

**Worship in the Home**  
**Nativity of Our Lord, Christmas Eve**  
**December 24, 2020**



*In this time of world-wide crisis, congregations throughout this church are not able to gather for worship as the body of Christ. While we cannot be together in person, we can hear the word of God and hold each other in prayer.*

*We want to invite you to sing along with the hymns that are printed in the bulletin, and we thank Elaine Smith and Mary Nelson for leading us in those Christmas carols.*

**Prelude**

*O Come, O Come Emmanuel  
Hark the Herald Angels Sing  
Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring*

*Jacob Orczeck  
Chime Choir  
Mary Lou Hinish*

**Greeting**

Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's people on earth! The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with us all. **Amen.**

# Hymn

# O, Come, All Ye Faithful

ELW # 283



1 O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant! O  
2 The 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



Ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus, ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus,  
O come, let us a - dore him, O come, let us a - dore him,



ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus Do - mi - num.  
O come, let us a - dore him, Christ the Lord!

## Prayer of the Day

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.**

## Children's Story

*"Twas the Evening of Christmas"*

by *Glenys Nellist*

*While You Are Sleeping*

*Alex Snyder*

**First Reading:** Isaiah 9:2-7

<sup>2</sup>The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness— on them light has shined. <sup>3</sup>You 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. <sup>4</sup>For 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. <sup>5</sup>For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. <sup>6</sup>For 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. <sup>7</sup>His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne and dominion of David, to 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.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

*Lo, How A Rose*

*Chime Choir—*

**Gospel:** Luke 2:1-20

The holy gospel according to Luke, the second chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>1</sup>In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. <sup>2</sup>This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. <sup>3</sup>All went to their own towns to be registered. <sup>4</sup>Joseph 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. <sup>5</sup>He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. <sup>6</sup>While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. <sup>7</sup>And 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.

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

<sup>13</sup>And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, <sup>14</sup>“Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom God favors!”

<sup>15</sup>When 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.” <sup>16</sup>So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. <sup>17</sup>When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; <sup>18</sup>and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. <sup>19</sup>But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. <sup>20</sup>The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

### **Homily**

*Since this year has been backwards in so many ways, it is perhaps fitting that I am here in our lovely but empty sanctuary, where there is plenty of space for whomever would want to be here, retelling the story of the holy family finding no room in the inn. For many reasons, not the least of which being that we can't meet together this night, this Christmas will not be the holiday that most of us would envision or want. But, just as months ago we declared that this was the Lentiest Lent we could imagine, this simple celebration of the birth of Christ might be exactly what we need to hear the story of God's love again in a new way.*

*When the pastors met for Bible study this week, we got to talking about how the nativity is usually portrayed in artwork—with the characters clean and composed, serene and statuesque, in flowing robes with gilded halos glowing behind their heads. Pastor Ed remembered hearing how difficult it is for people in developing nations with poor sanitation and fewer medical resources to reconcile those fancy pictures with the circumstances described in Luke's gospel. The truth is that we don't like to think about the indignities of Jesus' birth; we are uncomfortable with the inn being full, the travelers being turned out into the cold, the baby being laid in a feeding trough. We want to sanitize the scene and bring Jesus in out of the cold. It's almost as if we forget that God could have chosen any time and any place to enter into the human story, from the poshest palace to the most well-equipped maternity ward in the finest modern hospital.*

*But instead, God chose this: to be born to travelers far from their home, with no modern comforts or conveniences, and to announce this birth first to shepherds, who themselves were wandering without the comfort of shelter and a home. Who are we to polish the rough edges from God's work?*

*All throughout Advent we talk about preparing for the coming of the Lord. If it were up to us, we would have chosen better for the birth of Jesus this year. We would have decked the halls and lit the candles; we would have worn Christmas sweaters and gathered to sing carols. We would have opened the doors wide to welcome God here to this house of worship. But God comes to us anyway. It was not into extraordinary or carefully prepared or ideal circumstances that Jesus was born. Knowing that the human experience can be a fierce struggle, God chose to enter into that struggle right from the very beginning. It was on the people who lived in deep darkness that God's light shined.*

*And so it is for us. Although we are missing much of what makes Christmas feel like Christmas, still, God has come to us, right where we are, because that is where we need God to be. If the shepherds could find the Christ child in a lowly manger, we, too, can find God beyond our expectations, lighting up this dark place where we find ourselves. Thanks be to Emmanuel, God with Us, who truly is with us, wherever we are.*

*Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing*

*Alyssa Clark*

### **Prayers of the People**

As we celebrate Christmas, let us praise God for the birth of our Savior and pray for all in need.

Mighty and merciful God, we praise you for bringing your Word to birth among us. Strengthen with your Spirit all the baptized, so that even where the faithful cannot assemble for worship, the whole church can together to honor the birth of Jesus. Hear us, O God our Redeemer. **Your mercy is great.**

We praise you for your created earth, the stars in the sky, the animals in stables, the flocks in the fields. Show us your majesty in the brightness of day and the darkness of night. Rouse our care for your magnificent creation. Hear us, O God our Creator. **Your mercy is great.**

We praise you for each day that knows peace and welcomes justice. Inspire leaders of nations to seek concord where there is war and violence. Guard ambassadors, relief workers, and military personnel the world over. Visit both the Palestinians and the Israelis, and protect the many peoples who live under military rule. Make our own streets avenues of peace. Hear us, O God our Sovereign. **Your mercy is great.**

