

REDEEMER'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Introduction

In winter's deepest night, we welcome the light of the Christ child. Isaiah declares that the light of the long-promised king will illumine the world and bring endless peace and justice. Paul reminds us that the grace of God through Jesus Christ brings salvation to all people. The angels declare that Jesus' birth is good and joyful news for everyone, including lowly shepherds. Filled with the light that shines in our lives, we go forth to share the light of Christ with the whole world.

Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, who was in the beginning, who makes a dwelling among us, who covers us with justice and mercy. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

God of goodness and lovingkindness, **we confess that we have sinned against you and our neighbors. We have turned away from your invitation to new life. We have turned away from the lowly and downtrodden. In your abundant mercy, forgive us our sins, those we know and those known only to you, for the sake of the one who came to live among us, Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.**

Hear the good news of peace and salvation!

God forgives us all our sins, not through our own work, but through † Jesus Christ, made known to all people. With all who come to the manger, rejoice in this amazing gift of grace. **Amen.**

Gathering Song

“O Come, All Ye Faithful”

1 O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant! O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem; come and behold him, born the king of angels:

Refrain

***O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O 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*

**3 Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation, sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God in the highest: 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:**

Prayer of the Day

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 Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

Lighting of the Advent Wreath~ Five Advent Candles are Lit

Cantors: All creation lies in waiting, in the stillness of the night, with hope anticipating the Advent of Eternal Light.

Litany for Christmas Eve-PROCLAIM

L: The response will be "Joy to the world, the Lord is come!".

L: Advent is a time to proclaim.

C: Joy to the world, the Lord is come!

L: We proclaim a hope that is stronger than any trial.

C: Joy to the world, the Lord is come!

L: We proclaim a victory that is stronger than any defeat.

C: Joy to the world, the Lord is come!

L: We proclaim a peace that is stronger than any conflict.

C: Joy to the world, the Lord is come!

L: We proclaim a freedom that is stronger than any bondage.

C: Joy to the world, the Lord is come!

Tonight we light all of the candles. The **first candle** reminds us that Advent is a time to wait upon the Lord with faithful endurance. The **second candle** reminds us that Advent is a time to watch for God's presence with hopeful expectation. The **third candle** reminds us that Advent is a time to prepare for the Lord in heart, soul and mind. The **fourth candle** reminds us that the One we wait for, watch for, and prepare for is Jesus Christ, who is Emmanuel, meaning God is with us. Tonight we light the last candle; the **Christ candle**. This candle reminds us that we are to proclaim the message of Christmas by celebrating what Christ has done, and by sharing it with others. As the light from each candle fills this room, so may the Light of Christ fill our world!

Congregation sings:

**We proclaim with hope for the morning Light,
for the love of Christ to illuminate the night.**

We proclaim with joy for the Savior's birth;

We proclaim with hope for peace on earth, peace on earth.

Prayer

P: God in heaven, we thank you for guiding us through our Advent journey. Through waiting, watching, preparing, and praising, we are now ready to proclaim. Help us receive the glory of Christmas, as we celebrate and rejoice that you have come to us through the gift of Christ, our Savior and Redeemer. **Amen.**

The First Reading is from the 9th Chapter of Isaiah

First Reading: Isaiah 9:2-7

This poem promises deliverance from Assyrian oppression, a hope based on the birth of a royal child with a name full of promise. While Judah's king will practice justice and righteousness, the real basis for faith lies in God's passion for the people: The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this!

²The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness— on them light has shined.

³You 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.

⁴For 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.

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

⁶For 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.

⁷His 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.

L: Word of God. Word of Life. **C: Thanks be to God.**

Song:

“This Baby“

BC

The Second Reading is from the 2nd Chapter of Titus

Second Reading: Titus 2:11-14

The appearance of God's grace in Jesus Christ brings salvation for all humanity. Consequently, in the present we live wisely and justly while also anticipating the hope of our Savior's final appearance.

¹¹The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, ¹²training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, ¹³while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. ¹⁴He 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.

L: Word of God. Word of Life. **C: Thanks be to God.**

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke the 2nd chapter.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

Gospel: Luke 2:1-20

God's greatest gift comes as a baby in a manger. Angels announce the "good news of great joy" and proclaim God's blessing of peace.

¹In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. ⁵He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

⁸In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." ¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

¹⁴"Glory to God in the highest heaven,

and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

¹⁵When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." ¹⁶So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

Sermon Hymn

“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”

- 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!"

- 2 Christ, by highest heav'n adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord,
late in time behold him come, offspring of a virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see! Hail, incarnate deity!
Pleased as man with us to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel! *Refrain***
- 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***

Nicene Creed:

C: We believe in one God, the Father, the almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, light from light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one being with the Father. Through Him all things were made. For us and for our salvation He came down from heaven; by the power of the Holy Spirit He became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake He was crucified under Pontius Pilate; He suffered death and was buried. On the third day He rose again in accordance with the scriptures; He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and His kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son He is worshipped and glorified. He has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Song:

“Christmas is all in the Heart”

Jan Strojny

Prayers of Intercession

Joining our voices with the song of the angels, let us pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

The shepherds sing, "Jesus Christ is born!" Let your church throughout the world proclaim this good news, over the hills and everywhere. Unite the voices of all your faithful people in songs of praise and rejoicing. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Heaven and nature sing, "Joy to the world!" Give respite to flocks, fields, and those who tend them. Come near to us in the beauty of nighttime, the shining of the stars, and the hush of a world at rest. May our wonder at your creation rouse our care for all the earth. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

The angels sing, "Peace on earth!" Come quickly to still the strife of this world. Hush the noise of war and violence in places of unrest. Inspire leaders of nations to seek lasting peace and sustainable provision for all in their care. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Mary sings melodies of comfort to her newborn child. Bring rest and reassurance to those facing struggles this night. Shelter travelers and those without homes. Console those who lie awake due to pain or anxiety. Heal those who are sick or hurting (*especially*). Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Love sings through the sound of a new baby's cry. Bless new parents and expectant parents. Comfort those who long for children, especially those running out of hope or options. Surround families of every shape and size with your love and care. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

The heavenly chorus sings, "Glory to God in the highest!" We give you thanks for all the saints who have proclaimed your glory in word and deed. Let us join them this night in joyful praise around your eternal throne. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of mercy, come quickly to us with grace upon grace as we lift these and all our prayers to you, in the name of Jesus.

Amen.

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.

Blessing

Almighty God, who sent the Holy Spirit to Mary, proclaimed joy through the angels, sent the shepherds with good news, and led the magi by a star, bless you this day ☩ through the Word made flesh. **Amen.**

Sending song:

“Silent Night”

- 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 your holy face, with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at your birth, Jesus, Lord, at your birth.

Dismissal

Go in peace. Share the gift of Jesus.
Thanks be to God.



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