

CHRISTMAS EVE

December 24, 2023

7:30 p.m.

*Can I, will I forget how Love was born, and burned
 Its way into my heart—unasked, unforced, unearned,
 To die, to live, and not alone for me,
 To die, to live, and not alone for me?
 -Jaroslav Vajda, LSB 369:4*

AS WE GATHER

Christmas is a celebration of love. Loving thoughts and deeds certainly are part of this holy season as goodwill among people seems more pronounced than at other times of the year. What is the source of that love? It is the love of God that is fully expressed in Christ Jesus, the babe in the manger. For centuries, hymn writers and poets have found meaningful ways of describing that love of God. A poem by English writer Christina Rossetti simply but beautifully shares the Gospel truth that blesses this season.

Love came down at Christmas,
 Love all lovely, Love divine;
 Love was born at Christmas,
 Star and angels gave the sign. (LW 46:1)

Through the words of gifted hymn writers and poets and the evangelists Luke and Matthew, we hear the angels and we see the star. Once again, the message of God's love echoes in our world!

PRESERVICE MUSIC AND CAROLING *(see special folder)*

WELCOME

HYMN "O Come, All Ye Faithful"

The image shows the first system of a musical score for the hymn "O Come, All Ye Faithful". It features a treble and bass staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody is written in the treble staff, and the bass staff provides a harmonic accompaniment. The lyrics are written below the treble staff, with three parts indicated by numbers 1, 2, and 3.

1 O come, all ye faith - ful, Joy - ful and tri - um - phant! O
 2 High - est, most ho - ly, Light of Light e - ter - nal,
 3 Sing, choirs of au - gels, Sing in ex - ul - ta - tion,

come ye, O come ye to Beth - le - hem;
 Born of a vir - gin, a mor - tal He comes;
 Sing, all ye cit - i - zens of heav - en a - bove!

Come and be - hold Him Born the king of an - gels:
 Son of the Fa - ther Now in flesh ap - pear - ing!
 Glo - ry to God In the high - est:

Kejran

O come, let us a - dore Him, O come, let us a - dore Him,

O come, let us a - dore Him, Christ the Lord!

Text: John F. Wade, c. 1711–86, tr. Frederick Oakley, 1802–80, alt.;
 Spanish tr. Juan Bautista Cabrera, 1837–1916
 Tune: John F. Wade, c. 1711–86, setting: *The Hymnal* 1940

INVOCATION

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

People: Amen.

OPENING SENTENCES *John 1:14; Psalm 96:3; Psalm 98:1*

Pastor: And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us,

People: and we have seen His glory, glory as of the only Son
from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Pastor: Declare His glory among the nations,

People: His marvelous works among all the peoples!

Pastor: Oh sing to the LORD a new song, for He has done marvelous things!

People: His right hand and His holy arm have worked salvation
for Him.

HYMN "Angels from the Realms of Glory"

1 An - gels from the realms of glo - ry, Wing your flight o'er
2 Shep - herds in the field a - bid - ing, Watch - ing o'er your
3 Sa - ges, leave your con - tem - pla - tions, Bright - er vi - sions
△ 5 All cre - a - tion, join in prais - ing God the Fa - ther,

all the earth; Ye who sang cre - a - tion's sto - ry,
flocks by night, God with us is now re - sid - ing,
beam a - far; Seek the great De - sire of na - tions,
Spir - it, Son, Ev - er - more your voic - es rais - ing

Refrain
Now pro - claim Mes - si - ah's birth.
Yon - der shines the In - fant Light.
Ye have seen His na - tal star. Come and wor - ship,
To the e - ter - nal Three in One.



Text: James Montgomery, 1771–1854, sts. 1–4, alt.; *Salisbury Hymn Book*, Salisbury, 1857, st. 5, alt.
Tune: Henry T. Smart, 1813–79; setting: *The Lutheran Hymnal*, 1941

REGENT SQUARE
87 87 87

Text and music: Public domain

Luke 2:8–17; John 1:4–5, 9, 14; Luke 2:25–38; Matt. 2:1–11

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Pastor: Joined in worship on this sacred night, let us make confession to our heavenly Father, confident of His forgiveness for Jesus' sake.

Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination

Pastor: Almighty Father,

People: we confess that we are sinners by nature and by thought, word, and deed. We have not always given You the best of what we have and are, and have not fully made room for You in our lives. With repentant hearts, we turn to You for mercy, seeking Your grace. In Your loving kindness forgive, restore, and lead us so that we may be renewed and live to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.

Pastor: With joy I announce God's Good News to You. Our gracious God in His mercy has given His Son to be born, to live, and then to die for you and to rise again in glory. For His sake God 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. Be at peace and rejoice in the Lord.

People: Amen.

SHARING THE CHRISTMAS PEACE

Introduce yourself to those around you, greeting them with the greeting of peace.

Reverend Edmund Sears, who served congregations in the Boston area in the mid-1800s, wrote the text of "It Came upon the Midnight Clear" in 1849 and sent it to a popular magazine called *The Christian Register*. It was published the following year, and about forty years later the text by Sears was linked to a melody by Richard Willis, a musical editor who lived in New York City. Through this carol we are invited to hear the angels as they announce and rejoice in the birth of the Prince of Peace.

HYMN "It Came upon the Midnight Clear"

1 It came up-on the mid-night clear, That glo-rious song of old,
 2 Still through the clo-ven skies they come With peace-ful wings un-furled,
 3 All you, be-neath your heav-y load, By care and guilt bent low,
 4 For lo, the days have come to pass By proph-ets seen of old,

From an-gels bend-ing near the earth To touch their harps of gold:
 And still their heav'n-ly mu-sic floats O'er all the wea-ry world.
 Who toil a-long a drea-ry way With pain-ful steps and slow:
 When down in-to the cir-cling years Came Christ as was fore-told.

"Peace on the earth, good-will to all, From heav'n's all-gra-cious king."
 A-bove its sad and low-ly plains They bend on hov-'ring wing,
 Look up, for gold-en is the hour, Come swift-ly on the wing,
 His word of peace shall to the earth God's an-cient prom-ise bring,

The world in sol-emn still-ness lay To hear the an-gels sing.
 And ev-er o'er its ba-bel sounds The bless-ed an-gels sing.
 The Prince was born to bring you peace; Of Him the an-gels sing.
 And all who take this gift will hear The song the an-gels sing.

SALUTATION

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: Let us pray.

O God, You make us glad with the yearly remembrance of the birth of Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ. Grant that as we joyfully receive Him as our Redeemer, we may with sure confidence behold Him when He comes to be our Judge; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

CHOIR ANTHEM “In the Bleak Midwinter”

C. Rossetti, H Darke

Dian Silvey, soprano and Joe Nettleman, tenor

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Isaiah 7:10–14 (Immanuel will be born to a virgin mother.)

Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz, saying, Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven. But Ahaz said, I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test. Then Isaiah said: ‘Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

HYMN **“Once in Royal David’s City”**

1 Once in roy - al Da - vid's cit - y, Stood a
2 He came down to earth from heav - en, Who is
low - ly cat - tle shed, Where a moth - er laid her
God and Lord of all, And His shel - ter was a
ba - by In a man - ger for His bed: Mar - y
sta - ble, And His cra - dle was a stall; With the
was that moth - er mild, Je - sus Christ her lit - tle child.
poor and mean and low - ly Lived on earth our Sav - ior ho - ly.

Text: Cecil F. Alexander, 1818–95, alt.
Tune: Henry J. Gauntlett, 1805–76; setting: Arthur H. Mann, 1850–1929
Text and tune: Public domain
Setting: © 1957 Novello & Company Limited, London, UK. Reprinted by Permission.

IRBY
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Luke 2:4–7; Heb. 4:14–16; Job 19:25–27; Rev. 7:9–12

EPISTLE **1 John 4:7–16** (God sent His Son into the world as Redeemer.)

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. God’s love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to

love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us.

By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Saviour of the world. God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. So we have known and believe the love that God has for us.

