

## CHRISTMAS EVE

Resounding Psalms for Advent: Reign  
December 24, 2023 ~ 11:00pm

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**AS WE GATHER** This evening we join Joseph as we wait for the coming of Jesus. When Mary became pregnant Joseph did not have the luxury of knowing how this happened, and assumed that she had been unfaithful. He planned to divorce her quietly. But God had different plans, and sent an angel to Joseph to tell him that Mary's child was the Son of God, Immanuel. This left Joseph with a choice. Would he believe that through Mary God was coming to be with men, or was all of this a lie? This Christmas we also are left with this choice. Was Jesus truly the Son of God dwelling among us to save us from our sins, or was he just someone we can ignore?

**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

### HANDSHAKES & HUGS

#### ✠ PREPARATION ✠

#### HYMN #368 "Angels We Have Heard on High"

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

***Gloria in excelsis Deo. Gloria in excelsis Deo.***

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

***Gloria in excelsis Deo. Gloria in excelsis Deo.***

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.***

(Rise)

### INVOCATION

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

**People: Amen.**

### GREAT O ANTIPHONS

Pastor: O Wisdom, proceeding from the mouth of the Most High, pervading and permeating all creation, mightily ordering all things:

**People: Come and teach us the way of prudence.**

Pastor: O Adonai and ruler of the house of Israel, who appeared to Moses in the burning bush and gave him the Law on Sinai:

**People: Come with an outstretched arm and redeem us.**

Pastor: O Root of Jesse, standing as an ensign before the peoples, before whom all kings are mute, to whom the nations will do homage:

**People: Come quickly to deliver us.**

Pastor: O Key of David and scepter of the house of Israel, you open and no one can close, you close and no one can open:

**People: Come and rescue the prisoners who are in darkness and the shadow of death.**

Pastor: O Dayspring, splendor of light everlasting:

**People: Come and enlighten those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of Death, bringing them the joy of salvation.**

Pastor: O King of the nations, the ruler they long for, the cornerstone uniting all people:

**People: Come and save us all, whom you formed out of clay.**

Pastor: O Emmanuel, our king and our Lord, the anointed for the nations and their Savior:

**People: Come and save us, O Lord our God.**

#### HYMN #379

#### "O Come, All Ye Faithful"

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!*

Highest, most holy, Light of Light eternal,  
Born of a virgin, a mortal He comes;  
Son of the Father Now in flesh appearing! **Refrain**

Sing, choirs of angels, Sing in exultation,  
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!  
Glory to God In the highest: **Refrain**

Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, Born this happy morning;  
Jesus, To Thee be glory giv'n!  
Word of the Father Now in flesh appearing! **Refrain**

#### **SALUTATION & PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

Pastor: Let us pray. O God, you make us glad with the yearly remembrance of the birth of your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ.

**People: Grant that as we joyfully receive Him as our Redeemer, we may with sure confidence behold Him when He comes to be our Judge;**

Pastor: through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**People: Amen.**

(Be seated)

#### **✠ WORD ✠**

**OLD TESTAMENT READING** *Isaiah 7:10–14* (The virgin's son will be called Immanuel.) <sup>10</sup> Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz: <sup>11</sup> "Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven." <sup>12</sup> But Ahaz said, "I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test." <sup>13</sup> And he said, "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary men, that you weary my God also? <sup>14</sup> Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

**EPISTLE** *1 John 4:7–16* (God is love.)

<sup>7</sup> Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. <sup>8</sup> Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. <sup>9</sup> In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. <sup>10</sup> In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. <sup>11</sup> Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. <sup>12</sup> No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us. <sup>13</sup> By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. <sup>14</sup> And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. <sup>15</sup> Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. <sup>16</sup> So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

*"Of the Father's Love Begotten" Placido Ramos-Frankowski/Violin*

(Rise)

**HOLY GOSPEL** *Matthew 1:18–25* (Immanuel is born; they call Him Jesus.)

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the first chapter.

**People: Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>18</sup> Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. <sup>19</sup> And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. <sup>20</sup> But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup> She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will

save his people from their sins.”<sup>22</sup> All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:<sup>23</sup> “Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel” (which means, God with us).<sup>24</sup> When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife,<sup>25</sup> but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**People: Praise to you, O Christ.**

(Be seated)

### **SERMON HYMN #383 “A Great and Mighty Wonder”**

A great and mighty wonder, A full and holy cure:  
The virgin bears the infant With virgin honor pure!

**Refrain: Proclaim the Savior’s birth:**

**“To God on high be glory And peace to all the earth!”**

The Word becomes incarnate And yet remains on high,  
And cherubim sing anthems To shepherds from the sky. **Refrain**  
While thus they sing your Monarch, Those bright angelic bands,  
Rejoice, O vales and mountains, And oceans, clap your hands. **Refrain**  
Since all He comes to ransom, By all be He adored,  
The infant born in Beth’em, The Savior and the Lord. **Refrain**  
All idols then shall perish And Satan’s lying cease,  
And Christ shall raise His scepter, Decreeing endless peace. **Refrain**

### **SERMON**

(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.**

(Be seated)

**OFFERINGS** 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: Let us pray for the whole Church of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.

