



WELCOME TO GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH OF LILY LAKE, IL

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Saturday December 24th, 2022 * 7 PM * INPERSON



In winter's deepest night, we welcome the light of the Christ child. Isaiah declares that the light of the long-promised king will illumine the world and bring endless peace and justice. Paul reminds us that the grace of God through Jesus Christ brings salvation to all people. The angels declare that Jesus' birth is good and joyful news for everyone, including lowly shepherds. Filled with the light that shines in our lives, we go forth to share the light of Christ with the whole world

PRELUDE

WELCOME

Light of Light

CHOIR

CHRISTMAS EVE - Light of Light

Responsive Litany

L1: Light of Light, shine in our hearts and renew our hope.

C: Joy to the world, Emmanuel has come.

L1: Light of Light, shine in our hearts and grant us peace.

C: Joy to the world, Emmanuel has come.

L1: Light of Light, shine in our hearts and bring us true joy.

C: Joy to the world, Emmanuel has come.

L1: Light of Light, shine in our hearts and fill us with love.

C: Joy to the world, Emmanuel has come.

Candle Lighting

L1: Tonight, we light all five candles – the candles of hope, peace, joy, love, and finally, the Christ Candle, celebrating the birth of our Lord and Savior. The candle of hope reminds us that in sending Christ, God sent hope to the earth. The candle of peace reminds us that peace will one day reign. The candle of joy is a reminder that we have been given eternal life and have no reason to be fearful. And the candle of love represents God's redeeming love for us, brought to earth in the form of a tiny child.

Light of Light

CHOIR w/Congregation

Light of Light

Congregational Part

JOEL RANEY

Voi - ces cry out from a world in grief:
prayers of those who seek re - lief.
End their dark - ness, hear their call for
peace on earth, good will for all.

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Please rise

GOSPEL LUKE 2:1-20

God's greatest gift comes as a baby in a manger. Angels announce the "good news of great joy" and proclaim God's blessing of peace.

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.

Be seated

CHRISTMAS EVE MEDITATION

Leader 1:

Lord, how could the people wait so long for your birth? How could they hope and not give up? I like to expect, I like to get ready. Lord, you put us in this life in which things keep happening and you keep coming. So, take us on; keep coming and keep us going, Jesus

Leader 2:

Some things are hard to comprehend, like stars, how big they are, how far away are they? For example, high above us in our sky is our nearest star.

So bright we can see it in daylight. So far it takes eight minutes for its rays to reach us. So big, I can only begin to comprehend how big by looking at a pea (that's the earth) beside a basketball (that would be the sun). Some stars are even more incomprehensible, like Mira – so far it twinkles 300 light years behind and beyond the sun.

Far more difficult to comprehend than stars....How big, how far is God's love for YOU and ME. How deep and unfathomable...how wide and unboundable.

Busy as God must have been eternally bustling about His creation making stars, calibrating orbits, stock-piling galaxies, big banging universes...WHAT MADE HIM STOP AND STOOP THROUGH A STABLE DOOR TO COME TO US IN A MANGER? (*pause*)

I can only begin to comprehend that by seeing and understanding the Babe of Bethlehem as a NEW LIGHT in our vast darkness. For only in that light can I see a neighbor's need, a toddler's tear, how to bear another's burden – how to love one another! And now, the Christmas Story:

The Christmas Story (*as told through verses of Christmas carols*)

O come, O come Emmanuel
And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear.

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 hope and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

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!

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
The little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.
The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,
The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

While shepherds watched their flocks by night,
All seated on the ground,
The angel of the Lord came down,
And glory shone around.

(pause)

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.

HYMN: Hark the Herald Angels Sing

ELW 270

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing



1 Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new - born king;
2 Christ, by high - est heav'n a - dored, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord,
3 Hail the heav'n-born Prince of peace! Hail the Sun of righ - teous - ness!



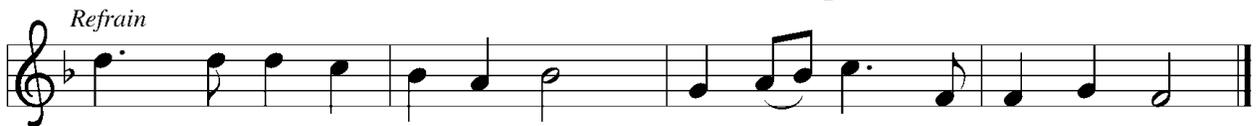
peace on earth, and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled."
late in time be - hold him come, off - spring of a vir - gin's womb.
Light and life to all he brings, ris'n with heal - ing in his wings.



