

CHRISTMAS EVE

The Song of the Angels

December 24, 2024

11:00pm

AS WE GATHER

One of the great pleasures of the Advent and Christmas season is the singing of hymns and carols associated with the nativity of our Lord. Many of the texts of these well-loved songs were written specifically for services in the Christmas season; others were not. “Silent Night, Holy Night” (*LSB* 363) was written to be first sung at a Christmas Eve service in Austria in 1818, and “O Little Town of Bethlehem” (*LSB* 361) was initially included as part of a children’s Christmas program at Holy Trinity Church in Philadelphia in 1868. But another well-loved hymn associated with Christmas was not originally a Christmas song. “Joy to the World” (*LSB* 387) was written as a paraphrase of the second half of Psalm 98 by the English hymnwriter Isaac Watts in 1719. When the text was printed as part of a collection of Psalms in English verse, he gave the song the heading “The Messiah’s Coming and Kingdom.” Our celebration of the coming to earth of Jesus as our Messiah and Lord gives us a great “resounding joy” that lasts all through our years as we await the fullness of His kingdom yet to come!

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.

WELCOME

PREPARATION

OPENING HYMN

“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing” *LSB* 380

Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King;
Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!”
Joyful, all ye nations, rise, Join the triumph of the skies;
With the angelic host proclaim,
“Christ is born in Bethlehem!” *Refrain*

Refrain: 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 the Father,
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see, Hail
Pleased as Man with man to dwell, Jesus

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
Born to raise the sons of earth,
Born to give them second birth. **Refrain**

(Rise)

INVOCATION & OPENING SENTENCE

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

People: Amen.

Pastor: I will bless the LORD at all times,
continually be in my mouth

2

**People: My soul makes its boast in the LORD,
humble hear and be glad.**

Pastor: Oh, magnify the LORD with all your might,
name together!

**People: Those who look to Him will not be ashamed,
faces shall never be ashamed.**

Pastor: The angel of the LORD encamps around those who love His name,
fear Him, and delivers them from all danger.

**People: The LORD redeems the souls of His servants,
of those who take refuge in Him,
condemned.**

CONFESSION & ABSOLUTION

Pastor: Let us go to our loving Father in prayer for
forgiveness for Jesus’ sake

HYMN “God Loves Me”

God loves me dearly, Grants me His love

God loves me dearly, Loves even me.

**Therefore I'll say again: God loves me dearly,
God loves me dearly, Loves even me.**

Pastor: Heavenly Father,

People: we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have failed to walk always in the paths of righteousness in our thinking, speaking, and acting; we have not loved you completely or our neighbors as ourselves. We have failed to live as sisters and brothers of your beloved Son, our Lord Jesus, whose birth we celebrate this day. In your great mercy, forgive and renew us that we may be servants of our eternal king to the glory of your holy name. Amen.

3

Pastor: God has heard our plea and has responded to our need. "God sent forth His Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law."

HYMN "God Loves Me Dearly" LSB 392 Sts. 2-3

I was in slav'ry, Sin, death, and darkness;
God's love was working To make me free.

**Therefore I'll say again: God loves me dearly,
God loves me dearly, Loves even me.**

He sent forth Jesus, My dear Redeemer,
He sent forth Jesus And set me free.

**Therefore I'll say again: God loves me dearly,
God loves me dearly, Loves even me.**

Pastor: Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

HYMN "God Loves Me Dearly" LSB 392 Sts. 4-5

Jesus, my Savior, Himself did
Jesus, my Savior, Paid all I owe
**Therefore I'll say again: G
God loves me dearly, Loves**

Now I will praise You, O Lov
Now I will praise You All my
**Therefore I'll say again: G
God loves me dearly, Loves**

4

Pastor: The heavenly sounds of the
God have echoed since the
relates that when the Lord
the earth, "the morning star
the sons of God [angels] sh
prophet Isaiah writes of a ti
heavenly beings sounding o
(Isaiah 6:24), and the psalm
that has breath" to "praise t
150:6). The traditional Fre
Have Heard on High" inclu
have be blessed to hear the
Using the Latin phrase "Glor
which means "glory to God
our voices to the glorious s
together we sing the next h

HYMN OF PRAISE

"Angels We Have Heard

Angels we have heard on high
Sweetly singing o'er the plain
And the mountains in reply,
Echoing their joyous strains.