God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord. **People: Thanks be to God.**

SERMON **“Love In Person”**

HYMN OF THE DAY **“Love Came Down at Christmas”**

1. Love came down at Christ - mas, Love all love - ly, Love di - vine;
2. Wor - ship we the God - head, Love in - car - nate, Love di - vine;
3. Love shall be our to - ken; love be yours and love be mine;

Love was born at Christ - mas; star and an - gels gave the sign.
wor - ship we our Je - sus, but where-with for sa - cred sign?
love to God and all men,* love for plea and gift and sign.

**“neighbor” may be substituted for “all men”*
WORDS: Christina G. Rossetti, 1885
MUSIC: Trad. Irish melody; harm. by David Evans, 1927; alt.
Harm. by permission of Oxford University Press

GARTAN
67.67

APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.
And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried.
He descended into hell.
The third day He rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life ☩ everlasting. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

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

Other prayers are inserted here. Each petition ends with "Lord, in your mercy," to which the congregation responds, "Hear our prayer."

The prayers conclude:

Pastor: Into your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

People: Amen.

PREFACE 2 Timothy 4:22

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.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Pastor: Blessed are You, Lord God Almighty, for You have sent Your Son, Jesus, to bring the fullness of divine light to shine on us with all of its beauty and grace. We bless You for the joy of this day and for the blessed fellowship we share at Your Table of grace where we receive His body and blood for the forgiveness of our sins. Grant that we walk in Your light at all times as we journey on this earth, to which our Savior was willing to come, until we rejoice in the light eternal of Your heavenly kingdom. This we ask in the saving name of Jesus. **People: Amen.**

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

Matthew 26:26–28; Mark 14:22–24; Luke 22:19–20; 1 Corinthians 11:23–25

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 ✠ 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 ✠ blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”

LORD’S PRAYER

Matthew 6:9–13

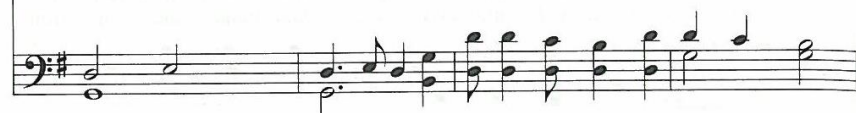
**Our Father who art in heaven,
hallowed be Thy name,
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done on earth
as it is in heaven;
give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom
and the power and the glory
forever and ever. Amen.**

DISTRIBUTION

DISTRIBUTION SONGS

"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.



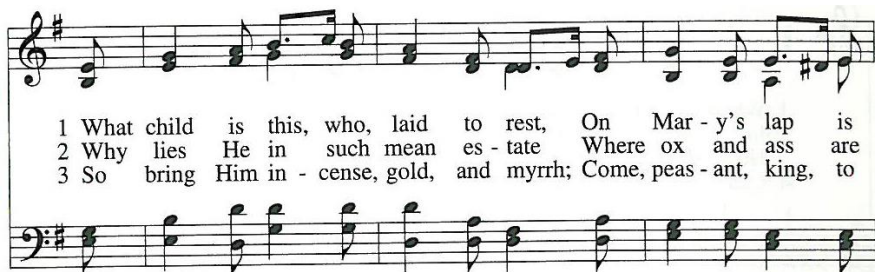
Text: African American spiritual, refrain; John W. Work II, 1873–1925. stanzas, alt.
 Tune: African American spiritual; setting: Hugh Porter, 1897–1960

GO TELL IT
 78 76 76 76

Text and music: Public domain

Luke 2:7–20; Is. 40:9–11

"What Child is This"



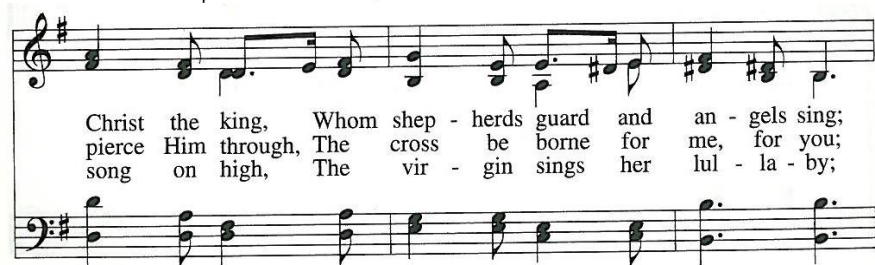
1 What child is this, who, laid to rest, On Mar - y's lap is
 2 Why lies He in such mean es - tate Where ox and ass are
 3 So bring Him in - cense, gold, and myrrh; Come, peas - ant, king, to



sleep - ing? Whom an - gels greet with an - thems sweet While
 feed - ing? Good Chris - tian, fear; for sin - ners here The
 own Him. The King of kings sal - va - tion brings; Let



shep - herds watch are keep - ing? This, this is
 si - lent Word is plead - ing. Nails, this shall
 lov - ing hearts en - throne Him. Raise, raise the



