

## NATIVITY OF OUR LORD, CHRISTMAS EVE

December 24, 2023

### INTRODUCTION

*On a long winter evening we gather to proclaim the coming of the light. Isaiah announces that the people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. Paul reminds us that the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all. In the familiar account of Christ's birth, the evening sky is bright with the heavenly host singing, "Glory to God in the highest." Amid our broken world we proclaim that the prince of peace is born among us. God comes to us in human flesh—in Christ's body and blood—so that we may be bearers of divine light to all the world.*

### PRELUDE

Duane Losh, harmonica

"Silent Night"  
"O Come, All Ye Faithful"

### WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### CALL TO WORSHIP

3:30	Ashley Benson	"Angels We Have Heard on High"
5:30	Jaxon Roberts	"O Holy Night"
10:30	Rem Kutchara	"Hallelujah"

### VIDEO

**\*GREETING** (From the Holden Evening Prayer)

P Jesus Christ, you are the light of the world;  
**C the light no darkness can overcome;**  
P Stay with us now, for it is evening,  
**C and the day is almost over.**  
P Let your light scatter the darkness,  
**C and shine within your people here.**

HYMN OF PRAISE

“Carol at the Manger”



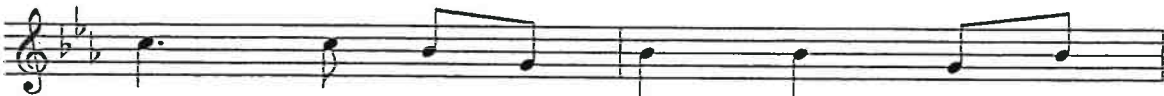
1. Ho - ly Child with - in the man - ger, Long a -  
 2. Once a - gain we tell the sto - ry— How your  
 3. Ho - ly Child with - in the man - ger, Lead us



go yet ev - er near; Come as friend to ev - 'ry  
 love for us was shown, When the Im - age of your  
 ev - er in your way, So we see in ev - 'ry



stran - ger, Come as hope for ev - 'ry fear. As you  
 glo - ry Wore an im - age like our own. Come, en -  
 stran - ger How you come to us to - day. In our



lived to heal the bro - ken, Greet the  
 light - en with your wis - dom, Come, and  
 lives and in our liv - ing Give us



out - cast, free the bound, As you taught us love un -  
 fill us with your grace, May the fire of your com -  
 strength to live as you, That our hearts might be for -



spo - ken, Teach us now where you are found.  
 pas - sion Kin - dle ev - 'ry land and race.  
 giv - ing And our spir - its strong and true.

Text: Marty Haugen, b.1950

Tune: JOYOUS LIGHT, 8 7 8 7 D; Marty Haugen, b.1950

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**\* PRAYER OF THE DAY**

**P** 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; through your only Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C** Amen

**SPECIAL MUSIC**

3:30	Margaret & Richard Schneider and grandchildren	"Do You Hear What I Hear?"
5:30	Praise Choir	"Hail Mary: Gentle Woman"
10:30	Chancel Choir	"I Am So Glad Each Christmas Eve"

**FIRST READING: Isaiah 9:2-7**

Responsory Verse:

**L** That which the heavens could not contain

**C** is the Babe lying fast asleep in his mother's arms.

The people who walked in darkness  
have seen a great light;  
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—  
on them light has shined.

<sup>3</sup>You have multiplied the nation,  
you have increased its joy;  
they rejoice before you  
as with joy at the harvest,  
as people exult when dividing plunder.

<sup>4</sup>For the yoke of their burden,  
and the bar across their shoulders,  
the rod of their oppressor,  
you have broken as on the day of Midian.

<sup>5</sup>For all the boots of the tramping warriors  
and all the garments rolled in blood  
shall be burned as fuel for the fire.

<sup>6</sup>For a child has been born for us,  
a son given to us;  
authority rests upon his shoulders;  
and he is named

Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

<sup>7</sup>His authority shall grow continually,  
and there shall be endless peace  
for the throne of David and his kingdom.

He will establish and uphold it  
with justice and with righteousness  
from this time onward and forevermore.  
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

## SECOND READING: Titus 2:11-14

Responsory Verse:

L A child has been born for us, a son is given to us.

C He is called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace

The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, <sup>12</sup>training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, <sup>13</sup>while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. <sup>14</sup>He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

## HYMN

### “Hark, the Herald Angels Sing” (vv. 1 & 3)

ELW 270

- 1 Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king;  
peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled."  
Joyful, all you nations, rise; join the triumph of the skies;  
with angelic hosts proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

Refrain

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

- 3 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 we no more may die,  
born to raise each child of earth, born to give us second birth. *Refrain*

P The Holy Gospel, according to the St. John, the 1<sup>st</sup> chapter

C **Speak, Lord, your servants are listening!**

## GOSPEL: John 1: [1-9] 10-18

*John begins his gospel with this prologue: a hymn to the Word through whom all things were created. This Word became flesh and brought grace and truth to the world.*

[<sup>1</sup>In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup>He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup>All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being <sup>4</sup>in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. <sup>5</sup>The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

<sup>6</sup>There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. <sup>7</sup>He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. <sup>8</sup>He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. <sup>9</sup>The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.]

<sup>10</sup>He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him.

<sup>11</sup>He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. <sup>12</sup>But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, <sup>13</sup>who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

<sup>14</sup>And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

<sup>15</sup>(John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.'") <sup>16</sup>From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. <sup>17</sup>The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

<sup>18</sup>No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE (3:30)

Doug Thompson

SERMON (5:30 & 10:30)

Pastor Jon

**“O Come, All Ye Faithful” (vv. 1, 2 & 4)**

**ELW #283**

1. 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

Refrain: Oh, come, let us adore him, Oh come, let us adore him,  
Oh, come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

2. The highest, most holy, light of light eternal,  
born of a virgin, a mortal he comes;  
Son of the Father now in flesh appearing! Refrain
4. 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.