Lord God Almighty, on this most holy night we come before you in awe at the wonder and majesty of the incarnation. The Savior of the nations has come, and with joy we greet our newborn King. Let the proclamation of His birth sound forth throughout the world. Give to your Church faithful pastors to proclaim the good tidings of His birth, and give to your people willing ears to hear and believe. Lord, in your mercy,

**People: hear our prayer.**

Pastor: Heavenly Father, you sent an angel to reveal to Joseph that the Child in Mary's womb was your own, preserving their marriage and family. Preserve our homes also by your Holy Word. Fill them with your grace, that husbands and wives, parents and children may live in peace and love with one another. Lord, in your mercy,

**People: hear our prayer.**

Pastor: Almighty God, the One born in Bethlehem is the Son of David and the Lord of David, to whom every knee shall bow. Look upon those you have placed in authority, and grant that they would govern in wisdom and justice. Lord, in your mercy,

**People: hear our prayer.**

Pastor: Heavenly Father, you love us and sent your Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Strengthen us to love one another. As you have mercy upon all who are poor and troubled, so perfect your love in us, that we would gladly be your instruments of help in time of need. Lord, in your mercy,

**People: hear our prayer.**

Pastor: Glorious Lord, as we near the hour of your Son's birth help us to look forward to his return. Be with all who mourn, reminding them that he is coming back to make all things new. Lord, in your mercy,

**People: hear our prayer.**

Pastor: Giver and Preserver of life, your Son came to save us from sin and its curse. Hear the pleas of all who call to you for mercy. Deliver them from affliction according to your will, and work in them steadfast faith to cling to the life they have in Christ. Lord, in your mercy,

**People: hear our prayer.**

Pastor: Almighty Father, guard in safety all emergency workers and those whose vocations keep them from their families for our well-being this evening. Lord, in your mercy,

**People: hear our prayer.**

Pastor: Holy Lord, you promised the virgin-born Son to reluctant King Ahaz, and in the fullness of time the Word became flesh. Open our hearts and strengthen our faith gladly to receive your Son in the signs where He is present: not in signs of our own choosing, but in the Holy Word and Sacraments. Lord, in your mercy,

**People: hear our prayer.**

Pastor: Almighty God, you have given your Son, born of Mary, to be the Savior of the world. Send your Spirit and abide with us, that we may confess Him and remain in your love until He comes again in glory; for He lives and reigns with you and the same 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 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; for in the mystery of the Word made flesh you have given us a new revelation of your glory that, seeing you in the person of your Son, we may know and love those things which are not seen. 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!

## PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Pastor: Blessed are you, Creator of all that exists, for you have had mercy on us and sent your Son into our flesh to be our Savior. In His name we ask you to forgive, renew, and strengthen us with your Word and Spirit. Gather us together with all the faithful until that Day we join them at the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom, which has no end. To you alone, O Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be all glory, now and forever.

**People: Amen.**

## THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

Pastor: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My  $\times$  body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me." In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My  $\times$  blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

## PROCLAMATION OF CHRIST

Pastor: As often as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.

**People: Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.**

Pastor: O Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, in giving us your body and blood to eat and to drink, you lead us to remember and confess your holy cross and passion, your blessed death, your rest in the tomb, your resurrection from the dead, your ascension into heaven, and your coming for the final judgment. So remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

## 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.**

## PAX DOMINI

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

**People: Amen.**

## AGNUS DEI

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

*"O Little Town of Bethlehem"*

*Placido Ramos-Frankowski/Violin*

### HYMN #380 "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"

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: 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 the incarnate Deity!  
Pleased as Man with man to dwell, Jesus, our Immanuel! *Refrain*

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 man no more may die,  
Born to raise the sons of earth, Born to give them second birth. *Refrain*

### Hymn #376 "Once in Royal David's City"

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.

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 mean and lowly Lived on earth our Savior holy.

For He is our childhood's pattern, Day by day like us He grew;  
He was little, weak, and helpless, Tears and smiles like us He knew;  
And He feels for all our sadness, And He shares in all our gladness.

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.

Not in that poor, lowly stable With the oxen standing by  
Shall we see Him, but in heaven, Set at God's right hand on high.  
Then like stars His children, crowned, All in white, His praise will sound!

#### COMMON DISMISSAL

*During the following hymn, ushers may light the individual candles of people sitting near the end of pews, who light those next to them until all candles are lit.*

#### HYMN #361 "O Little Town of Bethlehem" Stanzas 1,2,4

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!

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!

#### ✠ SERVICE OF LIGHT ✠

##### PRAYER

Pastor: Let us pray. O God, you make this most holy night to shine with the brightness of the true Light.

**People: Grant that as we have known the mysteries of that Light on earth we may also come to the fullness of His joys in heaven;**

Pastor: 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.**

##### BENEDICTION

Pastor: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.

**People: Amen.**

##### PSALM 24

The earth is the LORD's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein, <sup>2</sup>for he has founded it upon the seas and established it upon the rivers. <sup>3</sup>Who shall ascend the hill of the LORD? And who shall stand in his holy place? <sup>4</sup>He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to what is false and does not swear deceitfully. <sup>5</sup>He will receive blessing from the LORD and righteousness from the God of his salvation. <sup>6</sup>Such is the generation of those who seek him, who seek the face of the God of Jacob. <sup>7</sup>Lift up your heads, O gates! And be lifted up, O ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in. <sup>8</sup>Who is this King of glory? The LORD, strong and mighty, the LORD, mighty in battle! <sup>9</sup>Lift up your heads, O gates! And lift them up, O ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in. <sup>10</sup>Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, he is the King of glory!

**CANDLELIGHT 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.  
12 continued

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.

Preacher  
Liturgist  
Organist

Pastor Joshua Grotelueschen  
Pastor Harold Bender  
Olivia Kukor

**Christmas Day  
Worship**

December 25 at 9:00am

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December 30 – 5:00pm  
December 31 – 9:00am