

THE BIRTH OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST
FESTIVE FAMILY CANDLELIGHT WORSHIP
WITH HOLY COMMUNION



CHRISTMAS EVE 2023
7:00 PM

ST. MARK'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
HAGERSTOWN, MARYLAND

PRELUDE

<i>Variations on Away in a Manger</i>	Austin C. Lovelace
<i>Shepherd's Song</i>	G. Merkel
<i>O Sleep, Dear Holy Baby</i>	Carson P. Cooman
<i>O Little Town of Bethlehem</i>	Benjamin M. Culli
<i>Tomorrow Shall Be My Dancing Day</i>	James Biery
<i>Pastorale</i>	Zipoli / ed. Wold

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE

+ *Stand if you are able*

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

+ **GATHERING HYMN - "O Come, All Ye Faithful"** **ELW 283**

1 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:	2 The highest, most holy, light of light eternal, born of a virgin, a mortal he comes; Son of the Father now in flesh appearing! <i>Refrain</i>
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<i>Refrain</i> O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!	3 Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation, sing, all ye citizens of heaven above! Glory to God in the highest: <i>Refrain</i>
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4 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*

+ **CHRISTMAS DIALOGUE**

Jesus Christ is the Light of the world!

He is the Light no darkness can overcome.

As the day's light ebbs, we gather to celebrate the Great Light of our salvation.

With the heavenly host we sing, "Glory to God in the highest heaven."

In Christ, God's Word is made flesh and lives among us.

With the shepherds, we will tell of the wonders we have seen and heard.

+ **HYMN - "Good Christian Friends, Rejoice"**

ELW 288

1 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!

2 Good Christian friends, rejoice
with heart and soul and voice;
now ye hear of endless bliss:
Jesus Christ was born for this!
He has opened heaven's door,
and we are blest forevermore.
Christ was born for this!
Christ was born for this!

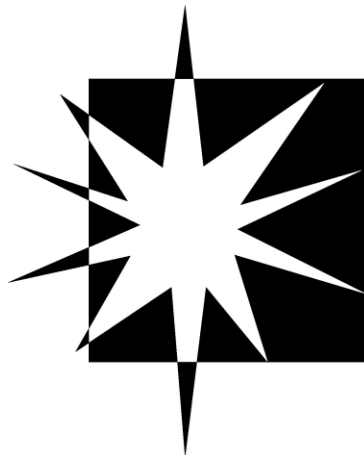
+ **GREETING AND PRAYER**

May the grace and truth of Christ be with you. **And also with you.**

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 only Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

PRAISE ANTHEM - "Sing We the Song of Emmanuel"

Getty, Papa



FIRST READING

Isaiah 9:2-7

²The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness — on them light has shined. ³You 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. ⁴For 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. ⁵For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. ⁶For 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. ⁷His 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.

+ HYMN - “O Little Town of Bethlehem”

ELW 279

1 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.

2 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!

SECOND LESSON

Titus 2:11-14

¹¹For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, ¹²training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, ¹³while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. ¹⁴He 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.

HYMN - "It Came upon the Midnight Clear"

ELW 282

- | | |
|---|--|
| 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, good will 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 blessed angels sing. |
|---|--|

+ *THE GOSPEL FOR CHRISTMAS EVE*

Luke 2:1-20

The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke the 2nd chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

¹In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. ⁵He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

⁸In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see — I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth 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 God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

¹⁵When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." ¹⁶So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger.

¹⁷When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰The 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 be to you, O Christ.**

HYMN - "It Came upon the Midnight Clear"

ELW 282

3 And you, beneath life's crushing
load,
whose forms are bending low,
who toil along the climbing way
with painful steps and slow:
look now, for glad and golden
hours
come swiftly on the wing;
oh, rest beside the weary road
and hear the angels sing!

4 For lo! The days are hast'ning on,
by prophets seen of old,
when with the ever-circling years
shall come the time foretold,
when peace shall over all the earth
its ancient splendors fling,
and all the world give back the song
which now the angels sing.

PRAISE ANTHEM - "Light of the Stable"

E & S Rhymer

+ BLESSING OF THE CRÈCHE

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, ruler of the universe. With Mary and Joseph, with the angels and shepherds, and with the animals in the stable we gather around your Son, born for us. Bless us, and fill us with joy and wonder as we look upon this manger scene. May Jesus be born in our lives, that we might share his love with all the world, for he is our light and our salvation. Blessed be God forever.

SERMON

Pastor Brian McClinton



+ **HYMN - "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"**

ELW 270

1 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!"

2 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! *Refrain*

Refrain

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

3 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. *Refrain*

OFFERING

MUSIC OFFERING - Christmas Day is Come

James Biery

+ **OFFERTORY HYMN - "Angels We Have Heard on High"**

ELW 289

1 Angels we have heard on high,
sweetly singing o'er the plains,
and the mountains in reply,
echoing their joyous strains.

3 Come to Bethlehem and see
him whose birth the angels sing;
come, adore on bended knee
Christ the Lord, the newborn king.
Refrain

Refrain

Gloria in excelsis Deo;
gloria in excelsis Deo.

+ WORD OF INSTITUTION

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.

+ 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

+ INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Come to the manger to behold the child, Jesus our Lord.

HYMN - "What Child Is This"

ELW 296

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!

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!

COMMUNION

"The First Noel"

ELW 300

"Away in a Manger"

ELW 277

TABLE BLESSING AFTER COMMUNION

+ *PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION*

We thank you, wondrous God, for Jesus, God with us, in these gifts of bread and wine. As we have shared this feast of love, strengthen us to share your love with all the world. In Jesus' name we pray. **Amen.**

+ *LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES*

+ *HYMN OF LIGHT - "Silent Night, Holy Night!"*

ELW 281

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!

Please raise candles for the last verse and sing acapella

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

+ *BENEDICTION*

May the Lord God, who has called you out of darkness to be servants of light, grant you the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds, and the peace of the Christ Child. In the name of Almighty God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Please "extinguish" candles

+ **DEPARTURE HYMN - "Joy To The World"**

ELW 267

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 all 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 sin and sorrow 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.

+ **DISMISSAL**

Rejoice that Jesus is Emmanuel, God with us. When he comes again in glory, may he bring you to everlasting life. Almighty God, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

+ **POSTLUDE – In dulci jubilo, BWV 729**

J. S. Bach

Please return your candle to the baskets near the exit doors.



PARTICIPANTS

OFFICIATING MINISTER	Pastor Brian McClinton
ORGANIST / PIANIST	Erin Petrella
LECTOR	Julie Stouffer
PRAISE TEAM PIANIST	Kurt Dela Paz and Matt Dela Paz
PRAISE TEAM	Patrick Albright, Libby Stouffer-Fitz, John & Kathy Gundling, Julie Stouffer, Addison Zeigler
COMMUNION ASSISTANTS	Sue Hawbaker

A SPECIAL THANKS to all of the musicians for their beautiful music.

A SPECIAL THANKS to all who helped to beautify our Sanctuary for our Christmas celebration. We owe a special debt of appreciation to the members of the Altar Guild who have done so much work in preparation for this wonderful celebration.

WELCOME to all who have come to this place to hear the story one more time of the birth of the Christ Child, the Hosannas of the angels, and the witness of the shepherds. Welcome to all who have come to sing the carols and light the candles as we offer our Christmas greeting. We are blessed by your presence and wish you all the joy and peace and hope that this celebration represents for us all.

We invite you to come worship with us on Sunday mornings at 10:00 am.

A blessed and joyful Christmas and New Year to you all.

ST. MARK'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
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