



Worship Folder for December 24, 2022

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Christ Lutheran Church

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Cambridge, MN

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A Service of Joy Reflecting on the Savior's Birth

Hymn #62

Joy to the World

EXHORTATION AND PRAYER

M: Beloved in Christ: In this Christmas season it is our duty and delight to hear again the message of the angels and, in heart and mind, to go even unto Bethlehem and see this thing which has happened, which the Lord has made known to us, the Christ-child, lying in a manger.

Let us read and learn in Holy Scripture the story of the loving purposes of God, to rightly see Joy we possess through the birth and glorious redemption brought to us by this Holy Child. Let us hear how peace was lost, and how peace is restored.

But first, let us pray, for this is good and right.

Heavenly Father, we pray for ourselves and all people who worship you and your Son this holy night. By your holy Word, lead us to say with the angels,

C: Glory to God in the highest!

M: We pray for your blessing upon the people of our city, our state, our nation, and our world.

C: Glory to God in the highest!

M: We pray for the poor and helpless, the cold and hungry, the sick and sad, that you would give them the joy of your salvation and the comfort of your presence.

C: Glory to God in the highest!

M: We pray for unbelievers and enemies of the Church, that through your Law and Gospel you would lead them to recognize your Son as their only hope for eternal life.

C: Glory to God in the highest!

M: Finally, we remember before you all those who rejoice with us in heaven, who live in greater light and beauty than we, that multitude which no one can number, who died in faith, and now praise you in your heavenly temple. We confess that we are united with them and with one another.

C: Glory to God in the highest!

M: We humbly offer up these prayers and praises in the words that Christ himself taught us.

C: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

HYMN #37

Once Again My Heart Rejoices

FIRST LESSON

Micah 5:2-5a

Everything according to plan. Here the prophet Micah shares God's plan to us that out of a little town called Bethlehem would come the one who would bring peace to me, to you, to the world.

- ² But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah,
though you are small among the clans of Judah,
from you, will go out the one who will be the ruler for me in Israel.
His goings forth are from the beginning, from the days of eternity.
- ³ Therefore the LORD will give them up,
until the time when the woman who is in labor bears a child.
Then the remaining survivors from his brothers will return to the people of Israel.
- ⁴ He will stand and shepherd with the strength of the LORD,
in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God.
They will dwell securely, for at that time he will be great to the ends of the earth.
- ⁵ This one will be their peace.

HYMN #40 v.1-3

O Jesus Christ, Your Manger Is

SECOND LESSON

Titus 2:11-14

Striking symbolic language describes the gift more than 700 years before it was given.

¹¹ For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all people. ¹² It trains us to reject ungodliness and worldly lusts and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in this present age, ¹³ while we wait for the blessed hope, that is, the glorious appearance of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. ¹⁴ He gave himself for us, to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people who are his own chosen people, eager to do good works.

HYMN

Hear the Bells Ringing

GOSPEL LESSON

Luke 2:1-20

In a fulfillment of the prophecy in tonight's third lesson, God uses the mighty powers of this world to accomplish his will and to deliver his gift to an otherwise doomed world and he uses his angels to announce it to those simply at work in the field tending to their sheep. The shepherds then eagerly spread the word of this gift as announced by the angels. We join them, glorifying and praising God for all that we have come to know about God's great gift.

In 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.) ³ And everyone went to their own town to register.

⁴ 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. ⁵ He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. ⁶ While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, ⁷ and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

⁸ And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. ⁹ An 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 that will cause great joy for all the people. ¹¹ Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

¹³ Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, ¹⁴ "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests."

¹⁵ 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."

¹⁶ So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. ¹⁷ When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, ¹⁸ and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. ¹⁹ But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰ The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

“A Savior Born to Change The World!”
Message on Luke 2:1-20

CANDLE LIGHTING

An usher will come to your pew and light the candle nearest the center aisle. Please then light the candle next to you until all the candles are lit in the pew. When all the candles are lit, the lights will be dimmed. Remember to tip the unlit candle and leave the lit candle vertical. Additionally, please be mindful of melted wax when blowing out your candles at the close of the service.

If you would like to give an offering, a basket has been placed on a stand at the entryway to the sanctuary. Offerings can be given as you are ushered out at the end of the service. The members of this congregation have joined together to do the Lord's work in this community and around the world. Visitors need not feel obligated to participate in this offering which supports our ministry.

PRAYER

M: O God, who makes us glad with the yearly remembrance of the birth of your only Son, Jesus Christ; grant that, as we once again joyfully receive Your gift of our Savior and Redeemer, we recognize all his life death and resurrection accomplished for us, the confidence to behold him when he shall come to be our judge; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

BLESSING

M: May he who by his incarnation, taking on human flesh, gathered things earthly and heavenly into one,
fill us with such joy that comes with the knowledge
of the forgiveness of sins and the hope of eternal life.

And the blessing of God Almighty—the Father, the † Son, and the Holy Spirit—
be upon you and remain with you always.

C: Amen.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHRISTMAS WORSHIP

“The Twelve Days of Christmas” run from tonight through the festival of Epiphany. Here are our additional Christmas worship opportunities. Please, join us!

- ☞ Sunday, December 25 at 9:00AM — THE FESTIVAL OF THE NATIVITY (A Savior Born to Dwell Among Us)
- ☞ Sunday, January 1 at 9:00AM — A Savior Is Born to Be the True Son
- ☞ Sunday, January 6 at 9:00AM — A Savior is Born for All the Nations (Epiphany)

Announcements

Merry Christmas!

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