We praise you for the benefits of light available in our homes and shining on our trees. Accompany those who enjoy no such light, and protect all who labor in the darkness on behalf of others. Hear us, O God our Light. **Your mercy is great.**

We praise you for new parents with their newborns and for the joys of families of every shape and size. Visit the homes where there is sickness or sorrow. Abide with people who live isolated from others. Bless the children who this year receive no gifts. Hear us, O God our Treasure. **Your mercy is great.**

We praise you for every sign of your loving presence, and we pray for all who suffer. Heal the sick. Feed the hungry. Shelter the homeless and the refugee. Visit those in prison. Comfort mourners. We pray for the millions who are afflicted with Covid-19. Uphold physicians, nurses, and all health care workers, and provide medical facilities for everyone. Hear us, O God our Healer. **Your mercy is great.**

We praise you, the almighty God born on the earth; and so you transformed the cosmos. Come to each of us, and receive our silent prayers. Hear us, O God our Beloved. **Your mercy is great.**

We praise you for all the saints who have proclaimed your glory in word and deed, especially those we remember in our hearts. With them, let us sing your praise, now and forever. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

To you, Mighty God, Prince of peace, wonderful Counselor, we offer our praises for your grace upon grace. Receive our prayers in the name of the one who was born to live and die and rise again for us, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who taught us to pray:

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.**

**Hymn**

*Silent Night, Holy Night!*

*ELW # 281*



1 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! All is calm,  
 2 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Shep - herds quake  
 3 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Son of God,



all is bright round yon vir - gin moth - er and child.  
 at the sight; glo - ries stream from heav - en a - far,  
 love's pure light ra - diant beams from your ho - ly face,



Ho - ly In - fant, so ten - der and mild, sleep in heav - en - ly  
 heav'n - ly hosts . . . sing, al - le - lu - ia! Christ, the Sav - ior, is  
 with the dawn of re - deem - ing grace, Je - sus, Lord, at your



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

**Benediction**

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 us this day + through the Word made flesh. **Amen.**

# Hymn

## Joy to the World

ELW # 267



1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re -  
2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their  
3 No more let sin and sor - row grow nor thorns in -  
4 He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the



ceive her king; let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare him  
songs em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and  
fest the ground; he comes to make his bless - ings  
na - tions prove the glo - ries of his righ - teous -



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  
ness and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his



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.  
love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.

# Sending

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

# Postlude

*Go Tell It on the Mountain*

*Alyssa Clark &  
Dr. Adam Smith*

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**Lessons & Carols Service**--a collaboration with the synod--will be available as usual on Facebook on Sunday and then the thing about no mid-week services for next week.

**Midweek Online Worship will resume the week of January 3rd.**

### **December's Special Envelope**

This month you will find an envelope marked "Christmas Offering". The designation for this offering is to help make up the deficit in the annual budget. If you are a monthly or quarterly contributor and would like to donate to this offering, please use a "PEW" envelope and mark "Christmas" along with your name or offering number.

**Prayers and Christian Sympathy** go to Vivian Beach upon the death of her husband, Gerald, on Tuesday, December 22, 2020.

#### **Serving God and Us Today**

Our Pastor – Rev. Traci Marriott

Our Pianist – Dr. Adam Smith

Special Musicians – Mary Lou Hinish, Alyssa Clark, Alex Snyder, Jacob Orczeck, Elaine Smith, Mary Nelson, Pr. Traci Marriott, Laura Orczeck, Shawn Orczeck, Bonnie Casey

Our Administrative Assistant – Lori Tremmel

Our Assistant Administrative Assistant– Laura Orczeck

Our Sexton – Bill Brown

Our Audio/Video Tech – Jacob Orczeck

Our Offering Counters – Jim Barley, Beth Garner

Third Quarter Ventures in Faith to "*United Lutheran Seminary*

**Prayers are needed for our homebound:** Shirley Acker, Carl & Dawn Alexy, Verna Blough, Fred Brandenburg, Clyde Claycomb, Betty Helsel, Doris Henderson, Gene Henry, Jere Hess, Gerald Hoover, Janet Kreider, Ginny Sell, Dan Sinal, Don Smith, Nancy Uber, Joy Williams.

**Prayer Concerns:**, John Aljets, Amy & Family, Pastor Denise Arpino, Randy Barrett, Helena Bassler, Vivian Beach, Barry Brumbaugh, Kelly Burk, Diane Cappel, Todd Chipperfield, Dwight Ciccotelli, Greg Comer, Melissa Fetzer, Brian Fleck, Ruth Fletcher, Jim Freyer, Amy Haffling, Erika Hallam, Betty Helsel, Gene Henry, Dan Hershberger, Audrey Hite, Jeff Hoenstine, Marilyn Horton, Amber Itle, Jenny, Darren Kreutzer, Kristen Malloy, Rick McIntyre, Ryder McDermitt, Betty McDowell, Nathan, Jim Negley, Zowe Orczeck, Aunt Mica, Deb Peters, Alana Rhodes, Paul Ruth, Kaleb Sollenberger, Barbara Smith, Connie Smith, Drew Smith, Luther Steele, Michael Sutton, Wyatt Sweinhart, Joyce Taylor, Cindy Thomas, Carol Weyandt, Pete Williams, Lyndsay Yon, Jody Zelanko, and for our **Missionaries: Rev. Lesley Hand, On Eagle's Wings, Elizabeth Hendrickson.**

**Our college students:** Christopher Bush, Olivia Day, Jacob Orczeck.

**Specialist Training in the Army:** Nathan Smith