please extinguish candles)

Preacher	Pastor Harold Bender
Liturgist	Pastor Gregg Stanton
Lectors	Bob Reynolds, Jim Adams
Acolytes	Abigail Fellenbaum,
Organist	Roger Gottschalk
Music Coordinator	Kim Woller
Bell Choir Director	Jan Schneider
Choir Director	Nancy Hoelke
Soloist	Bev Baumgart
Instrumentalists	Joel Conrad, Rindee Mowery, Gina Osell

Bulletin Sponsor: Judy Bergstrom for blessings received.