Gloria in excelsis Deo. Glo

Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains procl
What the gladsome tidings be
Which inspire your heav'nly s

Gloria in excelsis Deo. Gloria in excelsis Deo.

5 continued

Come to Bethlehem and see
Him whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee
Christ the Lord, the newborn King.

Gloria in excelsis Deo. Gloria in excelsis Deo.

SALUTATION & PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Let us pray. Gracious God, on this blessed day, we celebrate our Lord's birth as the fulfillment of your promise of redemption from sin. With the company of song-filled angels in heaven and jubilant people on earth, we welcome Jesus as the Savior of the world and Lord of our hearts, who now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

(Be seated)

WORD

OLD TESTAMENT READING *Isaiah 9:2–7* (We see a great light.) 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 th
forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of

Lector: This is the Word of the LO

People: Thanks be to God.

HYMN "Of the Father's Lov

Of the Father's love begotten Ere the
He is Alpha and Omega, He the source
Of the things that are, that have been,
And that future years shall see Evermo

Oh, that birth forever blessed, When t
By the Holy Ghost conceiving, Bore t
And the babe, the world's Redeemer,
First revealed His sacred face Evermo

This is He whom seers in old time
Chanted of with one accord,
Whom the voices of the prophets
Promised in their faithful word.
Now He shines, the long expected;
Let creation praise its Lord Evermore

O ye heights of heav'n adore Him;
Angel hosts, His praises sing.
Pow'rs, dominions, bow before Him
And extol our God and King.
Let no tongue on earth be silent,
Ev'ry voice in concert ring Evermore

7 continued

(Rise) Christ, to Thee, with God the
And, O Holy Ghost, to Thee
Hymn and chant and high than
And unending praises be,
Honor, glory, and dominion,
And eternal victory Evermore

EPISTLE *Titus 2:11–14* (The grace of

¹¹For the grace of God has appeared,
people, ¹²training us to renounce ungodly
passions, and to live self-controlled, u

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.

DUET

(Rise)

HOLY GOSPEL *Luke 2:1–20* (The birth of Jesus Christ)

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

People: Glory to you, O Lord.

In 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,

⁸ continued

because he was of the house and lineage of David, ⁵ to 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 great fear. ¹⁰And the angel said to them, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of 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 you in the highest, and earth peace among those with whom angels went away from them into heaven.” ¹⁵And when the angels went away from them into heaven, 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 no account of it, because they had been told them concerning this child. ¹⁸And they wondered at what the shepherds told them, but they pondered all these things in their hearts. ¹⁹And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all that they had heard and seen, as it had been said to them.

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to you, O Christ.

⁹

SERMON HYMN

“The People That in Darkness

The people that in darkness sat
A glory of the light has shined on them
who long in shades of death have been,
In shades of death have been,

To hail Thee, Sun of Righteousness,
The gath’ring nations come;
They joy as when the reapers bear
Their harvest treasures home, Their harvest

To us a Child of hope is born,
To us a Prince of Peace is born,
And on His shoulder ever rests
All power in earth and heav’n.

His name shall be the Prince of Peace,
The Wonderful, the Counselor,
The God by all adored, The God by all

His righteous government and pow’r
On judgment and on justice based,
His reign shall have no end. His reign

Lord Jesus, reign in us, we pray, And

Who with the Father ever art
And Holy Spirit, one, And Holy Spirit, one.

SERMON “The Promised Child and the Angels’ Song”

Isaiah 9:2-7

10

(Rise)

OFFERTORY

LSB p. 192

Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within me.
Cast me not away from Thy presence,
and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me.
Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation,
and uphold me with Thy free spirit. Amen.

NICENE CREED

**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
Father and the Son together is worshipped
who spoke by the prophets.**

11 continued

**And I believe in one holy Christian Church,
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,
I look for the resurrection of the dead and
the life of the world to come. Amen.**

OFFERING As your offering is collected, please
fellowship folder located at the end of the
visitor, please leave your address and phone number
finished, please pass the folder along to the next
return it to the center aisle. You may also have
of those to greet after the service.

(Rise)

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Pastor: Let us pray. O Dayspring from
Bethlehem, we follow in the footsteps of the
knelt in humble adoration and praise for the
years ago. Like shepherds of old, we receive
the message that the herald of peace
you is born this day in the city of David,
who is Christ the Lord.” We thank you for
thing that has happened. Thank you for
us as well. Our hearts grow joyful in the
meaning of the miracle. God is with us
there is hope for all who hunger and thirst
to you. You have come to our aid, O Lord,
helpless to do for ourselves. We thank you
faithfulness the things that we cannot do
so that like ancient shepherds, you have
become for us a road of glory and
peace. As you did with Mary and Joseph,
your home in our human life. We thank you
and Mary went up from Galilee to
wherever we may help to care for the
world.

