

CHRISTMAS EVE



**DECEMBER 24, 2021
1 P.M., 7 P.M.**

PRELUDE

ANNOUNCEMENT *Rev. Jason Christ, Associate Pastor*

WELCOME *Rev. Dr. Charles E. Whited, Jr., Lead Pastor*

(Stand)

INVOCATION

Leader We gather with expectant hope, confident faith, abundant joy, and heavenly peace to worship in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

People Amen.

OPENING HYMN *It Came Upon a Midnight Clear* Hymnal 366

Verse 1

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.

Verse 2

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.

Verse 3

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.

Verse 4

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: Public domain

*Introit (inn-TRO-it).
From the Latin for
"enter". Verses from
Scripture sung or
spoken at the
beginning of the
Divine Service.*

INTROIT

Leader "Behold, the days are coming," declares the Lord,

People "When I shall raise up for David a righteous Branch:

Leader And He will reign as king and act wisely

People And do justice and righteousness in the land.

Leader In His days Judah will be saved,

People And Israel will dwell securely;

Leader And this is His name by which He will be called,

People 'The Lord our righteousness.'" *Jeremiah 23:5-6*

CONFESSION

Leader Within the darkness of this sinful world, the Light comes in the form of Jesus of Nazareth. Today we celebrate that gift. Let us join in a time of silence to consider our sinfulness, that we might confess it and receive the warmth of His forgiveness.
(silence for personal confession)

Leader Lord of Light,

People We confess that we have sinned against You in our thoughts, words and actions, and by what we have left undone. We often have chosen to walk in the darkness. On this holy day, Lord, shine on us and forgive our sins. Grant us Your peace. Amen.

A common theme for Christmas Eve is light coming into the darkness. Notice it here in the confession and absolution. Watch for it later in the candlelight singing and Christmas prayer.

ABSOLUTION

Leader Arise, shine, for your Light has come. Sent by the Father, Jesus came to forgive our sins and bring us out of darkness into the Light. Because of Him our sins are forgiven. Let us celebrate the infinite God in infant flesh!

People Amen. Praise to You O Christ, Child born to save us!

HYMN OF PRAISE *Angels We Have Heard on High* Hymnal 368

Verse 1

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.

Verse 2

Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be
Which inspire your heav'nly song?

Verse 3

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

Text: Public domain

(Sit)

GOSPEL PROCLAMATION *Luke 2:1-20* Proclaimer (7 p.m. only): Piper Christ

Reader This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People Praise to You, O Christ, Child born to save us!

The Christ Candle is lit after the proclamation of the Gospel, symbolic of Jesus' birth.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE *Sue Steege, Director of Transformation Ministries*

MESSAGE HYMN *Gentle Mary Laid Her Child* Hymnal 374

Verse 1

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?
Ask the saved of all the race
Who have found His favor.

Verse 2

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

Verse 3

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!

Text: Public domain

MESSAGE *The Message of the Angel* Rev. Dr. Charles E. Whited, Jr.

(Stand)

CHRISTMAS CREED

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

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, worshiped by the shepherds, and adored by the wise men; who lived to suffer, die, and rise again to free me from sin, death, and the power of the devil.

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

We use this creed on Christmas Eve and the 12 days of Christmas. It retains the same structure as the Apostles' Creed, confessing Father, Son, and Holy Spirit--but does so with an emphasis on Christ's sending (Father), birth, death, and resurrection (Son), and Kingship (Holy Spirit).

(Sit)

OFFERING INVITATION

OFFERING *Infant Holy, Infant Lowly* Hymnal 393, Sung by Kantorei at 7 p.m. service

Verse 1

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!

Verse 2

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!

Text: Public domain

(Stand)

CANDLELIGHT SINGING

Leader¹ Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord rises upon you.
Isaiah 60:1

Leader² When Jesus spoke again to the people, He said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." *John 8:12*

Leader¹ For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth.
Ephesians 5:8-9

Leader² In the same way, let your light shine before people, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven." *Matthew 5:16*

We invite you to make an eternal difference in our world by giving to LeadaChild. They are an independent Lutheran Mission Agency dedicated to sharing the Good News of Jesus' love to children through Christian education in third world countries. Donations provide scholarships, school registration, and supplies for children so that they can attend Lutheran schools and after school programs.

Please use FTGives.com and choose "Special Christmas Offering", or mark your check/envelope "LeadaChild" to direct your gift. Other gifts will be designated for the ongoing Mission and Ministry of First Trinity. Thank you for making an impact today!

O Little Town of Bethlehem Hymnal 361

Verse 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.

Verse 2

For Christ is born of Mary,
And, gathered all above
While mortals sleep, the angels keep
Their watch of wond'ring love.
O morning stars, together
Proclaim the holy birth,
And praises sing to God the king
And peace to all the earth!

Verse 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.

Verse 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;
O come to us, abide with us,
Our Lord Immanuel!

Text: Public domain

Silent Night, Holy Night Hymnal 363

Verse 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.

Verse 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!

Verse 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: Public domain

THE CHRISTMAS PRAYER

Leader O God, You make this most holy night to shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that as we have known the mysteries of that Light on earth we may also come to the fullness of His joys in heaven; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

People 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. 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.

CLOSING HYMN *Now Sing We, Now Rejoice* Hymnal 386

Verse 1

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!

Verse 2

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!

Verse 3

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!

Verse 4

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!

Text: Public domain

BLESSING

Leader May you be filled with the wonder of Mary, the obedience of Joseph, the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds, the determination of the magi, and the peace of the Christ Child. And may the Almighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit bless you now and forevermore!

People Let us worship the newborn King!

SILENT PRAYER

POSTLUDE

*Unless noted otherwise, scripture passage came from the English Standard Version.
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*Special thanks to our
Kantorei.*

POINSETTIAS ARE GIVEN TO THE GLORY OF GOD

GIVEN BY

Joel Rockensuess
Marsha Peth
Anne Miller
Beth Schmidt
Mary Ann and David Young
Randy& Karen Wert
Tim Hartnett
Maryann Bryant

GIVEN BY

Pam Trevino

IN LOVING MEMORY OF

Marion & Arthur Rockensuess, Felimina Rotundo
Mark Peth and Julie Jean Reid
Beloved family and friends
My parents, Benjamin and Barbara Todtenhagen
Benjamin, Christopher and our loved ones in heaven
Kaden Wert
Christopher
Carrie Lynn Bryant

IN THANKSGIVING TO GOD FOR

Our children, Jesse and Emma