

CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE

Memorial Lutheran Church

December 24, 2020



PRESERVICE MUSIC

Please stand

P: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was 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... 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.” (John 1:1, 14, 4-5)

OPENING CAROL

“O, Come, All Ye Faithful”

LSB 379 vs.1-3

**Oh, come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant!
Oh, come ye, oh, come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold him, born the king of angels:**

Refrain:

*Oh, come, let us adore him,
Oh, come, let us adore him,
Oh, 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



INVOCATION

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

C: Amen.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

P: “When the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons.” (Galatians 4:4 - 5) Jesus came into the world to redeem us, to buy us back—to bring us back into a relationship with our Father in heaven. That broken relationship was the result of our sin—our failures and inability to keep God’s law. But Jesus saved us from our sin by keeping the law for us, and suffering the punishment of our sin in our place. Therefore it is appropriate and necessary that we begin this celebration of his birth with a confession of our sin.

C: Most merciful God, I confess to You my sins which I have committed against You, even those of which I am unaware. It was to save me from these sins, that You left Your heavenly home and came down to earth. It was to pay the punishment for my sins that the manger in which You were laid would be replaced by a tomb. I am sorry for my sins. I repent of my sins, and ask for Your mercy and Your forgiveness.

(silence for personal confession and meditation)

P: Jesus did come to save us from our sins. By the power of His birth, life, death and resurrection our sins are paid and we have been given peace with God. Therefore, as a called and ordained servant of God 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.

C: Amen.

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: 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 here on earth may be moved to share it with the world around us in both word and deed, so that together we may come to the full measure of its joys in heaven and the world to come; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C: Amen.

Please be seated

CAROL

“O Little Town of Bethlehem”

LSB 361 vs. 1, 4

**O little town of Bethlehem, How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep The silent stars go by;
Yet in thy darkness shineth The everlasting light.
The hopes and fears of all the years Are met in thee tonight.**

**O holy Child of Bethlehem, Descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin, and enter in, Be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels The great glad tidings tell;
Oh, come to us, abide with us, Our Lord Immanuel!**



THE PROCLAMATION TO ISRAEL

Micah 5:2-5a (NIV)

²But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days. ³Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has given birth; then the rest of his brothers shall return to the people of Israel. ⁴And he shall stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they shall dwell secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth. ⁵And he shall be their peace.

CAROL “It Came Upon The Midnight Clear”

LSB 366 vs. 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, goodwill 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.**



THE PROCLAMATION OF THE BIRTH OF CHRIST Luke 2:1–7 (NIV)

¹In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. ²(This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) ³And everyone went to his own town to register. ⁴So 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. ⁵He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, ⁷and 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.



CAROL

“Away in a Manger”

LSB 364

**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.**



THE PROCLAMATION TO THE SHEPHERDS

Luke 2:8–14; 15-16

⁸And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. ⁹An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ 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. ¹¹Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." ¹³Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, ¹⁴"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests."



CAROL **“Go Tell it On the Mountain”**

LSB 388 vs. 1-2

Refrain

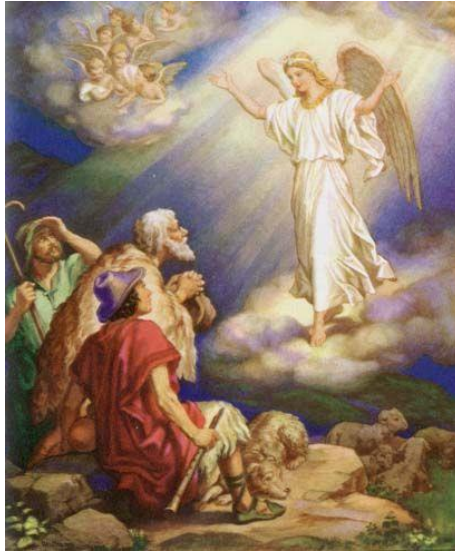
*Go tell it on the mountain, Over the hills and ev’rywhere;
Go tell it on the mountain That Jesus Christ is born!*

**While shepherds kept their watching O’er silent flocks by night,
Behold, throughout the heavens There shone a holy light.**

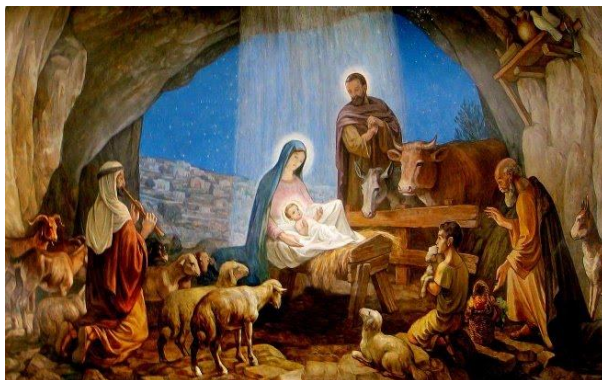
Refrain

**The shepherds feared and trembled When lo, above the earth
Rang out the angel chorus That hailed our Savior's birth.**

Refrain



¹⁵When 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." ¹⁶So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger.