Christ the king, Whom shep - herds guard and an - gels sing;
 pierce Him through, The cross be borne for me, for you;
 song on high, The vir - gin sings her lul - la - by;



Haste, haste to bring Him laud, The babe, the son of Mar - y!
 Hail, hail the Word made flesh, The babe, the son of Mar - y!
 Joy, joy, for Christ is born, The babe, the son of Mar - y!

POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING

Pastor: Let us pray.

We give thanks, heavenly Father, that You have refreshed us through this Sacrament, and we pray that, walking in the true light of Christ, we shall ever put our hope in Jesus, Your Son and our King; 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.

CHRISTMAS GOSPEL & CAROLS

We now join in singing a variety of Christmas songs interspersed with the Good News from the Gospel according to St. Luke, chapter 2. Following each reading, we will sing a Christmas song that complements it.

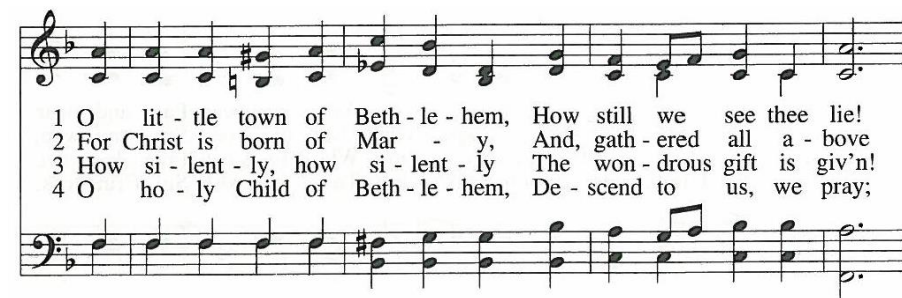
READING *Luke 2:1–5*

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. And all went to be registered, each to his own town. 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, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child.

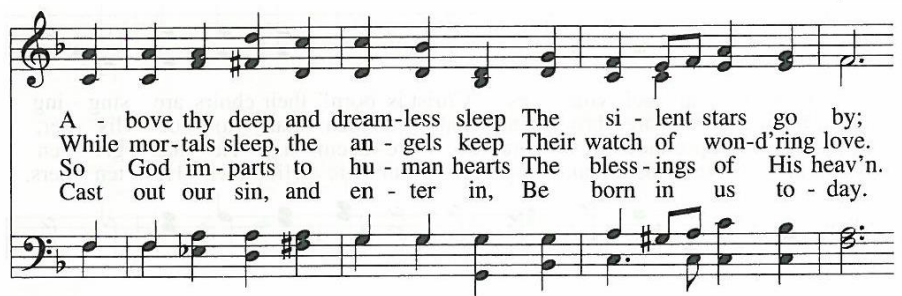
Although “O Little Town of Bethlehem” is an American carol, written by the Reverend Phillips Brooks of Pennsylvania in 1865, it was inspired by his visiting the actual town where Jesus was born in what we call the Holy Land. On this holy evening, we all go in heart and mind to that little town that became so special in God’s plan of salvation.