Joy - ful, all you na - tions, rise; join the tri - umph of the skies;
Veiled in flesh the God - head see! Hail, in - car - nate de - i - ty!
Mild he lays his glo - ry by, born that we no more may die,



with an - gel - ic hosts pro - claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"
Pleased as man with us to dwell, Je - sus, our Em - man - u - el!
born to raise each child of earth, born to give us sec - ond birth.



Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born king!"

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707–1788, alt.

Music: MENDELSSOHN, Felix Mendelssohn, 1809–1847; arr. William H. Cummings, 1831–1915

Leader 1:

God as an unborn child. Holiness sleeping in a womb. The creator of life being created. Come and behold him, for God has come near! He came not as a flash of light or as an unapproachable conqueror, but as one whose first cries were heard by a peasant girl and a sleepy carpenter. The hands that first held him were unmanicured, calloused and dirty. Were it not for the shepherds, there would have been no happy gathering. And were it not for the magi, there would have been no gifts. ON THIS NIGHT, THE GIFT WAS GIVEN TO US.... (pause)

Leader 2:

At this time of each year, for a few precious hours, we behold Christ the Lord. Those who live most of the year without seeing Jesus, suddenly see him. People who have been accustomed to using his name in vain, pause to use it in praise. Eyes now looking outward instead of inward, marvel at his majesty.

Leader 1:

And, all of a sudden, Christ is everywhere. In the grin of congregation members taking gifts to needy children, in the joy of buying a couple of goats to help a family live, in the twinkle of the eyes of those waiting to have dinner with their extended family, Christ is in the emotion of a father who is too thankful to finish the dinner table prayer, in the tears of the eyes of those who pray for God's blessing on family in the military, Christ is in the minds of all who crave peace in the world God has given us. Christ is with all of us who wish for more of His love in the New Year.

Choir**He Is Born****Leader 2:**

It is Christmas Eve and we celebrate and are blessed. In a few days, all the trappings of Christmas will begin to disappear. For this moment, the spirit and mystery of God is in the air. Savor it and pray that those who behold him today will look for him and share his love every month, every day and every hour of the year. Soon life will be normal again – or will it? For God sent us salvation... on that blessed Christmas morn and I can hear him asking us tonight, what will we do about it?

HYMN: Go Tell It on the Mountain**ELW 290**

Go Tell It on the Mountain

Refrain



Go tell it on the moun - tain, o-ver the hills and ev - 'ry - where;



go tell it on the moun - tain that Je - sus Christ is born!



- 1 While shep-herds kept their watch-ing o'er si - lent flocks by night,
- 2 The shep-herds feared and trem-bled when, lo, a - bove the earth
- 3 Down in a lone - ly man - ger the hum-ble Christ was born;

Refrain



be - hold, through-out the heav-ens there shone a ho - ly light.
rang out the an - gel cho - rus that hailed our Sav - ior's birth.
and God sent us sal - va - tion that bless-ed Christ-mas morn.

Text: African American spiritual, refrain; John W. Work Jr., 1872–1925, stanzas, alt.

Music: GO TELL IT, African American spiritual

Leader 1:

Emmanuel. He is with us. God is near. We are blessed and saved. So, go, tell it on the mountain and everywhere!

Offeratory Music

Offering Prayer

God of abundance,
receive and bless these gifts we have offered.
Join our hearts with the song of the angels,
and gather us at your table of celebration.
Strengthen us to share with all the world
the abundance of your grace upon grace,
poured out in Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh.
Amen.

Prayers of the Church

With wonder and thanksgiving for Christ's coming into the world, we pray for the church, the life of the earth, and the whole human family.

A brief silence.

Your infinite love is born to us this night. With choirs of angels the church proclaims the good news. Send us out as messengers of the hope that has come to all people. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

You are pleased to dwell with your creatures and the whole earth sings for joy. Renew the splendor of creation from the smallest cell to the widest galaxies. Guide us to be wise stewards of your gifts for the sake of generations to come. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Your authority is over the nations. Break the rod of oppression in every land and free all people from fear. Bring peace where there is war, compassion where there is suffering, and healing where there is disease (*regions in crisis may be named*). God of grace,

hear our prayer.

