



# ***“Prepare Ye: Prepare a Place”***

***Wednesday, December 24, 2020 4:00PM***

***Worship Service***

## **AS WE GATHER**

Welcome to Christmas Eve worship to celebrate the Christ Child placed in a manger. Just as Mary and Joseph prepared a place for the baby Jesus to rest his head in a manger, so we prepare a place in our hearts this Christmas Eve for Jesus to be present with us.

**CALL TO WORSHIP (Bell Choir)**

**“O Come All Ye Faithful”**

**arr. Krug**

## **WELCOME**

## **OPENING HYMN**

**“Angels from the Realms of Glory”**

**LSB 367 sts. 1-3**

1 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

2 Shepherds in the field abiding,  
Watching o’er your flocks by night,  
God with us is now residing,  
Yonder shines the Infant Light. Refrain

3 Sages, leave your contemplations,  
Brighter visions beam afar;  
Seek the great Desire of nations,  
Ye have seen His natal star. Refrain

Ref Come and worship, come and worship;  
Worship Christ, the newborn King.

Text: Public domain

*Stand*

## **INVOCATION AND CALL TO WORSHIP**

**P** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**C** Amen.

**P** Prepare the way of the Lord! Make straight in the desert a highway for our God!

**C** To us a child is born.

**P** To us a Son is given.

**C** And the government will be on his shoulders.

**P** And he will be called—

**C** Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

**P** For unto you is born today in the city of David—

**C** A Savior, who is Christ the Lord!

## CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

**P** On this holy night, merciful Father, hear our confession, for frequently we hesitate to take your Son.

**C** **Instead we take the forbidden fruit, like Adam and Eve, and hide behind the bushes.**

**P** We take advantage of others, while mouthing pious words.

**C** **We take your blessings for granted, living with thankless hearts.**

**P** We take vengeance upon those who hurt us, promising retaliation.

**C** **We take life into our own hands, ignoring your holy will.**

**P** We take refuge and satisfaction in sin, spurning your commandments.

**C** **We take hold of our possessions, refusing to let them go.**

**P** We take part in sinful conversations, oblivious as to how they break your heart.

**C** **Lord, have mercy! Christ, have mercy! Lord, have mercy!**

**P** Luke writes in tonight's gospel lesson, "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:11). Jesus your Savior took your place in the manger and upon the cross. As the Christ and Lord, Jesus took all of your sin, shame and brokenness. I announce to you the complete and full pardon of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. For unto you is born today in the city of David—

**C** **A Savior, who is Christ the Lord!**

## HYMN of PRAISE

**"Angels from the Realms of Glory"**

**LSB 367 sts. 4-5**

4 Saints before the altar bending,  
Watching long in hope and fear,  
Suddenly the Lord, descending,  
In His temple shall appear. Refrain

△ 5 All creation, join in praising  
God the Father, Spirit, Son,  
Evermore your voices raising  
To the\_ternal Three in One. Refrain

Ref Come and worship, come and worship;  
Worship Christ, the newborn King.

Text: Public domain

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

**P** Almighty God, you gave your only Son to take our human nature upon himself and to be born of a virgin. Grant that we may rejoice in this Christmas gift—"For unto you is born today in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord"; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

*Sit*

## BELL CHOIR ANTHEM

**"Angels We Have Heard on High"**

**arr. Krug**

## OLD TESTAMENT READING

**Isaiah 9:1–7**

**P** The Old Testament Reading is from Isaiah, chapter 9.

<sup>1</sup> But there will be no gloom for her who was in anguish. In the former time he brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time he has made glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations.

<sup>2</sup> The people who walked in darkness  
 have seen a great light;  
 those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness,  
 on them has light 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 they are glad when they divide the spoil.

<sup>4</sup> For 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.

<sup>5</sup> For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult  
 and every garment rolled in blood  
 will be burned as fuel for the fire.

<sup>6</sup> For 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.

<sup>7</sup> Of 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.

**P** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

#### **EPISTLE READING**

**2 Corinthians 4:5–6**

**P** The Epistle is from 2 Corinthians, chapter 4.

<sup>5</sup>For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. <sup>6</sup>For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

**P** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

*Stand*

#### **GOSPEL READING**

**Luke 2:1–20**

**P** The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the second chapter.

**C** Glory to You, O Lord.

<sup>1</sup>In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. <sup>2</sup>This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. <sup>3</sup>And all went to be registered, each to his own town. <sup>4</sup>And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, <sup>5</sup>to be registered with Mary, his betrothed,

who was with child. <sup>6</sup>And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. <sup>7</sup>And 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.

<sup>8</sup>And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup>And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear. <sup>10</sup>And the angel said to them, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy that will be for all the people. <sup>11</sup>For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. <sup>12</sup>And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths 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,  
and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!”

