

Nativity of Our Lord:

Christmas Eve

December 24, 2020
4:30pm



On a long winter evening we gather to proclaim the coming of the light. Isaiah announces that the people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. Paul reminds us that the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all. In the familiar account of Christ's birth, the evening sky is bright with the heavenly host singing, "Glory to God in the highest." Amid our broken world we proclaim that the Prince of peace is born among us. God comes to us in human flesh—in Christ's body and blood—so that we may be bearers of divine light to all the world.

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

PRELUDE – *It Came upon a Midnight Clear* – Abby Mohlis

GREETING

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God, who shines in glory, clothes us in compassion, and bears gifts of mercy for all. **Amen.**

CHRISTMAS PROCLAMATION

Many ages from the time when God created the heavens and the earth
and then formed man and woman in his own image;
long after the great flood, when God made the rainbow shine forth as a sign of the covenant;
twenty-one centuries from the time the promise was given to Abraham and Sarah;
thirteen centuries after Moses led the people of Israel out of Egypt and Miriam danced in
freedom;
eleven hundred years from the time of Ruth and the judges;
one thousand years from the anointing of David as king, in fulfillment of the times and years
and months and days discerned by the prophets;
in the one hundred and ninety-fourth Olympiad;
the seven hundred and fifty-second year from the foundation of the city of Rome;
the forty-second year of the reign of Octavian Augustus;
while the whole world enjoyed a span of peace,
Jesus Christ, eternal God and Son of the eternal Father,
desiring to sanctify the world by his most merciful coming,
being conceived by the Holy Spirit and nine months of growth in the womb of his mother—
now in our own times is the nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ,
God made flesh.

CHRISTMAS PAGEANT – Kenadie and Bradley Iverson

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

CHRISTMAS DIALOG AND GREETING

Jesus Christ is the Light of the world!

He is the Light no darkness can overcome.

At darkest night we gather to celebrate the great light of our salvation.

With the heavenly host we sing, "Glory to God in the highest heaven."

In Christ, God's Word is made flesh and lives among us.

With the shepherds, we will tell of the wonders we have seen and heard.

Hymn: "Go, Tell It on the Mountain"

Refrain

Go tell it on the mountain, over the hills and ev'rywhere;

Go tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born!

While shepherds kept their watching o'er silent flocks by night,

Behold, throughout the heavens there shone a holy light. *Refrain*

The shepherds feared and trembled when, lo, above the earth

Rang out the angel chorus that hailed our Savior's birth. *Refrain*

Down in a lonely manger the humble Christ was born;

And God sent us salvation that blessed Christmas morn. *Refrain*

PRAYER OF THE DAY

May the grace and truth of Christ be with you. **And also with you.**

Let us pray.

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.**

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 9:2-7

A reading from Isaiah.

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.

Here ends the reading.

HYMN: “ONCE IN ROYAL DAVID’S CITY”

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|--|--|
| 1 Once in royal David's city
stood a lowly cattle shed,
where a mother laid her baby
in a manger for his bed:
Mary was that mother mild,
Jesus Christ, her little child. | 3 And our eyes at last shall see him,
through his own redeeming love;
for that child so dear and gentle
is our Lord in heav'n above;
and he leads his children on
to the place where he is gone. |
| 2 He came down to earth from heaven
who is God and Lord of all,
and his shelter was a stable,
and his cradle was a stall;
with the poor and meek and lowly,
lived on earth our Savior holy. | 4 Not in that poor lowly stable,
with the oxen standing by,
we shall see him; but in heaven,
set at God's right hand on high;
there his children gather round,
bright like stars, with glory crowned. |

SECOND READING: Titus 2:11-14

A reading from Titus.

¹¹For the 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.
Here ends the reading.

HYMN: "HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING"

1) Hark! The herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn king;
peace on earth, and mercy mild,
Joyful, all you nations, rise;
join the triumph of the skies;
with angelic hosts proclaim,
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
God and sinners reconciled."

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

THIRD READING: Luke 2:1-7

A reading from Luke.

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.
Here ends the reading.

HYMN: "AWAY IN A MANGER" (CRADLE SONG)

- 1) Away in a manger, no crib for his bed,
the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head;
the stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,
the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

- 2) The cattle are lowing; the baby awakes,
but little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes.
I love you, Lord Jesus; look down from the sky
and stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.

- 3) Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask you to stay
close by me forever and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in your tender care
and fit us for heaven, to live with you there.

FORTH READING: Luke 2:8-20

A reading from Luke.

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. Here ends the reading.

Hymn: “Angels from the Realms of Glory”

- 1 Angels, from the realms of glory,
wing your flight o'er all the earth;
once you sang creation's story,
now proclaim Messiah's birth:
Come and worship, come and worship,
worship Christ, the newborn king.
- 2 Shepherds, in the fields abiding,
watching o'er your flocks by night,
God with us is now residing,
yonder shines the infant light.
Come and worship, come and worship,
worship Christ, the newborn king.
- 3 Sages, leave your contemplations,
brighter visions beam afar;
seek the great desire of nations,
you have seen his natal star.
Come and worship, come and worship,
worship Christ, the newborn king.
- 4 All creation, join in praising
God, the Father, Spirit, Son,
evermore your voices raising
to the eternal Three in One.
Come and worship, come and worship,
worship Christ, the newborn king.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY “*What Child Is This*”

- 1) 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!
- 2) Why lies he in such mean estate
where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear; for sinners here
the silent Word is pleading.
Nails, spear shall pierce him through,
the cross be borne for me, for you;
hail, hail the Word made flesh,
the babe, the son of Mary!

- 3) So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh;
come, peasant, king, to own him.
The King of kings salvation brings;
let loving hearts enthrone him.
Raise, raise the song on high,
the virgin sings her lullaby;
joy, joy, for Christ is born,
the babe, the son of Mary!

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

This night the eternal Word of God is born in us. We pray for Christ’s light of life to take flesh in the church, the creation, and all people of God. *A brief silence.*

We bring to the manger our longing for the visible unity of the church of Jesus Christ, that undivided it proclaim the one whose birth brings good news of glad tidings to all people. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We bring to the manger hope for the well-being of creation, that every valley be exalted and every rough place be made plain so that every living thing may flourish. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We bring to the manger a vision of the reign of the Prince of Peace, that the nations, tribes, and peoples of this world will see and cherish in each other the very image of Christ, whose scepter is mercy and whose judgment is love. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We bring to the manger concern for those who have no place to lay their heads this night and for those who dwell in the shadow of loneliness, despair, illness, or death (*especially*). We come begging that the child for whom there was no room will open the doors of our hearts to the needs of our neighbors and ourselves. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We bring to the manger all people who, like the holy family, gather with children in the splendor of this most holy night, that the gift of faith be lavished on another generation. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We bring to the manger the hopes and dreams of all the years, that with Mary and Joseph, angels and archangels, saints and martyrs, loved ones of every time and every place, our prayers and praises join in a common song uniting heaven and earth in a single peace. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Into your outstretched arms, O God, we commend ourselves and all for whom we pray, trusting in Jesus Christ, the light and life of the world. **Amen.**

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Let us confess our sins with confidence in God's promise of forgiveness.

Silence is kept for reflection.

God, wonderful counselor,
**we confess that we have turned from your gifts
and chosen our own way.
We have not made room for you
in our hearts or in our world.**

**We have lived in fear;
we have not welcomed the stranger;
we desire gifts that will not endure.
Forgive us our sins, known and unknown,
and open us to receive the peace of Jesus
dwelling in and among us. Amen.**

God's lovingkindness has appeared to us in Christ our Savior.
We are saved, not by anything we have done,
but by God's mercy poured out on us richly.

In the name of **+** Jesus Christ,
your sins are forgiven.
Through the Spirit living in you,
God give you faith to trust Jesus,
who is Love born for you, now and always. **Amen.**

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

THANKSGIVING

OFFERING

An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need. If you would like to send an offering to Peace in Christ, you can mail it to PO Box 2098, Elizabeth, CO, 80107 or use this QR code:



OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray together,
Holy God,
**your beauty shines forth from the manger
and your love flows from the cross.**
**As you gather us around these signs
of your love come among us,
warm us to extend your care
among the hungry and all in need.**
In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

THANKSGIVING FOR THE WORD

Holy God,

everlasting Father, Prince of Peace, wonderful Counselor,
at the birth of time your Word brought light into the world,
and throughout the ages, you proclaim newness of life.

For your wondrous Word, we thank you, O God. **We thank you, O God.**

In the fullness of time, your Word became flesh,
to shine in our world's darkness,
to speak peace to all peoples,
and to welcome us as members of your family.

For your loving Word, we adore you, O God. **We adore you, O God.**

Grant us now the gift of your Spirit,
that held, nourished, and protected by your Word,
we may live as your children,
bearing your goodness throughout the world.

For your powerful Word, we praise you, O God. **We praise you, O God.**

All glory to you, holy God,
now and forever. Amen. **Amen.**

GOSPEL OF THE INCARNATION: John 1:1-14 (*candlelight*)

A reading from John.

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

¹⁰He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. ¹²But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

¹⁴And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

THE PRAYERS

Wonderful Counselor, increase our joy as the church gathers on this holy night to sing of our dear Savior's birth. May the story of salvation live in the hearts of all who sing of its wonders. God of grace, **Hear our prayer.**

Mighty God, you have broken the yoke of sin's burden through the birth of your Son. Comfort those whose burdens distract them from the deeper peace of this holy night and grant them a restful mind. God of peace, **Hear our prayer.**

Everlasting Father, uphold all who are in sorrow or need of your divine goodness and mercy (*especially*). We remember with thanksgiving all who have died and who now rest in your peaceful light. God of love, **Hear our prayer.**

Gracious God, bathe us always in the light of your Word made flesh, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

SILENT NIGHT - Sue and Jacob Nolan

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.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

BLESSING

May the Lord God, who has called you out of darkness to be servants of light, grant you the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds, and the peace of the Christ Child. In the name of Almighty God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

The candles are extinguished.

SENDING SONG: “Joy to the World”

1) Joy to the world, the Lord is come!

Let earth receive her king;
let ev'ry heart prepare him room
and heav'n and nature sing,
and heav'n and nature sing,
and heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.

2) Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!

Let all their songs employ,
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and
plains
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

3) No more let sin and sorrow grow
nor thorns infest the ground;
he comes to make his blessings flow
far as the curse is found,
far as the curse is found,
far as, far as the curse is found.

4) He rules the world with truth and grace
and makes the nations prove
the glories of his righteousness
and wonders of his love,
and wonders of his love,
and wonders, wonders of his love.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Share the good news. **Thanks be to God.**

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

Thank you to all of our helpers for sharing their gifts!

Piano and Voice – Tessa Smith

Readers – Ed Owen, Sharon Mohlis, Abby Mohlis, Kenadie Iverson, Derek Iverson