

CHRISTMAS EVE
Stir Up the Power of Joy
December 24, 2015
4:00 pm & 6:00 pm

AS WE GATHER

The angels brought good news of great joy to the shepherds. The Savior is born! We have heard the truth of Christ's birth so many times that we sometimes forget how astounding it is. On Christmas Eve we celebrate the source of our Christian faith—God Himself comes to us to save us by grace. And He comes not as a king or a hero. He comes as a fragile, human baby—as one of us. All other religions see God as a more distant being who shows you how you might achieve salvation, but only if you are good enough, smart enough, or do enough. Tonight, we rejoice in the Good News that God Himself comes to us as one of us. He comes not so that we can save ourselves, but to save us by grace through faith in the one named Jesus, Immanuel, the Prince of Peace.

✠ PREPARATION ✠

4:00 PRELUDE *"Gloria"* arr. Doug Wagner *Bell Choir*

OPENING 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

(Rise)

INVOCATION

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

People: Amen.

OPENING SENTENCES *Isaiah 9:6*

Pastor: Joy to the world!

People: For to us a child is born,

Pastor: to us a son is given;

People: and the government shall be upon His shoulder,

Pastor: and His name shall be called

Women: Wonderful Counselor,

Men: Mighty God,

Children: Everlasting Father,

People: Prince of Peace.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION *Isaiah 9:2*

Pastor: In 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: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light, and the light shines on them. The grace of God has appeared through the birth of our Savior Jesus Christ, bringing salvation to all people. I, a called and ordained servant of Christ, by His authority, forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

INTROIT *Psalms 2:1-2, 4-6; antiphon: Liturgical Text*

Pastor: When all was still, and it was midnight, your almighty Word, O Lord, descended from the royal throne.

People: Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain?

Pastor: The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD and against His anointed.

People: He who sits in the heavens laughs; the Lord holds them in derision.

Pastor: Then He will speak to them in His wrath, and terrify them in His fury, saying,

People: "As for Me, I have set My King on Zion, My holy hill."

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.

Pastor: When all was still, and it was midnight, your almighty Word, O Lord, descended from the royal throne.

HYMN OF PRAISE #358 “From Heaven Above to Earth I Come” Stanzas 1, 2, 8, 15

“From heav’n above to earth I come To bear good news to ev’ry home;
Glad tidings of great joy I bring, Where-of I now will say and sing.

“To you this night is born a child Of Mary, chosen virgin mild;
This little child of lowly birth Shall be the joy of all the earth.

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.

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

SALUTATION

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: Let us pray. God our Father, on this night you sent your Son into our broken world as a vulnerable infant. Angels glorified you and shepherds rejoiced in your coming. Draw us together to rejoice tonight in the salvation you graciously offer us through a child born in a manger. Bring us like the angels to sing your glory, like the shepherds to rejoice, and like Mary to keep on pondering the wonder of it all; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

(Be seated)

4:00 CHOIR ANTHEM “*Little Child of Love*” Nancy Price & Don Besig *Choir*

✘ **WORD** ✘

OLD TESTAMENT READING *Isaiah 9:2–7* (“For to us a child is born.”)

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.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

4:00 ANTHEM/6:00 SOLO “*Rose of Bethlehem*” arr. John Carter

Choir

There's a Rose in Bethlehem with a beauty quite divine, perfect in this world of sin on this silent holy night. There's a fragrance much like hope that it sends upon the wind, reaching out to ev'ry soul, from a lowly manger's crib. Oh, Rose of Bethlehem, how lovely, pure and sweet, born to glorify the Father, born to wear the thorns for me. There's a Rose in Bethlehem colored red like mercy's blood. 'Tis the flower of our faith; 'tis the blossom of God's love. Though its bloom is fresh with youth, surely what will be He knows, for a tear of morning dew is rolling down the Rose. Oh, Rose of Bethlehem, how lovely, pure and sweet, born to glorify the Father, born to wear the thorns for me. Oh, Rose of Bethlehem, how lovely, pure and sweet, born to glorify the Father, born to wear the throne for me.

EPISTLE *Titus 2:11–14* (A people zealous for good works)

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.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

VERSE *Luke 2:11*

Pastor: Alleluia!

People: Alleluia!

Pastor: For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior,

People: who is Christ the Lord.

All: Alleluia!

(Rise)

HOLY GOSPEL *Luke 2:1–20* (The birth of Jesus)

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

People: Glory to you, O Lord.

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)

HYMN OF THE DAY #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**

SERMON "A Heart That Ponders Christmas"

Luke 2:19

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.

4:00 OFFERTORY "Angel Tidings" arr. Cynthia Dobrinski

Bell Choir

(Rise)

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

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH *Isaiah 9:6*

Pastor: Stirred up by the power of joy, let us pray with zeal for the Church, for our world, and for all people in need.

After each petition:

Pastor: Hear our prayers, O Lord,

People: for to us a child is born, to us a son is given.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

(Be seated)

CANDLELIGHT CEREMONY

As Pastor lights his candle from the Christ candle in the middle of the Advent wreath, the ushers come forward.

Pastor: The Lord is my Light and my salvation - whom shall I fear?

People: The Lord is the stronghold of my life - of whom shall I be afraid?

All: Fill us with your Light, Lord Jesus, that we may live in the light of your salvation.

After the above sentences are spoken, the ushers light their candles from Pastor's candle. They will bring the Light to worshipers at the end of each pew.

(For the sake of safety, please hold lighted candles upright, dipping **unlit** candles into the flame of a lighted candle. We also ask that **young children not hold their own candle**, but instead hold a candle with one of their parents or use a battery operated candle.)

THE PROMISE OF THE LIGHT

CANDLELIGHT HYMNS

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” (stanzas 1, 3 & 4)

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.

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.

HYMN #363 “Silent Night, Holy 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.

(Rise)

BENEDICTION

Pastor: Rejoice, for the grace of God has appeared!
God has stirred up the power of joy! Christ is born!
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.

(Please extinguish your candle)

CLOSING 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.

Preacher

Liturgist

Lector

Acolytes

Choir Director

Bell Choir Director

Organist

Soloist

Music Coordinator

Pastor Harold Bender

Pastor Gregg Stanton

Russell Hurst

Thomas Kadolph, Jeffrey Moravec

Nancy Hoelke

Gina Osell for Matthew Compton

Roger Gottschalk

Stacey Kukor

Kim Woller

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Christmas Worship Opportunities

December 25th - Christmas Day - 9:00am

December 26th - 5:00pm

December 27th - 8:00 & 10:30am

December 31st - New Year's Eve - 6:00pm



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