

HOLY CROSS LUTHERAN CHURCH
CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE
December 24, 2020, 11:00 p.m.

PRELUDE

PROCESSIONAL HYMN “*Oh Come, All Ye Faithful*”



1 O come, all ye faith - ful, Joy - ful and tri - um - phant! O
2 High - est, most ho - ly, Light of Light e - ter - nal,
3 Sing, choirs of an - gels, Sing in ex - ul - ta - tion,
4 Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, Born this hap - py morn - ing;



come ye, O come ye to Beth - le - hem;
Born of a vir - gin, a mor - tal He comes;
Sing, all ye cit - i - zens of heav - en a - bove!
Je - sus, to Thee be glo - ry giv'n!



Come and be - hold Him Born the king of an - gels:
Son of the Fa - ther Now in flesh ap - pear - ing!
Glo - ry to God In the high - est:
Word of the Fa - ther Now in flesh ap - pear - ing!

Refrain



O come, let us a - dore Him, O come, let us a - dore Him,



O come, let us a - dore Him, Christ the Lord!

Text and tune: Public domain

CALL TO WORSHIP

P The angel of the Lord announced to Mary that she would bear the Holy Child.

C **He was born in Bethlehem then. We pray that he might be born again tonight in our hearts.**

P The angel reassured the shepherds who were frightened by the brightness of God’s glory.

C **He directed them, just as he will direct us, to the gentle light shining from the manger.**

P A choir of angels filled the night sky with hymns of praise for God’s Christmas gift.

C **We would join that song with thankful hearts. We would offer our best gifts to God’s gracious Son.**

THE LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

CHRISTMAS SCRIPTURE

Luke 2:1–20

¹In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³And all went to be registered, each to his own town. ⁴And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, ⁵to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. ⁶And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. ⁸And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear. ¹⁰And the angel said to them, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy that will be for all the people. ¹¹For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹²And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths 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,
and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!”

¹⁵When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.” ¹⁶And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. ¹⁷And

when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. ¹⁸And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. ²⁰And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

HYMN "Angels We Have Heard on High"



1 An - gels we have heard on high, Sweet - ly sing - ing o'er the plains,
 2 Shep - herds, why this ju - bi - lee? Why your joy - ous strains pro - long?
 3 Come to Beth - le - hem and see Him whose birth the an - gels sing;



And the moun - tains in re - ply, Ech - o - ing their joy - ous strains.
 What the glad - some tid - ings be Which in - spire your heav' - n - ly song?
 Come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ the Lord, the new - born King.

Refrain



Glo - - - - - ri - a



in ex - cel - sis De - o. Glo - - - - -



- ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o.

PRAYER

P Dear God, come into this holy night with stars to light our way to the cradle of peace. Come with angels that will sing us into a deep joy. Come to this moment and open our hearts so we may hear the familiar story new and fresh. Surprise us and remind us that the child in the manger is Emmanuel – God with us, now and always.

C Amen.

CHRISTMAS VERSE *Gloria in Excelsis*



- 1 To God on high be glo - ry And peace to all the earth;
2 To You, O sole-be - got - ten, The Fa - ther's Son, we pray;
3 For You a - lone are ho - ly; You on - ly are the Lord.



Good-will from God in heav - en Pro - claimed at Je - sus' birth!
O Lamb of God, our Sav - ior, You take our sins a - way.
For - ev - er and for - ev - er, Be wor - shi - ped and a - dored;



We praise and bless You, Fa - ther; Your ho - ly name, we sing—
Have mer - cy on us, Je - sus; Re - ceive our heart - felt cry,
You with the Ho - ly Spir - it A - lone are Lord Most High,



Our thanks for Your great glo - ry, Lord God, our heav'n - ly King.
Where You in pow'r are seat - ed At God's right hand on high—
In God the Fa - ther's glo - ry. "A - men!" our glad re - ply.

CHRISTMAS MESSAGE *Pastor Matt Wallis*

OFFERING

OFFERTORY - "O Holy Night" *Sharon Shyrock*

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

P Lord, in this holy season of prayer and song and laughter, we praise you for the great wonders you have sent us: for a shining star and angel's song, for an infant's cry in lowly manger. We praise you for the Word made flesh in a little Child. We behold his glory, and are bathed in its radiance. Be with us as we sing the ironies of Christmas, the incomprehensible comprehended, the poetry made hard fact, the helpless Babe who cracks the world asunder. We kneel before you shepherds, innkeepers, wisemen. Help us to rise bigger than we are. Amen.

THE 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.**

CONFESSION

**C Gracious God, gentle Lord, on this holy night we
pray that your power and peace would cast out our sin,
that there may be room for you to be born in our hearts.
We confess we have crowded you out of our lives with false
priorities and self-serving goals. Forgive us, Lord. We have
deceived people and pretended it was “for their own good”.
We have hurt good people and claimed it was “nothing
personal”. We have hidden our sins behind clichés and habits
for so long we are hardly aware of right and wrong. Forgive
us, Lord. Send your spirit to awaken our conscience and
purify our minds, that this Christmas we may welcome you
aright. For Jesus’ sake, Amen.**

ABSOLUTION

**P Our God has already forgiven us, even before we ask. In his
birth at Bethlehem He made that forgiveness visible. May the
God of Bethlehem give us peace!**

SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT

P The Lord be with you

C And also with you

P Lift up your hearts

C We lift them to the Lord

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God

C It is right to give Him thanks and praise

P It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord; for in the mystery of the Word made flesh You have given us a new revelation of Your glory that, seeing You in the person of Your Son, we may know and love those things which are not seen. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

P Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My T body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My T blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

P As often as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.

C Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

P Incarnate Lord, may the gift of Your body and blood strengthen us in this time and may we be enabled to serve You who became flesh to serve us. You live and reign with the Father and the Sprit, now and forever more.

C Amen

DISTRIBUTION

Holy Cross believes that the Lord's Supper is a gift of Jesus to His church. The apostle Paul wrote, "Let a man examine himself, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For any one who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment upon himself." (I Corinthians 11:28-29). Out of loving concern for those that commune and from our understanding of the Bible and the Lutheran Confessions, we request that those who commune here:

1. Be baptized Christians
2. Should have received special instruction on the essence and significance of the Lord's Supper.
3. Are mature enough to examine themselves, recognizing their sin and their need for God's grace through this special means.
4. Profess the "real presence" of Christ in this sacrament, that is, confessing the true presence of Jesus' body in the bread and His blood in the wine.

We request that all that come to the Lord's Supper join us in acknowledging the preceding affirmations of our understanding of communion. Non-communing children may join their parents. They are asked to fold their hands for a blessing. If you have any questions, please feel free to speak with the pastor after the service.

If you are unable to drink wine, the inner tray has light colored grape juice. If you are in need of gluten free bread, please speak with one of the pastors.

MUSIC DURING DISTRIBUTION

"O Little Town of Bethlehem"



1 O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, How still we see thee lie!
3 How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly The won - drous gift is giv'n!



A - bove thy deep and dream-less sleep The si - lent stars go by;
So God im - parts to hu - man hearts The bless - ings of His heav'n.



Yet in thy dark streets shin - eth The ev - er - last - ing light.
No ear may hear His com - ing; But in this world of sin,



The hopes and fears of all the years Are met in thee to - night.
Where meek souls will re - ceive Him, still The dear Christ en - ters in.

"It Came upon the Midnight Clear"



1 It came up - on the mid - night clear, That glo - rious song of old,
3 All you, be - neath your heav - y load, By care and guilt bent low,



From an - gels bend - ing near the earth To touch their harps of gold:
Who toil a - long a drea - ry way With pain - ful steps and slow:



"Peace on the earth, good-will to all, From heav'n's all - gra - cious king."
Look up, for gold - en is the hour, Come swift - ly on the wing,



The world in sol - emn still - ness lay To hear the an - gels sing.
The Prince was born to bring you peace; Of Him the an - gels sing.

“What Child is This?”



1 What child is this, who, laid to rest, On Mar - y's lap is
3 So bring Him in - cense, gold, and myrrh; Come, peas - ant, king, to



sleep - ing? Whom an - gels greet with an - thems sweet While
own Him. The King of kings sal - va - tion brings; Let



shep - herds watch are keep - ing? This, this is
lov - ing hearts en - throne Him. Raise, raise the



Christ the king, Whom shep - herds guard and an - gels sing;
song on high, The vir - gin sings her lul - la - by;



Haste, haste to bring Him laud, The babe, the son of Mar - y!
Joy, joy, for Christ is born, The babe, the son of Mar - y!

CANDLELIGHT PREPARATION

P As the Light of these candles illuminates our faces, it symbolizes the light of Christ, seen in the child lying in the manger at Bethlehem and soon to be revealed again when He comes from His throne on high to be the judge of all. He is our light here on earth and the eternal light who enlightens heaven, where there is no need of candle or sun. Rejoice on this night for the light of the world has come, the light who transforms us to shine with the brightness of His glory.

HYMN "Silent Night"



1 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! All is calm, all is bright Round yon
2 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Shep-herds quake at the sight; Glo - ries
3 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Son of God, love's pure light Ra - diant



vir - gin moth-er and child. Ho - ly In-fant, so ten-der and mild,
stream from heav-en a - far, Heav'n-ly hosts sing, Al - le - lu - ia!
beams from Thy ho-ly face With the dawn of re-deem - ing grace,



Sleep in heav - en - ly peace, Sleep in heav - en - ly peace.
Christ, the Sav - ior, is born! Christ, the Sav - ior, is born!
Je - sus, Lord, at Thy birth, Je - sus, Lord, at Thy birth.

BENEDICTION

P The Lord bless you and keep you
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you
The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace
C Amen

CANDLES EXTINGUISHED

HYMN "Joy to the World"



1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re - ceive her
2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let men their songs em -
3 No more let sins and sor - rows grow Nor thorns in - fest the



King; Let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare Him
joy, While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and
ground; He comes to make His bless - ings



room And heav'n and na - ture sing, And heav'n and na - ture
plains Re - peat the sound - ing joy, Re - peat the sound - ing
flow Far as the curse is found, Far as the curse is



sing, And heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.
joy, Re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
found, Far as, far as the curse is found.

Words of Departure

P Go in peace and serve the Lord!

C **Thanks be to God!**

It's a Boy!

It is now possible to determine before birth whether a baby will be a boy or girl. No surprises. Before Jesus was born, Mary was told that her child would be a boy. This was not information determined by medical science; it was God's eternal plan. The angel told Mary, "You will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call His name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High" (Luke 1:31-32)

It's a boy! No surprise. This, the Son of the Most High, entering a world of sinful people so that we sinners might receive the forgiveness of sins and eternal life. The birth of Jesus, God's own Son, is the birth that gives life and joy to all of us. In the birth of Jesus, Mighty God came to us to rescue and redeem us and to reconcile and restore us to Himself. In the birth of Jesus, the Prince of Peace came to be our peace. In the birth of Jesus, love and grace came to be with us. That's why today is such a joyful and merry Christmas for all who believe and trust in Him.