OFFERING -  
Anne Benson

“Breath of Heaven”

**Welcome to the Feast of Holy Communion.** (Gluten free wafers available, ask the Pastors)  
We believe that in the sacrament Holy Communion, the crucified and risen Christ is present, giving his true body and blood as food and drink. This real presence is a mystery. All who trust in Jesus and call upon his name as Lord are invited to receive Holy Communion. Guests who are with us, who regularly commune in their home congregations, are also welcome. Children who have not yet been instructed in receiving the sacrament are encouraged to come forward to receive a blessing.

#### WORDS OF INSTITUTION

**P** In the night in which he was betrayed  
our Lord Jesus took bread,  
and gave thanks; broke it,  
and gave it to his disciples,  
saying: Take and eat;  
this is my body, given for you.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper,  
he took the cup, gave thanks,  
and gave it for all to drink,  
saying: This cup is  
the new testament in my blood,  
shed for you and for all people  
for the forgiveness of sin.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

#### \* 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 us 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**

**P** The gifts of God for the People of God

**C** I am not worthy to receive you, Lord,  
But, only say the Word and I shall be healed.

**“Go Tell It on the Mountain”**

**ELW 290**

Refrain

Go tell it on the mountain,  
over the hills and ev'rywhere;  
go tell it on the mountain  
that Jesus Christ is born!

- 1 While shepherds kept their watching  
o'er silent flocks by night,  
behold, throughout the heavens  
there shone a holy light. *Refrain*
- 2 The shepherds feared and trembled  
when, lo, above the earth  
rang out the angel chorus  
that hailed our Savior's birth. *Refrain*
- 3 Down in a lonely manger  
the humble Christ was born;  
and God sent us salvation  
that blessed Christmas morn. *Refrain*

Text: African American spiritual, refrain; John W. Work Jr., 1872-1925, stanzas, alt

**“Away in a Manger”**

**ELW #277**

- 1 Away in a manger, no crib for his 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.
- 2 The cattle are lowing; the poor baby wakes,  
but little Lord Jesus no crying he makes.  
I love you, Lord Jesus; look down from the sky  
and stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.
- 3 Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask you to stay  
close by me forever and love me, I pray.  
Bless all the dear children in your tender care  
and fit us for heaven, to live with you there.

Text: North American, anonymous, 19th cent.

**“O Little Town of Bethlehem”**

**ELW #279**

- 1 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 dark streets shineth  
the everlasting light.  
The hopes and fears of all the years  
are met in thee tonight.
  
- 3 How silently, how silently  
the wondrous gift is giv'n!  
So God imparts to human hearts  
the blessings of his heav'n.  
No ear may hear his coming;  
but, in this world of sin,  
where meek souls will receive him, still  
the dear Christ enters in.
  
- 4 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!

Text: Phillips Brooks, 1835-1893  
Music Lewis H. Redner 1831, 1908

**“The First Noel”**

**ELW #300**

- 1 The first Noel the angel did say  
was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;  
in fields where they lay, keeping their sheep,  
on a cold winter's night that was so deep.

Refrain

Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel!  
Born is the King of Israel.

- 2 They lookèd up and saw a star  
shining in the east beyond them far;  
and to the earth it gave great light,  
and so it continued both day and night. *Refrain*
  
- 3 And by the light of that same star  
three wise men came from country far;



to seek for a king was their intent,  
and to follow the star wherever it went. *Refrain*

4 This star drew near to the northwest,  
o'er Bethlehem it took its rest;  
and there it did both stop and stay  
right over the place where Jesus lay. *Refrain*

5 Then entered in those wise men three,  
full rev'rently upon their knee,  
and offered there in his presence  
their gold, and myrrh, and frankincense. *Refrain*

Text: English carol, c. 17th cent

**\* BLESSING**

**P** The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ keep you unto eternal life.

**C** Amen.

**CANDLELIGHTING CEREMONY**

(Remain seated)

**P** And God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. And God saw that the light was good. God is Light, and in Him is no darkness at all. If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, His Son, cleanses us from all sin.

*LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES:*

Candle bearers will come forward and light their candles from the Pastor's.

*WHEN ALL CANDLE BEARERS' CANDLES ARE LIT, the Pastor will lead in prayer:*

**P** Almighty God, You have filled us with the new Light of the Word who became flesh and lived among us. Let the light of our faith shine in all that we do; through You Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C** Amen

(The candle bearers then light the candles of worshipers in the aisle.)

*WHEN ALL THE CANDLES ARE LIT, the following is spoken:*

**P** Arise, shine, for your Light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you!

**C** Jesus Christ is the Light of the World.

**HYMN:****“Silent Night, Holy Night”**  
(last verse a capella)**ELW #281**

1. 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.
2. 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!
3. 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: Joseph Mohr, 1792-1849; tr. John F. Young, 1820-1885

**\* BENEDICTION**

**P** May God, who has in these last days spoken to us by a Son, bless you,  
may Christ, born of Mary and enthroned in a manger, dwell in you richly, and  
may the Holy Spirit, Power of the Most High, give you peace.

**C** Amen.

*Extinguish candles.*

**\* RECESSIONAL HYMN****“Joy to the World”****ELW #267**

1. Joy to the world, the Lord is come!  
Let earth receive its 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.
2. No more let sin and sorrow 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.
3. 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