
**GRACE
LUTHERAN CHURCH**



The Light of Our Christmas

CHRISTMAS 2024



GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

CHRISTMAS DAY

DECEMBER 25, 2024

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Our Christmas Worship

ENTRANCE:

OPENING DIALOGUE:

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*

Responsory: *Based on TLH 95*

P: The Lord be with you.

C: The Lord bless you.

P: As the Lord Jesus once came in love and great poverty to be born in a manger in Bethlehem

C: So now He comes to us in the richness of His Word.

P: As Jesus once came from heaven to earth to live with people in love

C: So now He comes in the Word, to give the light of the Spirit.

P: As He came to heal, to forgive, and to save

C: So now He comes to rescue, to relieve, to love.

P: Let us bless the great name of the Lord.

C: Let us sing with our hearts the great songs of His Word.

SING: Savior of the nations, come,
Virgin's Son, make here Thy home!
Marvel now, O heaven and earth,
That the Lord chose such a birth.

**Not by human flesh and blood,
By the Spirit of our God,
Was the Word of God made flesh--
Woman's Offspring, pure and fresh.**

P: O Lord, our transgressions are multiplied before You,

C: And our sins testify against us;

P: For our transgressions are with us,

C: And as for our iniquities, we know them:

P: We are all like an unclean thing,

C: And all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags;

P: We all fade as a leaf

C: And our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.

P: Do not be furious, O Lord,

C: Nor remember our iniquity forever;

**SING: Brightly doth Thy manger shine,
 Glorious is its light divine.
 Let not sin o'er cloud this light;
 Ever be our faith thus bright.**

P: Rejoice! The Baby whose birth we celebrate today is named "Jesus" because He came to "save" His people from their sins. His name is "Immanuel" for He is "God with us." He became a man like us, except without sin, so that He might die for us, rise in victory, and then live again forever as our eternal King. Rejoice this Christmas morning! Your sins are all forgiven!

**SING: From the Father forth He came
 And returneth to the same,
 Captive leading death and hell--
 High the song of triumph swell!
 Thou, the Father's only Son,
 Hast o'er sin the victory won.
 Boundless shall Thy kingdom be;
 When shall we its glories see?**

P: Oh, sing to the Lord a new song!

C: For He has done marvelous things;

P: The Lord has made known His salvation;

C: His righteousness He has revealed in the sight of the nations.

P: He has remembered His mercy and His faithfulness to the house of Israel;

C: All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

P: Oh, sing to the Lord a new song!

C: Proclaim the Good News of His salvation from day to day.

P: Declare His glory among the nations, His wonders among all peoples.

C: For the Lord is great and greatly to be praised.

SING: Praise to God the Father sing,
Praise to God the Son, our King,
Praise to God the Spirit be
Ever and eternally.

FIRST READING:*Isaiah 52:7-10*

The Lord comes to manifest His strength and power to redeem.

SECOND READING:*Romans 16:25-27*

Through Jesus Christ the mystery of salvation is clearly revealed.

CONFESSION OF FAITH:*The Christmas Creed*

I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the virgin Mary, is my Lord. He has redeemed me, a lost and condemned person, purchased and won me from all sin, from death, and from the power of the devil, not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and His innocent suffering and death. He did this that I should be His very own, live under Him in His kingdom, and serve Him in eternal righteousness, innocence, and joy; just as He is risen from death, lives and reigns in eternity. This is most certainly true.

THE CHRISTMAS GOSPEL:*Luke 2:1-20 w/Christmas Carols*

ALL: 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.

WOMEN: Oh, come, let us adore Him,

MEN: Oh, come, let us adore Him,

ALL: Oh, come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!

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

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.

WOMEN: 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.

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.

MEN: From God our Heav'nly 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.*

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 Saviour, 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."

WOMEN: God loves me dearly, grants me salvation;
God loves me dearly, loves even me.
Therefore I'll say again: God loves me dearly,
God loves me dearly, loves even me.

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: Angels we have heard on high,
Sweetly singing o'er the plains.
And the mountain in reply
Echoing their joyous strains:
Gloria in excelsis Deo!
Gloria in excelsis Deo!

MEN: And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, "Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known to us." And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger.

WOMEN: 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!

WOMEN: And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this Child. And all they that heard *it* wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things, and pondered *them* in her heart.

MEN: 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 the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

ALL: Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare Him room
And heaven and nature sing.
And heaven and nature sing.
And heaven and nature sing.

CHOIR:..... *Were You There?*

SERMON:..... *John 1:4-5, 9*

(4) In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. (5) And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. ... (9) That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world.

Jesus Christ, the Light of Our Christmas

The Light of Life

HYMN:..... *WS 715: Where Shepherds Lately Knelt*

OUR GIFTS TO THE CHRIST-CHILD:

CHRISTMAS PRAYER & LORD'S PRAYER:

CHOIR:..... *Handel's Hallelujah Chorus*

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:..... *TLH 92: Now Sing We, Now Rejoice*

Let us, then, meditate upon the Nativity just as we see it happening in our own babies. I would not have you contemplate the deity of Christ, the majesty of Christ, but rather his flesh. Look upon the Baby Jesus. Divinity may terrify man. Inexpressible majesty will crush him. That is why Christ took on our humanity, save for sin, that he should not terrify us but rather that with love and favor he should console and confirm. – Martin Luther

FROM THE MARTIN LUTHER CHRISTMAS BOOK

"But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart."

But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart.

Luke 2:19



She wrote them in her heart, meditated upon them, and thought to herself, "This is wonderful news that I am the mother of the Child whom the angels call Lord." These thoughts sank so deeply into her heart that she would have held to them though the whole world were against her.

Why did she ponder these things in her heart? Because she too was in need of preaching. Even though she was the mother and had borne the Child, she had need to ponder these words in her heart, in order to strengthen her faith and increase

her assurance. She reflected how these words correspond to those of the angel: "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest." The message of the angels fitted in exactly with the annunciation by Gabriel. This was to her a great joy and confirmation. Without these a human heart, and especially a woman's, would have had difficulty in believing: "I am the mother of the King of kings lying here in the manger." There was nothing kingly about the Babe, but Mary heard from the shepherds that he was the Savior of the world and greater than all kings, and that she should be his mother and nurse him. The quality of faith in this Virgin no words can express. If anyone has faith and thinks he knows enough, let him take a lesson from this mother and let him assemble the passages of Scripture in order to confirm his faith. If he has one passage, good, but if he has eight or ten, that is better.

When I die I see nothing but sheer darkness except for this light: "Unto you is born this day ... a Savior." The Savior will help me when all else fails. When the heaven, the stars, and all the creatures glower, I see nothing in earth and heaven but this Child. This light should be so great in my eyes that I can say: "Dear Mary, you have borne this Child not for yourself alone. You are indeed his mother. But I have an even greater honor than yours as a mother. Your honor is the bearing of the body of this Child, but my honor is this, that you have my treasure, and I know no one, man or angel, who can help me as can the Babe that you, dear Mary, hold in your lap." If, for the sake of this Child, a man could count all gold and goods, all power and honor as blackness; if, compared with this Child, the stars in heaven and all the treasures of earth were as nothing, then he would know the true use and fruit of the angel's message.