
Grace Lutheran Church Christmas 2021



What Child Is This?



**GRACE LUTHERAN
CHURCH**
CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL
DECEMBER 25, 2021

Pastor: John P. Hein
Organist: Sue Nelson
Web: www.FridleyLutheran.org
Email: john.p.hein@gmail.com
Phone: 763-784-8784

Our Christmas Worship

ENTRANCE:

OPENING DIALOG:

- P:** Unto us a Child is born, Hallelujah!
- C: Unto us a Son is given, Hallelujah!**
- P:** The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us.
- C: And we beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.**
- P:** Oh, come, let us worship Him:
- C: Let us kneel before the Lord in the manger. Hallelujah!**

HYMN:..... *WS 710: Once in Royal David's City*

CONFESSION & ABSOLUTION:..... *Based on TLH 90*

- P:** Dear Heavenly Father, having come into Your presence, we are moved to confess to you all of our many sins; sins that we have committed in our desires, our thoughts, our words, and our actions.
- C: Have mercy upon us, O God, we pray.**
 - SING: Gracious Child, we pray Thee, hear us,
From Thy lowly manger cheer us,
Gently lead us and be near us
Till we join th' angelic choir.**

P: You who are dearly loved by God, it is good and right for us to come before the throne of His grace in Christ Jesus and confess our many sins. The command of our Lord is that His people be comforted with the message of forgiveness in the Christ. Through the Prophet Isaiah, the Lord says to His

people, Israel: "Tell her that her sins I cover, and her warfare now is over." Our Savior came to make peace between God and man. Now He desires to come to us and abide with us — in our hearts — with His forgiveness and peace.

**SING: See how God, for us providing,
Gave His Son and life abiding;
He our weary steps is guiding
From earth's woe to heav'nly joy.**

C: O most merciful God, we confess to You all of our many sins. We have sinned against You by what we have thought, what we have said, and what we have done. Yet You have given Your only begotten Son to die for us. Have mercy upon us we pray, and for His sake grant us forgiveness for all our sins. By the power of Your Holy Spirit cause us to know Your will truly, and to obey it willingly, so that by Your grace, through faith, we may finally come to everlasting life, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

**SING: Oh, the joy beyond expressing
When by faith we grasp this blessing
And to Thee we come confessing
That our freedom Thou hast wrought!**

P: Since God has given you the Keys of the Kingdom of heaven, and as you have called me to administer the same, even so may it be to you as you believe, by the command of our Lord Jesus Christ, I forgive you all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. He who believes and is baptized shall be saved! For if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed! O Lord, grant this unto us all.

**SING: From the bondage that oppressed us,
From sin's fetters that possessed us,
From the grief that sore distressed us,
We, the captives, now are free.**

CHRISTMAS DAY COLLECT:

CHOIR:.....*All My Heart This Night Rejoices*

FIRST READING:.....*Isaiah 9:2-7*
In the midst of sin, God promises to send a Child, His Son, to save.

SECOND READING:.....*Titus 2:11-14*
The coming of Jesus shows the manifestation of God's grace to all.

THIRD READING:..... *Luke 2:1-14 with "From Heaven Above"*

ALL: "From heav'n above to earth I come
To bear good news to ev'ry home;
Glad tidings of great joy I bring,
Whereof I now will say and sing:"

Pastor: And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) And all went to be taxed, everyone into his own city.

MEN: "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."

Men: And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.

WOMEN: "This is the Christ, our God and Lord,
Who in all need shall aid afford;
He will Himself your Savior be
From all your sins to set you free."

Women: And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling clothes, and laid Him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

MEN: Give heed, my heart, lift up thine eyes!
What is it in yon manger lies?
Who is this child, so young and fair?
The blessed Christ-child lieth there.

Men: And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.

WOMEN: Welcome to earth, Thou noble Guest,
Through whom the sinful world is blest!
Thou com'st to share my misery;
What thanks shall I return to Thee?

Women: And the angel said unto them, "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the Babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger."