HYMN

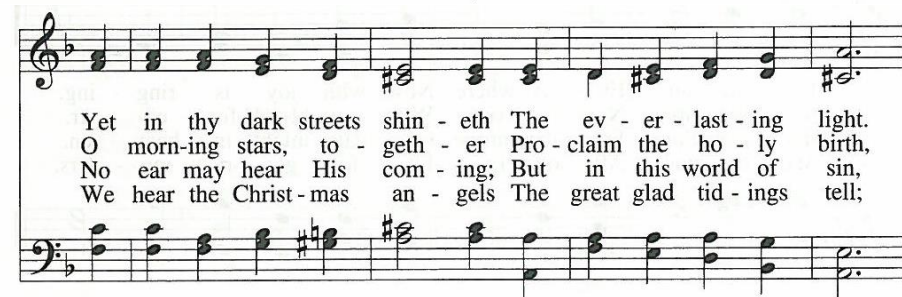
"O Little Town of Bethlehem"



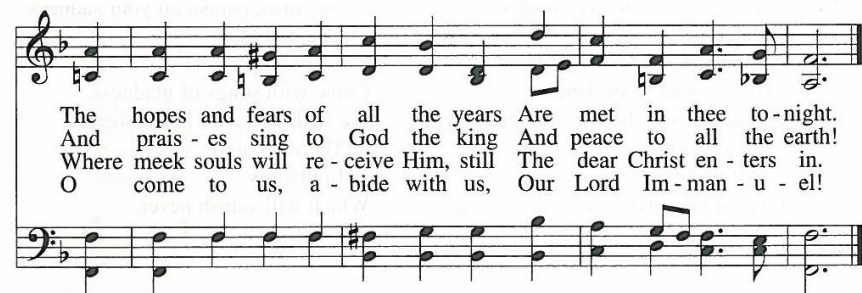
1 O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, How still we see thee lie!
 2 For Christ is born of Mar - y, And, gath - ered all a - bove
 3 How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly The won - drous gift is giv'n!
 4 O ho - ly Child of Beth - le - hem, De - scend to us, we pray;



A - bove thy deep and dream-less sleep The si - lent stars go by;
 While mor - tals sleep, the an - gels keep Their watch of won - d'ring love.
 So God im - parts to hu - man hearts The bless - ings of His heav'n.
 Cast out our sin, and en - ter in, Be born in us to - day.



Yet in thy dark streets shin - eth The ev - er - last - ing light.
 O morn - ing stars, to - geth - er Pro - claim the ho - ly birth,
 No ear may hear His com - ing; But in this world of sin,
 We hear the Christ - mas an - gels The great glad tid - ings tell;



The hopes and fears of all the years Are met in thee to - night.
 And prais - es sing to God the king And peace to all the earth!
 Where meek souls will re - ceive Him, still The dear Christ en - ters in.
 O come to us, a - bide with us, Our Lord Im - man - u - el!

Alternate tune: FOREST GREEN (362)

Text: Phillips Brooks, 1835-93

Tune: Lewis H. Redner, 1831-1908; setting: *Service Book and Hymnal*, 1958, alt.

ST. LOUIS

86 86 76 86

Text and music: Public domain

Take 2:1-15; Take 1:68-75; Enh. 3:16-19; Micah 5:2

READING

Luke 2:6–7

And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. 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.

The carol “Infant Holy, Infant Lowly” is a translation of a Polish Christmas song that appeared in its original language in a song collection in 1838. As with many traditional folk songs, the text author and musical composer are not known. An adaptation in the American version we sing is the repetition of the last phrase of each stanza: “Christ the child is Lord of all!” and “Christ the child was born for you!”—both lines are certainly worthy of being repeated!

HYMN

“Infant Holy, Infant Lowly”

1 In - fant ho - ly, In - fant low - ly, For His bed a cat - tle stall;
2 Flocks were sleep - ing, Shep - herds keep - ing Vig - il till the morn - ing new

Ox - en low - ing, Lit - tle know - ing Christ the child is Lord of all.
Saw the glo - ry, Heard the sto - ry, Tid - ings of a Gos - pel true.

The image shows a musical score for the hymn "Infant Holy, Infant Lowly". It consists of two systems of music. Each system has a treble and bass staff. The first system contains the first two lines of the hymn, with the lyrics "1 In - fant ho - ly, In - fant low - ly, For His bed a cat - tle stall;" and "2 Flocks were sleep - ing, Shep - herds keep - ing Vig - il till the morn - ing new". The second system contains the next two lines, with the lyrics "Ox - en low - ing, Lit - tle know - ing Christ the child is Lord of all." and "Saw the glo - ry, Heard the sto - ry, Tid - ings of a Gos - pel true." The music is written in a simple, folk-like style with a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a common time signature (C).

