

# St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church Christmas Eve Candlelight and Communion

Thursday, December 24, 2020

9:00 p.m.



## 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.



## PRELUDE & QUIET MEDITATION

**\*OPENING HYMN**

*"The First Noel"*

**LBW 56**

(Verses 1, 2, & 5)

**The first Noel the angel did say  
was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;  
in fields where they lay, keeping their sheep,  
on a cold winter's night that was so deep.  
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel!  
Born is the King of Israel.**

**They looked up and saw a star  
shining in the east beyond them far;  
and to the earth it gave great light,  
and so it continued both day and night.  
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel!  
Born is the King of Israel.**

Then entered in those wise men three,  
full rev'rently upon their knee,  
and offered there in his presence  
their gold, and myrrh, and frankincense.  
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel!  
Born is the King of Israel.

**\*WE CONFESS OUR SIN**

**LBW 41**

*"O Little Town of Bethlehem"*

(verse 4)

**O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray;  
Cast out our sin, and enter in, be born in us today.  
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;  
Oh, come to us, abide with us, Our Lord Immanuel!**

**\*WE ARE FORGIVEN**

God's love for us is greater than all our sins. God promises full pardon and complete forgiveness to all who turn from sin and place their trust in Christ, the light of the world. Hear and believe the good news that all your sins are forgiven. With God nothing is impossible.

**Amen.**

**\*LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH**

Now hear the words of Isaiah: For to us a child is born, to us a son is given,

**and the government will be on his shoulders.**

And he will be called

**Wonderful Counselor,**

(The first candle of the Advent Wreath is lit at this time.)

And he will be called

**Mighty God,**

(The second candle of the Advent Wreath is lit at this time.)

And he will be called

**Everlasting Father,**

(The third candle of the Advent Wreath is lit at this time.)

And he will be called

**Prince of Peace,**

(The fourth candle of the Advent Wreath is lit at this time.)

He is...

**Emmanuel, God is with us.**

(The Christ candle of the Advent Wreath is lit at this time.)

**\*HYMN OF PRAISE**

**ELW 240**

*“Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah”*

**Light one candle to watch for Messiah:  
let the light banish darkness.  
He shall bring salvation to Israel,  
God fulfills the promise.**

**Light two candles to watch for Messiah:  
let the light banish darkness.  
He shall feed the flock like a shepherd,  
gently lead them homeward.**

**Light three candles to watch for Messiah:  
let the light banish darkness.  
Lift your heads and lift high the gateway  
for the King of glory.**

**Light four candles to watch for Messiah:  
let the light banish darkness.  
He is coming, tell the glad tidings.  
Let your lights be shining!**

**\*GREETING**

Today Christ is born: Alleluia, alleluia! The grace of our ✠Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**And also with you.**

## **\*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.**

## **FIRST READING**

**Isaiah 9:2-7**

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

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks Be to God.**

## **PSALM**

**Psalms 96**

<sup>1</sup>Sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth.

<sup>2</sup>**Sing to the LORD, bless the name of the LORD; proclaim God's salvation from day to day.**

<sup>3</sup>Declare God's glory among the nations and God's wonders among all peoples.

<sup>4</sup>**For great is the LORD and greatly to be praised, more to be feared than all gods.**

<sup>5</sup>As for all the gods of the nations, they are but idols; but you, O LORD, have made the heavens.

**<sup>6</sup>Majesty and magnificence are in your presence; power and splendor are in your sanctuary.**

<sup>7</sup>Ascribe to the LORD, you families of the peoples, ascribe to the LORD honor and power.

**<sup>8</sup>Ascribe to the LORD the honor due the holy name; bring offerings and enter the courts of the LORD.**

<sup>9</sup>Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness; tremble before the LORD, all the earth.

**<sup>10</sup>Tell it out among the nations: “The LORD is king! The one who made the world so firm that it cannot be moved will judge the peoples with equity.”**

<sup>11</sup>Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea thunder and all that is in it; let the field be joyful and all that is therein.

**<sup>12</sup>Then shall all the trees of the wood shout for joy at your coming, O LORD, for you come to judge the earth.**

<sup>13</sup>You will judge the world with righteousness and the peoples with your truth.

## **SECOND READING**

**Titus 2:11-14**

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

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**\*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION** *“Joy to the World”*

**LBW 39**

**Joy to the world, the Lord is come.**

**Let earth receive its 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.**

**\*GOSPEL READING****Luke 2:1-20**

The Holy Gospel according to Luke the second chapter.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

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, every one 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. 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. 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. 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 Savior, 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. 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. 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 unto us. And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. 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.****CHRISTMAS MESSAGE****Pastor Clyde Singh**

**\*CREED** (sung to the tune of “O Little Town of Bethlehem”) **LBW 41**

**In God the Father we believe, the Lord of hosts his name.  
All things from him their form receive; by his strong Word they came.  
By him was all created in earth and heav’n above.  
He made them all, things great and small, by his great pow’r and love.**

**In God’s Son Jesus we believe, who came at God’s own hour,  
Whom Virgin Mary did conceive by Holy Spirit’s pow’r.  
He suffered and was buried, was raised at God’s own call  
To reign on high, and to draw nigh at last as judge of all.**

**In the Spirit we believe and in Christ’s Church on earth.  
The saints united, faith received, a gift of precious worth.  
He sanctifies and keeps us by his empow’ring love.  
Forgiven, we the grace shall flee to live with God above.**

**\*PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

*Each petition concludes: “Hear us, O God,”*

**The congregation responds: “Your mercy is great.”**

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 Carol Flint, Elaine Sierer, Betty Blockberger, Mary & Steve Clark, Lynn Conrad, Bud Cotterman, Betty Smalley, Jared DeLong, Sam Clippenger, Burl Barnes, and Ivan Aldred. Our friends Nick Bostelman, Alice Hunt, George Hunt, Roberta, Tom Zuber, Scott St. John, Romaine Boundy, Bob and Gretchen Noneman, Joey DenHerder and Nancy Kuns. 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.**

***The prayers conclude:***

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.**

**\*PEACE**

The peace of Christ the newborn child be with you all.

**And also with you.**

**OFFERING**

**\*OFFERING CANTICLE**

**LBW 144**

*"Good Christian Friends, Rejoice"*

**Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice;**

**Give ye heed to what we say: Jesus Christ is born today;**

**Ox and ass before him bow, and he is in the manger now.**

**Christ is born today! Christ is born today!**

**\*OFFERING PRAYER**

Let us pray.

Good and loving God, we rejoice in the birth of Jesus, who came among the poor to bring the riches of your grace. As you have blessed us with your gifts, let them be blessing for others. With the trees of the field, with all earth and heaven, we shout for joy at the coming of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

**\*THE GREAT THANKSGIVING**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

**\*PREFACE**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer, through whom you will also make all things new in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

**\*SANCTUS**

*“Holy, holy, holy...”*

**ELW pg. 153**

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,**

**Lord God of pow’r and might:**

**Heav’n and earth are full of your glory.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

**\*THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE**

Holy God, the Beginning and the End, our Salvation and our Hope, we praise you for creating a world of order and beauty. When we brought on chaos, cruelty and despair, you sent the prophets to proclaim your

justice and mercy. At this end of the ages your Son Jesus came to bring us your love and to heal all the suffering world.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore, his life, death, and resurrection, we await his coming again in righteousness and peace. Send your Spirit on us and on this bread and wine we share: strengthen our faith, increase our hope, and bring to birth the justice and joy of your Son. Through him all glory and honor is yours, Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy Church, both now and forever.

**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.**

**\*COMMUNION**

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

Amen.

**\*THE BLESSING AFTER COMMUNION**

Christ has come to us as a babe in Bethlehem and in the body and blood which we have now received. May we be strengthened for our journey by God's grace. **Amen.**

**\*THE CANTICLE** (sung to “God Rest You Merry Gentlemen”)

**Oh, thank the Lord and sing His praise,  
What he has done proclaim!  
Let all who seek the Lord rejoice  
And proudly bear His name  
Who leads his people forth  
His promise to claim  
Oh, tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy,  
Oh, tidings of comfort and joy!**

**Lord, let Your servant go in peace,  
Your word has been fulfilled.  
My eyes have seen the saving work  
Which for the world you willed;  
The glory of Your chosen race  
As Light for all revealed.  
Oh, tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy,  
Oh, tidings of comfort and joy!**

**\*PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Let us pray.

Radiant God, with our eyes we have seen your salvation, and in this meal we have feasted on your grace. May your Word take flesh in us, that we may be your holy people, revealing your glory made known to us in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

**\*CANDLELIGHT CEREMONY**

*(Candles are lit from the Christ Candle at the center of the Advent wreath,  
and the flames are spread throughout the congregation.)*

**\*HYMN**

*“Silent Night”*

**LBW 65**

**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.**

**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!**

**Silent night, holy night! Son of God, love's pure light  
Radiant beams from thy holy face with the dawn of redeeming grace,  
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.**

*(The congregation's candles are extinguished.)*

**\*BENEDICTION**

May Christ, who by his incarnation has filled us with grace and truth, give you peace this Christmas and always. Almighty God, Father, ✠Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

**Amen.**

**\*CLOSING HYMN**

*"Hark the Herald Angels Sing"*

**LBW 60**

**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!"  
Hark! The herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the newborn king!"**

**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!  
Hark! The herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the newborn king!"**

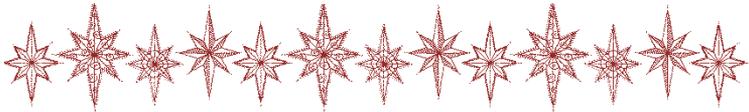
**Hail the heav'n-born Prince of peace!  
Hail the Sun of righteousness!  
Light and life to all he brings,  
ris'n with healing in his wings.**

**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.  
Hark! The herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the newborn king!"**

**\*DISMISSAL**

Glory to God in the highest!  
**Peace to God's people on earth!**

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



**Those serving Christ tonight:**

Pastor .....Pastor Clyde Singh  
Pianist.....Bill Brune  
Reader.....Anne Reinhart  
A/V Tech.....Jon Rhodes

Flowers adorning the alter are given to the glory of God by Burl and Ellie Barnes in honor of their family.