ALL: **Ah, dearest Jesus, holy Child,
Make Thee a bed, soft, undefiled,
Within my heart, that it may be
A quiet chamber kept for Thee.**

All: And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

ALL: **My heart for very joy doth leap,
My lips no more can silence keep;
I, too, must sing with joyful tongue
That sweetest ancient cradle-song:
Glory to God in highest heaven,
Who unto us His Son hath given!
While angels sing with pious mirth
A glad new year to all the earth.**

CONFESSION OF FAITH:.....*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 Ghost, Born of the Virgin Mary, Announced by the Angels, Worshipped by the shepherds, 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 Ghost, Who has brought me to faith in the Christ of Christmas, And by whose continuous work in my heart, I am ever 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.

HYMN:.....*WS 711: See in Yonder Manger Low*

SERMON:..... *Luke 2:8-14*

⁸ Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid. ¹⁰ Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. ¹¹ "For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹² "And this *will be* the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger." ¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: ¹⁴ "Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!" (NKJVTM)

What Child Is This?

Joy, Joy, for Christ Is Born

HYMN:..... *WS 712: What Child Is This*

OUR GIFTS TO THE CHRIST-CHILD:..... *Interlude*

CHRISTMAS PRAYER & LORD'S PRAYER:

BENEDICTION:

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all.

C: [Sung] Amen. Amen. Amen.

HYMN:..... *LSB 368: Angels We Have Heard on High*

**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.**

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

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

A Christmas Day Devotion

CLC E-Devotions – December 25, 2020

Luke 2:10-11 (KJV) I bring you good tidings of great joy ... For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

Keeping Christmas

“He became as good a friend, as good a master, and as good a man, as the good old city knew, or any other good old city, town, or borough, in the good old world. ... and it was always said of him, that he knew how to keep Christmas well, if any man alive possessed the knowledge.”

So concludes Charles Dickens classic story A Christmas Carol. And as much as we might enjoy the tale, a question does hang in the air. Did he? Did Dicken’s Ebenezer Scrooge truly know how to keep Christmas well? Is the heart and soul of Christmas kindness and generosity and family gatherings?

Certainly these things along with trees and lights and decorations and gift-giving can be part of truly celebrating Christmas, for the joy of Christmas has always overflowed in a wealth of such expressions- ever since the very angels of heaven could not contain themselves that first Christmas night but had to burst into celestial song. But the heart of Christmas is ever and always in the angels’ message **not** our responses to it.”

This year COVID-19 and some stormy weather has curtailed the plans of many who planned to get together with at least some of their family over the holiday weekend. Some have expressed the hope that after this bad year and its fractured plans the joy of Christmas might be restored in 2021.

But the truth is, no matter how difficult our situation or circumstances, the joy of Christmas cannot be taken away by anything that happens in this world. For it is a historical fact that the Son of God was born into our human family in order to rescue us from sin and death- and finally bring us through faith into God’s eternal family.

“... when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God” (Galatians 4:4-5, 7).

Not only is Christ always with those who trust in Him, those who are one in Him are drawn closer to each other as He draws us closer to Himself. Whoever believes the message of the angel to the shepherds with a whole heart truly keeps Christmas and is kept by the Christ of Christmas.

How are you celebrating Christmas? It’s not just a day or 12 days. It’s not just being generous or kind or recognizing the importance of God’s gift of family. It begins within, with holding fast the incarnate Son of God as your Savior and LORD.



*Oh, may we keep and ponder in our mind
God's wondrous love in saving lost mankind!
Trace we the Babe, who hath retrieved our loss,
From His poor manger to His bitter cross,
Tread in His steps, assisted by His grace,
Till man's first heavenly state again takes place.*

*Then may we hope, th'angelic hosts among,
To sing, redeemed, a glad triumphal song.
He that was born upon this joyful day
Around us all His glory shall display.
Saved by His love, incessant we shall sing
Eternal praise to heaven's almighty King.*

(The Lutheran Hymnal, 84:5-6)