Swift-ly wing-ing, An - gels sing-ing, Bells are ring-ing, Tid - ings bring-ing:
Thus re - joic - ing, Free from sor - row, Prais - es voic-ing, Greet the mor - row:

Christ the child is Lord of all! Christ the child is Lord of all!
Christ the child was born for you! Christ the child was born for you!

READING *Luke 2:8–12*

And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear. 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. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.”

Although “Away in a Manger” may sound like an “Old World” carol, its first Lutheran Church appearance was in a Lutheran Sunday School hymnal in Philadelphia published in 1885. Reminding us that there was no room in the inn and that our Savior was humbly born, the text was not translated into German until 1934. Now sung around the world, the text concludes in the third stanza with a prayer that has been memorized by countless generations of children.

HYMN “Away in a Manger”

1 A - way in a man - ger, no crib for a bed,
 2 The cat - tle are low - ing, the ba - by a - wakes,
 3 Be near me, Lord Je - sus; I ask Thee to stay

The lit - tle Lord Je - sus laid down His sweet head.
 But lit - tle Lord Je - sus, no cry - ing He makes.
 Close by me for - ev - er and love me, I pray.

The stars in the sky — looked down where He lay,
 I love Thee, Lord Je - sus! Look down from the sky,
 Bless all the dear chil - dren in Thy ten - der care,

The lit - tle Lord Je - sus a - sleep on the hay.
 And stay by my cra - dle till morn - ing is nigh.
 And take us to heav - en to live with Thee there.

Text: *Little Children's Book*, Philadelphia, 1885, sts. 1–2; *Vineyard Songs*, Louisville, 1892, st. 3, alt.
 Tune: James R. Murray, 1841–1905; setting: Joseph Herl, b. 1959

AWAY IN A MANGER
 11 11 11 11

Text and tune: Public domain
 Setting: © 2006 Concordia Publishing House

Luke 2:7; Mark 10:14–16; Matt. 1:23; 28:20

READING

Luke 2:13–16

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom He is pleased!” 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.” And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger.

Echoing the song of the angels is a joy for God’s people—especially on Christmas Eve. A traditional French carol gives us the opportunity to sing “Glory to God in the highest” in Latin, as “Gloria in excelsis Deo.” The words and melody of this Christmas carol, both from France, bring a bright excitement to our celebration as we bring to our God limitless praise.

HYMN

“Angels We Have Heard on High”

1 An - gels we have heard on high, Sweet - ly sing - ing o'er the plains,
2 Shep - herds, why this ju - bi - lee? Why your joy - ous strains pro - long?
3 Come to Beth - le - hem and see Him whose birth the an - gels sing;

And the moun - tains in re - ply, Ech - o - ing their joy - ous strains.
What the glad - some tid - ings be Which in - spire your heav'n - ly song?
Come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ the Lord, the new - born King.

Refrain

Glo - - - ri - a

The musical score is written for voice and piano. It features a treble and bass staff. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The tempo is marked 'Allegretto'. The lyrics are written below the treble staff. The refrain is marked with a bracket and the word 'Refrain' above it. The word 'Glo - - - ri - a' is written below the treble staff, with a long dash indicating a sustained note. The piano accompaniment consists of chords and single notes in the bass staff.

in ex-cel-sis De-o. Glo- - -

- - ri-a in ex-cel-sis De-o.

Text: French; tr. *The Crown of Jesus, Part 2*, London, 1862, alt.
Tune: French; setting: Edward S. Barnes, 1887–1958