CAROL

“Angels We Have Heard on High”

LSB 368

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

Refrain: *Glo- - - - -ri-a in excelsis Deo.*
Glo- - - - -ri-a in excelsis Deo.

Women: Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be
Which inspire your heavn’ly song? *Refrain (all)*

Men: Come to Bethlehem and see
Him whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee
Christ the Lord, the newborn king. *Refrain (all)*



THE PROCLAMATION TO THE WORLD

Luke 2:17-20 (NIV)

¹⁷When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which had been told.
were just as they



*But Mary treasured up
all these things,
pondering them in her heart.*

Luke 2:19

CAROL

“Joy to the World”

LSB 387 vs. 1-2, 4

**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.

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.



Please stand

THE PROCLAMATION TODAY

John 3:16-17 (NIV)

¹⁶"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷For God did not send his Son into the



world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.

CAROL **“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”**

LSB 380 vs. 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.**

*Hark! The herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn King!"*

Please be seated

THE CHRISTMAS EVE MESSAGE

Pastor John Davis

OFFERING CAROL “What Child Is This”

LSB 370

**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!**

Please stand



THE

**CHRISTMAS
CREED**

I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, who sent His Son as my Savior on Christmas Day.

I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, announced by the angels, worshipped

by the wise men, who lived to suffer, die and rise again, to free us from sin, death, and the power of the devil.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, who brought me to faith in the Christ of Christmas, by whose continuous work in my heart I am led to lay before the feet of Christ the treasures of my love, and to live under Him as my King, both now and forever. Amen.

CHRISTMAS EVE PRAYERS

THE CELEBRATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

Invitation To The Lord's Supper

P: "The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ?"

C: Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread." (1 Corinthians 10:16-17)

P: The Lord's Supper is a way in which believers in Jesus Christ proclaim more than his birth, but proclaim the Lord's death and resurrection until He comes, and we look forward to the day when we will join in the feast that has no end. Tonight, that proclamation is one that resounds here and in your homes and brings the blessings of Holy Communion to you where you are. Let us proclaim what we are about to receive, speaking together the words with which our Savior instituted this sacred meal.

Words Of Institution

ALL: 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."

ALL: 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 covenant 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."

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

C: Amen.

Please be seated

DISTRIBUTION CAROLS

"A Communion Hymn for Christmas"

**Gathered round Your table on this holy eve,
Viewing Bethlehem's stable we rejoice and grieve;
Joy to see You lying in Your manger bed,
Weep to see You dying in our sinful stead.**

**Prince of Glory gracing heav'n ere time began,
Now for us embracing death as Son of Man;
By Your birth so lowly, by Your love so true,
By Your cross most holy, Lord we worship You!**

**Bethlehem's Incarnation, Calvary's bitter cross,
Wrought for us salvation by Your pain and loss;
Now we fall before You in this holy place,
Prostrate we adore You, for Your gift of grace.**

**With profoundest wonder we Your body take -
Laid in manger yonder, broken for our sake;
Hushed in adoration we approach the cup -
Bethlehem's pure oblation freely offered up.**

**Christmas Babe so tender, Lamb who bore our blame,
How shall sinners render praises due Your name?
Do Your own good pleasure in the lives we bring;
In Your ransomed treasure reign forever King!**

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CAROL

“Now Sing We Now Rejoice”