12 continued

humankind. As Mary brought into this world “a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to your people Israel,” so enable us, too, to bring your peace to desperate people. Grant that all who see our worship of the newborn babe wonder at the way we keep this day. And O Bethlehem’s royal prince, let there be some who, because of us, ponder these things deep within their hearts. We praise you, the sun of righteousness, who has risen with healing in your wings; we praise you now and evermore.

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 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; by whose birth as Savior and divine king, you have manifested the fullness of your glory. By your coming among us, you have turned our sorrow into joy that has no end. Therefore with angels and archangels and all the company of heaven we laud and magnify your holy name, evermore praising you and saying:

13

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

Our Father who art in heaven, hallow kingdom come, Thy will be done on e give us this day our daily bread; and f trespasses as we forgive those who t lead us not into temptation, but deliv Thine is the kingdom and the power a and ever. Amen.

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

PAX DOMINI

Pastor: The peace of the Lord be w

People: Amen.

AGNUS DEI

O Jesus Christ, true Lamb o

You take the sin of the wor

O Jesus Christ, true Lamb o

Have mercy on us, Lord, w

O Jesus Christ, true Lamb o

You take the sin of the wor

Have mercy on us, Jesus C

And grant us peace, O Lor

(Be seated)

14

DISTRIBUTION HYMNS

“Infant Holy, Infant L

Infant holy, Infant lowly, For His bed
Oxen lowing, Little knowing Christ th
Swiftly winging, Angels singing,
Bells are ringing, Tidings bringing:
Christ the child is Lord of all! Christ

Flocks were sleeping, Shepherds keep
Vigil till the morning new
Saw the glory, Heard the story, Tiding
Thus rejoicing, Free from sorrow,
Praises voicing, Greet the morrow:

Christ the child was born for you!
Christ the child was born for you!

“What Child Is This”

LSB 370

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!

15 continued

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!

COMMON DISMISSAL

(Rise)

POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING

Pastor: Let us pray. We give thanks, heavenly Father, that you have refreshed us through this Sacrament and have given us eternal hope in Jesus, your Son and our king. Joined with singing saints and the whole host of heaven, we praise your Son at His birth and celebrate with joy the blessings He brings this day and every day; through the same Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

CANDLELIGHTING

The pastor takes the light from the Church acolytes and ushers. They pass the light. The lights are lit.
While we light the candles – “Th

16

“The First Noel”

The first Noel, the angel did say,
was to certain poor shepherds in field
in fields where they lay keeping their
on a cold winter’s night that was so d

Refrain: Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, I

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

And by the light of that same star
three wise men came from country far
to seek for a king was their intent,
and to follow the star wherever it went

This star drew nigh to the northwest,
o’er Bethlehem it took its rest,
and there it did both stop and stay,
right over the place where Jesus lay. I

Then entered in those wise men three,
full reverently upon their knee,
and offered there in his presence
their gold, and myrrh, and frankincense

Then let us all with one accord
sing praises to our heavenly Lord,

who hath made heaven and earth of naught,
and with his blood our life hath bought. **Refrain**

17

“Silent Night, Holy Night” LSB #363

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 blessing of God Almighty—the Father, the Son,
and the Holy Spirit—be with you, now and
forevermore.

People: Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

“Angels from the Realms of Glory” LSB 367

Angels from the realms of glory,
Wing your flight o’er all the earth;
Ye who sang creation’s story,
Now proclaim Messiah’s birth.

**Refrain: Come and worship, come and worship;
Worship Christ, the newborn King.**

18 continued

Shepherds in the field
Watching o’er your flock
God with us is now res
Yonder shines the Infan

Sages, leave your cont
Brighter visions beam
Seek the great Desire o
Ye have seen His natal

Saints before the altar
Watching long in hope
Suddenly the Lord, des
In His temple shall app

All creation, join in pr
God the Father, Spirit,
Evermore your voices
To the eternal Three in

Please extinguish you

Preacher
Liturgist
Lector
Organist

Pastor
Pastor
Elisha
Olive

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