<sup>15</sup>When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.” <sup>16</sup>And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. <sup>17</sup>And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. <sup>18</sup>And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. <sup>19</sup>But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. <sup>20</sup>And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

**P** This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**C** Praise to You, O Christ.

### HYMN of the Day

### “Angels We Have Heard on High”

LSB 368

- 1 Angels we have heard on high,  
Sweetly singing o’er the plains,  
And the mountains in reply,  
Echoing their joyous strains. Refrain
- 2 Shepherds, why this jubilee?  
Why your joyous strains prolong?  
What the gladsome tidings be  
Which inspire your heav’nly song? Refrain
- 3 Come to Bethlehem and see  
Him whose birth the angels sing;  
Come, adore on bended knee  
Christ the Lord, the newborn King. Refrain

Ref Gloria in excelsis Deo.  
Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Text: Public domain

### SERMON

### “Prepare Ye: A Place”

*Stand*

### PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

**P** Dear Lord Jesus, you came from eternity into time and space—not as a metaphor or myth, fable or tale—but to bear our sin and be our Savior. We sing to you with all the humility and joy we can muster, “Born that man no more may die, born to raise the sons of earth, born to give them second birth.” We praise, bless and adore you as we embrace the hymn of the angels. For unto you is born today in the city of David—

**C** A Savior, who is Christ the Lord!

**P** Dear Lord Jesus, we thank you that Luke took such great care to detail the history of your birth—one of the greatest details is the lowliness of your birth. Any other king—like Caesar Augustus—would’ve come with great fanfare and a royal entourage. But you came into our world in profound weakness. “No room in the inn” wasn’t an insult to you; it was your choice, your plan, the way of the gospel. We rejoice with the angels who announced. For unto you is born today in the city of David—

**C** **A Savior, who is Christ the Lord!**

**P** Dear Lord Jesus, you didn’t consider equality with God something to be protected or hoarded. Rather, you made yourself nothing, becoming one of us. And with measureless love and indescribable compassion, you died in our place upon the cross. Thank you for these angelic lyrics. For unto you is born today in the city of David—

**C** **A Savior, who is Christ the Lord!**

**P** Dear Lord Jesus, we long for the Day when every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that you are Lord, to the glory of God the Father. But on this Christmas Eve, we humble ourselves, in quietness and stillness, gratefulness and peace. We pray in your merciful and mighty name, Jesus.

**C** **Amen.**

### **LORD’S PRAYER**

**P** Lord, remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

**C** **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.**

### **INVITATION TO THE MEAL**

**P** Jesus Christ, who in love gave His life for us, invites us to share in the meal He has given to His disciples with His words, “Do this in remembrance of Me.”

**C** **We remember His love for us in His death and we remember and celebrate His rising from the grave for our salvation.**

**P** Jesus says, “Whoever acknowledges Me before men, I will also acknowledge before My Father in heaven.”

**C** **We publicly acknowledge You, Jesus, as our Savior from sin and we come before You now in oneness of faith and spirit to receive Your grace in this meal.**

**P** Let us then approach the Table of the Lord with confidence so that we may receive mercy, grace and strength to live as His people.

### **THE WORDS OF OUR LORD**

**P** 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  $\text{✠}$  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  $\text{✠}$  blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”

## **PAX DOMINI**

**P** The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**C** Amen.

*Sit*

## **DISTRIBUTION HYMN**

## **“What Child Is This”**

**LSB 370**

- 1 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!
- 2 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!
- 3 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!

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## **DISTRIBUTION HYMN**

## **“Gentle Mary Laid Her Child”**

**LSB 374**

- 1 Gentle Mary laid her child  
Lowly in a manger;  
There He lay, the Undefined,  
To the world a stranger.  
Such a babe in such a place,  
Can He be the Savior?  
Ask the saved of all the race  
Who have found His favor.
- 2 Angels sang about His birth,  
Wise Men sought and found Him;  
Heaven’s star shone brightly forth  
Glory all around Him.  
Shepherds saw the wondrous sight,

Heard the angels singing;  
All the plains were lit that night,  
All the hills were ringing.

- 3 Gentle Mary laid her child  
Lowly in a manger;  
He is still the Undefined  
But no more a stranger.  
Son of God of humble birth,  
Beautiful the story;  
Praise His name in all the earth;  
Hail the King of glory!

Text: Public domain

## **DISTRIBUTION HYMN**

## **“It Came upon the Midnight Clear”**

**LSB 366**

- 1 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, goodwill to all,  
From heav’n’s all-gracious king.”  
The world in solemn stillness lay  
To hear the angels sing.
- 2 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 blessèd angels sing.
- 3 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.
- 4 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.

Text: Public domain

## THE LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

**P** As we light our candles, we remember and worship our Savior, Jesus Christ, God's light of love. "Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord rises upon you" (Isaiah 60:1). "When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, 'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life'" (John 8:12). "For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth" (Ephesians 5:8-9). "In the same way, let your light shine before people, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven" (Matthew 5:16).

## CANDLE HYMN

### "Silent Night, Holy Night"

LSB 363

- 1 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.
- 2 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!
- 3 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.

Text: Public domain

## BENEDICTION

- P** Prepare the way of the Lord! Make straight in the desert a highway for our God!
- C** For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness"—
- P** Has shone in our hearts.
- C** To give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God—
- P** In the face of Jesus Christ.
- C** For unto us is born today in the city of David—a Savior, who is Christ the Lord!

*Sit*

## CLOSING HYMN

### "Joy to the World"

LSB 387

- 1 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.
- 2 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.

- 3 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.
- 4 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.
- Text: Public domain

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

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