LSB 386

**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!**



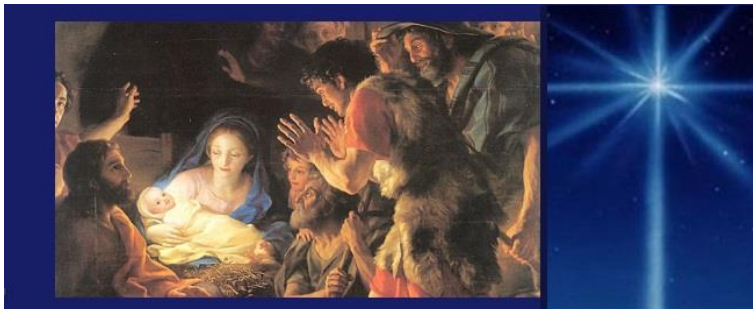
CAROL

“Infant Holy, Infant Lowly”_

LSB 393

**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!**

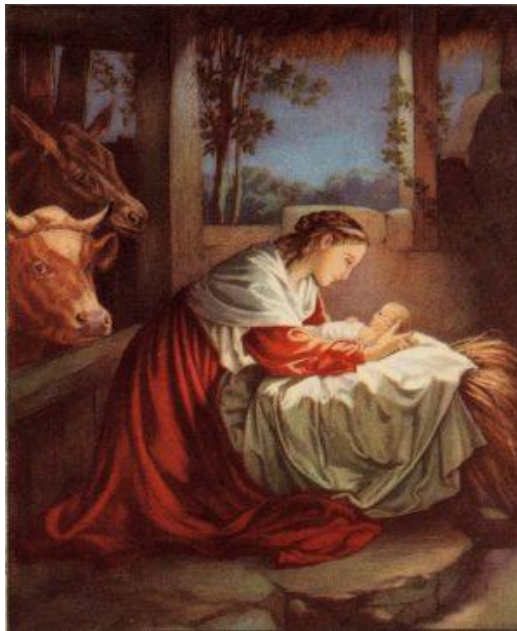
**Flocks were sleeping, shepherds keeping
Vigil till the morning new
Saw the glory, heard the story,
Tidings of a Gospel true.
Thus rejoicing, free from sorrow,
Praises voicing, greet the morrow:
Christ the child was born for you!
Christ the child was born for you!**



**Gentle Mary laid her child Lowly in a manger;
There He lay, the Undefined, to the world a stranger.
Such a babe in such a place, Can He be the Savior?
As the saved of all the race Who have found His favor.**

**Angels sang about His birth, Wise Men sought and found Him;
Heaven’s star shone brightly forth Glory all around Hm.
Shepherds saw the wondrous sight, Heard the angels singing;
All the plains were lit that night, All the hills were ringing.**

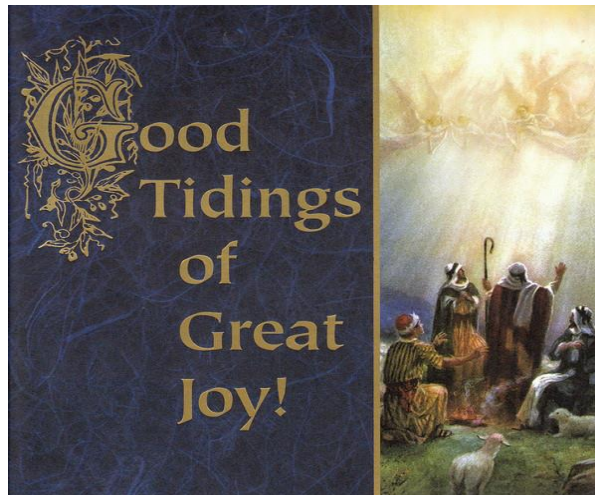
**Gentle Mary laid her child Lowly in a manger;
He is still the Undefined But no more a stranger.
Son of God of humble birth, Beautiful the story;
Praise His name in all the earth; Hail the King of glory!**



CAROL “God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen” English carol, 18th century

**God rest you merry, gentlemen, Let nothing you dismay.
Remember, Christ our Savior Was born on Christmas Day,
To save us all from Satan's power When we were gone astray.
O tidings of comfort and joy, Comfort and joy;
O tidings of comfort and joy!**

**From God, our heavenly Father A blessed angel came,
And unto certain shepherds Brought tidings of the same:
How that in Bethlehem was born The Son of God by name.
O tidings of comfort and joy, Comfort and joy;
O tidings of comfort and joy!**



CANDLELIGHT WELCOME FOR JESUS

(As the Pastor signals the congregation to rise, please turn on the small battery powered candle you received as you entered the church.

You may continue to let these candles shine for the remainder of worship, and you may also take them home with you as a reminder that the light of Christ still shines, even in the midst of the darkness of a pandemic.

If you are worshipping with us at home, we invite you to have candles ready to be lit before we sing *Silent Night*.)

P: "Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD rises upon you.

C: See, darkness covers the earth and thick darkness is over the peoples,

P but the LORD rises upon you and his glory appears over you. Nations will come to your light. (Isaiah 60: 1-3a NIV)

C: Almighty God, You made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that here on earth we may walk in the light of Jesus' presence and in the last day wake to the brightness of His glory.



THE CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT CAROL

“Silent Night, Holy Night”

LSB 363

**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,
Heav’nly 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.**



THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

(Matthew 6: 9 – 13)

P: “The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.”

(Luke 2:20 NIV)

Go in the peace of this night with the blessing of God the Father, the ✠ Son, and the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

RECESSIONAL CAROL

“From Heaven Above to Earth I Come”

LSB 358 vs. 1–3, 8

**From heav'n above to earth I come
To bring bear good news to ev'ry home;
Glad tidings of great joy, I bring,
Whereof 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.**

**This is the Christ, our God Most High,
Who hears your sad and bitter cry;
He will Himself your Savior be
From all your sins to set you free.**

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.



*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.
(Luke 2:10-11)*

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✠ TO GOD ALONE BE THE GLORY ✠