You cherish those who are most vulnerable. Protect infants and children, and bless those who care for them. Watch over women giving birth, attend the dying, and relieve any who are in pain (*especially*). Shelter refugee families and those who have no home. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Your lovingkindness embraces everyone in need. Help any for whom this season is lonely or joyless. Comfort those among us, or known to us, who are experiencing distress of body or mind, missing loved ones, or grieving (*especially*). God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

You welcome those who have died into the joyous light of glory. We give thanks for the saints of every time and place who have praised you with lives of faith and humility. Inspire us by their example to love you by serving others. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Pondering the mystery of eternal love made flesh in Christ Jesus, we commend all for whom we pray to the mercy of God.

Amen.

(Each row light candle from center usher)

Hymn

Silent Night

ELW 281 w/candles

Silent Night, Holy Night!

Stille Nacht, Heilige Nacht!



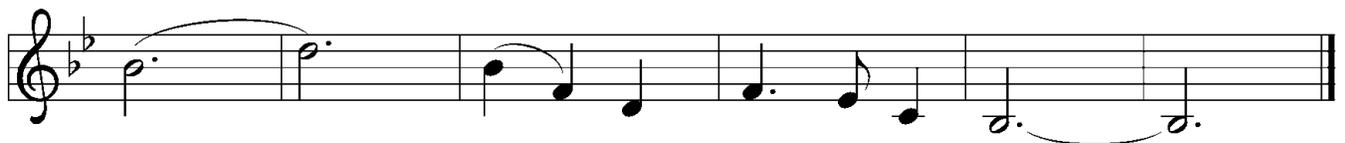
Stil - le Nacht, hei - li - ge Nacht! Al - les schläft,
 1 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! All is calm,
 2 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Shep - herds quake
 3 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Son of God,



ein - sam wacht nur das trau - te, hoch - hei - li - ge Paar.
 all is bright round yon vir - gin moth - er and child.
 at the sight; glo - ries stream from heav - en a - far,
 love's pure light ra - diant beams from your ho - ly face,



Hold - er Kna - be im lok - ki - gen Haar, schlaf in himm - li - scher
 Ho - ly In - fant, so ten - der and mild, sleep in heav - en - ly
 heav'n - ly hosts . . . sing, al - le - lu - ia! Christ, the Sav - ior, is
 with the dawn of re - deem - ing grace, Je - sus, Lord, at your



Ruh, schlaf in himm - li - scher Ruh.
 peace, sleep in heav - en - ly peace.
 born! Christ, the Sav - ior, is born!
 birth, Je - sus, Lord, at your birth.

Text: Joseph Mohr, 1792–1849; tr. John F. Young, 1820–1885
 Music: STILLE NACHT, Franz Gruber, 1787–1863

(Extinguish candles)

Please Rise

CLOSING PRAYER

CHRISTMAS EVE

God of light, tonight we celebrate the birth of Jesus. We thank you for this, the most precious of Christmas gifts, and we ask that you keep the hope, peace, joy and love of this season in our hearts, now and throughout the coming year. Emmanuel – God is with us, now and forevermore. Amen.

Joy to the World



1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re -
 2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their
 3 No more let sin and sor - row grow nor thorns in -
 4 He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the



ceive her king; let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare him
 songs em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and
 fest the ground; he comes to make his bless - ings
 na - tions prove the glo - ries of his righ - teous -



room and heav'n and na - ture sing, and heav'n and na - ture
 plains re - peat the sound-ing joy, re - peat the sound-ing
 flow far as the curse is found, far as the curse is
 ness and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his



sing, and heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.
 joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
 found, far as, far as the curse is found.
 love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748

Music: ANTIOCH, English melody, 18th cent.; arr. Lowell Mason, 1792–1872

Blessing and Dismissal

God bless you and keep you,

✠ Jesus grant you grace and truth,
 and the Spirit send peace upon your hearts,
 now and forever.

Amen.

Christ the Savior is born!

Go in peace. Proclaim this good news.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE