

CHRISTMAS EVE

God Fulfills His Promises

December 24, 2022 11:00pm

AS WE GATHER

The original title of the Christmas carol “In dulci jubilo” (LSB 386, “Now Sing We, Now Rejoice”) was interpreted by the famous French organist and composer Marcel Dupre as “In Quiet Joy.” Another familiar hymn tells of the birth of the Savior in the words “How silently the wondrous gift is given!” (LSB 361:3). Though there were moments of rage and loud opposition through His earthly ministry, many of our Lord’s activities happened in the quiet and stillness of His presence. Indeed, even as He accomplished His goal, He entered Jerusalem in quiet humility, suffered obediently, closed His eyes and breathed His last in death, and finally was laid in the stone-cold silence of a tomb. There are times for loud praise and rejoicing, but this night let us gather in quiet joy contemplating the mystery that, in this little babe in the little town of Bethlehem of Judea, fulfilled God’s ancient promise of redemption and peace for all who would be drawn in the silence of the Spirit of God through His Word and blessed Sacraments.

Reception of Holy Communion: If you are planning to receive Christ's supper today, please read through the words of exhortation in the fellowship folder. For members, it is a good review of important spiritual matters for gathering at the table. For guests, it explains our stance on confession of faith, doctrinal unity, and proper spiritual preparation to receive the Supper for your benefit.

✠ PREPARATION ✠

OPENING HYMN #386 “Now Sing We, Now Rejoice”

Now sing we, now rejoice, Now raise to heav’n our voice;
He from whom joy streameth Poor in a manger lies;
Not so brightly beameth The sun in yonder skies.
Thou my Savior art! Thou my Savior art!

Come from on high to me; I cannot rise to Thee.
Cheer my wearied spirit, O pure and holy Child;
Through Thy grace and merit, Blest Jesus, Lord most mild,
Draw me unto Thee! Draw me unto Thee!

Now through His Son doth shine The Father’s grace divine.
Death was reigning o’er us Through sin and vanity
Till He opened for us A bright eternity.
May we praise Him there! May we praise Him there!

Oh, where shall joy be found? Where but on heav’nly ground?
Where the angels singing With all His saints unite,
Sweetest praises bringing In heav’nly joy and light.
Oh, that we were there! Oh, that we were there!

(Rise)

INVOCATION & OPENING SENTENCES

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

Pastor: In dulci jubilo! In quiet joy! In quiet joy, we gather this evening, this very special night.

People: The Lord Almighty grant us a quiet night and peace at the last.

Pastor: We gather from our busy lives, our hurried routines, the loud noises of life,

People: in quiet joy.

Pastor: We bring our wearied bodies, our troubled hearts, our restless souls in hope,

People: in quiet joy.

Pastor: God is here, the LORD is in His holy temple;

People: let all the earth keep silence before Him.

CONFESSION & ABSOLUTION

Pastor: In the silence of this moment, let us prepare ourselves, and confess our sin to God.

Silence for reflection.

Pastor: Holy and gracious God,

People: I confess that I have sinned against you this day. Some of my sin I know—the thoughts and words and deeds of which I am ashamed—but some is known only to you. In the name of Jesus Christ, I ask forgiveness. Deliver and restore me that I may rest in peace.

Silence for reflection.

Pastor: In the silence of this night, by the mercy of God, we are redeemed by Jesus Christ, and in Him we are forgiven. We rest now in His peace and in quiet joy.

People: Amen.

HYMN #366 “It Came Upon the Midnight Clear”

It came upon the midnight clear, That glorious song of old,
From angels bending near the earth To touch their harps of gold:
“Peace on the earth, good-will to all, From heav’n’s all gracious king.”
The world in solemn stillness lay To hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come With peaceful wings unfurled,
And still their heav’nly music floats O’er all the weary world.
Above its sad and lowly plains They bend on hov’ring wing,
And ever o’er its babel sounds The blessed angels sing.

All you, beneath your heavy load, By care and guilt bent low,
Who toil along a dreary way With painful steps and slow:
Look up, for golden is the hour, Come swiftly on the wing,
The Prince was born to bring you peace; Of Him the angels sing.

For lo, the days have come to pass By prophets seen of old,
When down into the circling years Came Christ as was foretold.
His word of peace shall to the earth God’s ancient promise bring,
And all who take this gift will hear The song the angels sing.

✠ WORD ✠

Pastor: O Jesus, Prince of Glory, draw us to Thee.

People: Ah, dearest Jesus, holy Child, Prepare a bed, soft, undefiled, A quiet chamber set apart for you to dwell within my heart.

Pastor: Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me.

People: Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me. Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, grant us all your peace.

SALUTATION & PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And with thy spirit.

Pastor: Let us pray. In quiet joy, O God, we praise and thank you for the gift of your light, your joy, and your peace in your blessed Son, the Prince of Glory. Grant us to join our voices with your holy angels in new songs of peace and joy this night and always; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

(Be seated)

OLD TESTAMENT READING *Isaiah 9:2–7* (Light in the darkness)

² The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone. ³You have multiplied the nation; you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as they are glad when they divide the spoil. ⁴For the yoke of his burden, and the staff for his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian.⁵For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult and every garment rolled in blood will be burned as fuel for the fire. ⁶For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall

be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord

People: Thanks be to God.

PSALM 96 (A new song in praise of God's salvation)

Pastor: Sing to the LORD, bless his name;

People: tell of his salvation from day to day.

Pastor: Oh sing to the LORD a new song;

People: sing to the LORD, all the earth!

Pastor: Declare his glory among the nations,

People: his marvelous works among all the peoples!

Pastor: For great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised;

People: he is to be feared above all gods.

Pastor: For all the gods of the peoples are worthless idols,

People: but the LORD made the heavens.

Pastor: Splendor and majesty are before him;

People: strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.

Pastor: Ascribe to the LORD, O families of the peoples,

People: ascribe to the LORD glory and strength!

Pastor: Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name;

People: bring an offering, and come into his courts!

Pastor: Worship the LORD in the splendor of holiness;

People: tremble before him, all the earth!

Pastor: Say among the nations, "The LORD reigns! Yes, the world is established; it shall never be moved;

People: he will judge the peoples with equity."

Pastor: Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice;

People: let the sea roar, and all that fills it;

Pastor: let the field exult, and everything in it!

People: Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy

Pastor: before the LORD, for he comes,

People: for he comes to judge the earth.

Pastor: He will judge the world in righteousness,

People: and the peoples in his faithfulness.

Pastor: Sing to the LORD, bless his name;

People: tell of his salvation from day to day.

EPISTLE *Titus 2:11–14* (The grace of God has appeared.)

"For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people,¹² training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, ¹³ waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, ¹⁴ who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord

People: Thanks be to God.

VERSE

All: Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Pastor: For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

People: Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

(Rise)

HOLY GOSPEL *Luke 2:22–40* (The fulfillment of the promised Messiah)

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the second chapter.

People: Glory be to Thee, O Lord.

²²And when the time came for their purification according to the Law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord ²³(as it is written in the Law of the Lord, "Every male who first opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord") ²⁴and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the Law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons." ²⁵Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was

righteous and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. ²⁶And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. ²⁷And he came in the Spirit into the temple, and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the Law, ²⁸he took him up in his arms and blessed God and said, ²⁹“Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace, according to your word; ³⁰for my eyes have seen your salvation ³¹that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, ³²a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to your people Israel.” ³³And his father and his mother marveled at what was said about him. ³⁴And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, “Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed ³⁵(and a sword will pierce through your own soul also), so that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed.” ³⁶And there was a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years, having lived with her husband seven years from when she was a virgin, ³⁷and then as a widow until she was eighty-four. She did not depart from the temple, worshiping with fasting and prayer night and day. ³⁸And coming up at that very hour she began to give thanks to God and to speak of him to all who were waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem. ³⁹And when they had performed everything according to the Law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. ⁴⁰And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom. And the favor of God was upon him.

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to Thee, O Christ.

(Be seated)

SERMON HYMN #361 “O Little Town of Bethlehem”

O little town of Bethlehem, How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep The silent stars go by;
Yet in thy dark streets shineth The everlasting light.
The hopes and fears of all the years Are met in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary, And, gathered all above
While mortals sleep, the angels keep Their watch of wond’ring love.
O morning stars, together Proclaim the holy birth,
And praises sing to God the king And peace to all the earth!

How silently, how silently The wondrous gift is giv’n!
So God imparts to human hearts The blessings of His heav’n.
No ear may hear His coming; But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive Him, still The dear Christ enters in.

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;
O come to us, abide with us, Our Lord Immanuel!

SERMON

“The Only True Light in the Darkness”

Isaiah 9:2-7

(Rise)

NICENE CREED

People: I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried. And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end. And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets. And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church, I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life ☩ of the world to come. Amen.

OFFERING As your offering is collected, **please sign our fellowship folder** located at the end of the pew. If you are a visitor, please leave your address and phone. After you are finished, please pass the folder along to others in your pew, and return it to the center aisle. You may check the folder to see names of those to greet after the service.

(Rise)

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Pastor: Almighty and ever-living God, hear our prayer from the silence of our hearts and from your Holy Church. Inspire all those who confess your holy name with the Spirit of truth, unity, and concord. Grant that they agree in the truth of your holy Word and live in unity and godly love. Lord, in your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Save and defend our country, heavenly Father. Grant to all in authority wisdom and strength to know and do your will. Direct the hearts of all rulers that they rightly administer justice to all. Give grace to all pastors and servants of your Church that they by both their life and doctrine proclaim your true and lively Word and rightly administer your holy Sacraments. Give to all your people your heavenly grace that in quiet joy and with due reverence they hear and receive your holy Word, truly serving you in holiness and righteousness all the days of their life. Lord, in your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: We implore you, O Lord, mercifully to consider this congregation begging you especially to comfort and help all those who are in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness, or any adversity. Defend them from every evil to body and soul. Lord, in your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Heavenly Father, we give you high praise and thanks for the wonderful grace and virtue declared in all your saints from the beginning of the world. We commend to your mercy also, O Lord, all your servants who have departed with the sign of faith and now rest in the sleep of peace. Grant that on the day of the resurrection of all flesh, we and all your servants of the mystical Body of your Son be

set together on His right hand and hear His most joyful voice saying, “Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” Lord, in your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Grant this, O Father, for the sake of your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, our only Mediator, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

✠ SACRAMENT ✠

PREFACE

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them to the Lord.

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

PROPER PREFACE

Pastor: It is truly meet, 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, who brought redemption from sin to Jerusalem and the whole world, of whom all the Law and the Prophets proclaimed of old and, when the set time had fully come, came and announced the Good News of liberty and peace with God. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify your glorious name, evermore praising you and saying:

SANCTUS

Holy, holy, holy Lord God of Sabaoth adored;
Heav'n and earth with full acclaim shout the glory of your name.
Sing hosanna in the highest, sing hosanna to the Lord;
Truly blest is He who comes in the name of the Lord!

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THE LORD'S PRAYER

People: 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.

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

PAX DOMINI

Pastor: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

People: Amen.

AGNUS DEI

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O Jesus Christ, true Lamb of God, You take the sin of the world away;
O Jesus Christ, true Lamb of God, Have mercy on us, Lord, we pray.

O Jesus Christ, true Lamb of God, You take the sin of the world away;
Have mercy on us, Jesus Christ, And grant us peace, O Lord, we pray.

(Be seated)

DISTRIBUTION HYMNS

“God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen”

God rest ye merry, gentlemen, Let nothing you dismay,
Remember Christ our Savior Was born on Christmas Day;
To save us all from Satan's power When we were gone astray.
O tidings of comfort and joy, Comfort and joy, O tidings of comfort and joy!
From God our heavenly Father A blessed angel came;
And unto certain shepherds Brought tidings of the same;
How that in Bethlehem was born The Son of God by name.
O tidings of comfort and joy, Comfort and joy, O tidings of comfort and joy!

Fear not then, said the Angel Let nothing you affright
This day is born a Savior Of a pure Virgin bright
To free all those who trust in Him From Satan's pow'r and might
Oh tidings of comfort and joy Comfort and joy Oh tidings of comfort and joy!
God rest ye merry gentlemen Let nothing you dismay
Remember Christ our Savior Was born on Christmas Day
To save us all from Satan's pow'r When we were gone astray
Oh tidings of comfort and joy Comfort and joy Oh tidings of comfort and joy!

HYMN #373 “See Amid the Winter's Snow”

See amid the winter's snow, Born for us on earth below,
See, the gentle Lamb appears, Promised from eternal years.

Refrain:

**Hail, O ever-blessed morn! Hail, redemption's happy dawn!
Sing through all Jerusalem: “Christ is born in Bethlehem!”**

Lo, within a stable lies He who built the starry skies,
He who, throned in height sublime, Sits amid the cherubim. **Refrain**

Sacred Infant, all divine, What a tender love was Thine,
Thus to come from highest bliss Down to such a world as this! **Refrain**

Teach, O teach us, holy Child, By Thy face so meek and mild,
Teach us to resemble Thee In Thy sweet humility. **Refrain**

COMMON DISMISSAL

(Rise)

POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING

Pastor: Let us pray. In quiet joy, O God, how silently the wondrous gift is given: the gift of your Son at Christmas in His mother's lap and the gift of your Son now in us as members of His own Body. With sins forgiven, grant us a quiet night now and peace at the last; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

CANDLELIGHT SERVICE “Let There Be Light”

As the Pastor lights his candle from the Christ candle in the middle of the Advent wreath, the usher's come forward. The ushers light their candles from Pastors' candle. They will bring the Light to worshipers at the end of each pew.

(For the sake of safety, please hold lighted candles upright, dipping **unlit** candles into the flame of a lighted candle. We also ask that **young children not hold their own candle**, but instead hold a candle with one of their parents or use a battery operated candle.)

CANDLELIGHT HYMNS

HYMN #370 “What Child Is This”

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!

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!

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!

HYMN #363 “Silent Night, Holy Night”

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,
Heavenly 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.

BENEDICTION

Pastor: The angels declared to the shepherds, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.”

People: **Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ, the Lord.**

All: **Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests!**

Pastor: May the peace of Christ which passes all understanding fill your soul, the love of Christ + that covers all your sins comfort your heart, and the joy of Christ fill your lives tonight and always.

People: **Amen.**

CLOSING HYMN #387 “Joy to the World”

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.

Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns! Let men their songs employ,
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy, Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

No more let sins and sorrows 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.

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.

(Candles are extinguished)

Preacher
Liturgist
Lector
Acolyte
Organist

Pastor Harold Bender
Pastor Josh Grotelueschen
Krystal Wilson
Isabella Schmitz
Olivia Kukor

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Merry Christmas!