Text and music: Public domain

GLORIA
77 77 and refrain

Luke 2:7–20


READING *Luke 2:17–20*

And when [the shepherds] saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

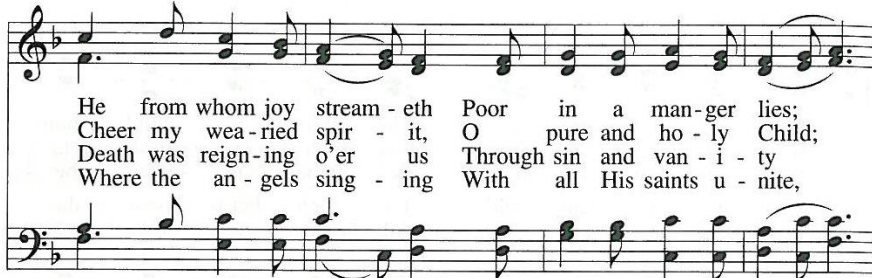
Luke writes that Mary “treasured up all these things” in her heart. We are invited to do as Mary did, to treasure these things—including our worship with the joyous carols—in our hearts. Through these songs, we share the joy of sisters and brothers around the globe who join in praising Jesus Christ, our newborn King. With repeating alleluias, we give voice to our joy in the words and music of a Bohemian carol from over five hundred years ago.

HYMN

"Now Sing We, Now Rejoice"



1 Now sing we, now re - joice, Now raise to heav'n our voice;
 2 Come from on high to me; I can - not rise to Thee.
 3 Now through His Son doth shine The Fa - ther's grace di - vine.
 4 Oh, where shall joy be found? Where but on heav'n - ly ground?



He from whom joy stream - eth Poor in a man - ger lies;
 Cheer my wea - ried spir - it, O pure and ho - ly Child;
 Death was reign - ing o'er us Through sin and van - i - ty
 Where the an - gels sing - ing With all His saints u - nite,



Not so bright - ly beam - eth The sun in yon - der skies.
 Through Thy grace and mer - it, Blest Je - sus, Lord most mild,
 Till He o - pened for us A bright e - ter - ni - ty
 Sweet - est prais - es bring - ing In heav'n - ly joy and light.



Thou my Sav - ior art! Thou my Sav - ior art!
 Draw me un - to Thee! Draw me un - to Thee!
 May we praise Him there! May we praise Him there!
 Oh, that we were there! Oh, that we were there!

Text: Latin and German, 14th cent.; tr. Arthur T. Russell, 1806-74, alt.
 Tune: German, 14th cent.; setting: Richard W. Hillert, b. 1923, alt.

Text and tune: Public domain
 Setting: © 1969 Concordia Publishing House

IN DULCI JUBILO
 66 66 66 55

Luke 2:1-14; John 12:32; 1 Peter 1:8-9; Rev. 21:3-4

CANDLELIGHTING

Pastor: With renewing faith, growing hope, and expanding love on this most holy night, we sing “Silent Night, Holy Night” by candlelight.

The candles are distributed and lit. Follow the Pastor in raising and lowering the candles during the singing of Silent Night. Tip only your unlit candle.

HYMN

“Silent Night, Holy Night”

Alex Dwyer, guitar accompaniment

1 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! All is calm, all is bright Round yon
2 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Shep-herds quake at the sight; Glo - ries
3 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Son of God, love's pure light Ra - diant

vir - gin moth-er and child. Ho - ly In-fant, so ten-der and mild,
stream from heav-en a - far, Heav'n-ly hosts sing, Al - le - lu - ia!
beams from Thy ho-ly face With the dawn of re-deem - ing grace,

Sleep in heav - en - ly peace, Sleep in heav - en - ly peace.
Christ, the Sav - ior, is born! Christ, the Sav - ior, is born!
Je - sus, Lord, at Thy birth, Je - sus, Lord, at Thy birth.

CLOSING PRAYER

Pastor: Let us pray.

O God, You make this most holy night to shine with the brightness of the true Light. 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; 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 *Numbers 6:24–26*

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.

HYMN “Joy to the World”

1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re - ceive her
2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let men their songs em -
3 No more let sins and sor - rows grow Nor thorns in - fest the
4 He rules the world with truth and grace And makes the na - tions

King; Let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare Him
ploy; While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and
ground; He comes to make His bless - ings
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 the curse is found.
love, And won - ders, won - ders of His love.

Our Confession about Communion

Our Confession

1. Holy Communion is a divinely instituted act in which Jesus Christ gives His true (real) body and blood under the forms of bread and wine. We thus hold that the bread and wine are not mere symbols of Jesus' body and blood. When we receive the bread and wine we receive in fact the body and blood of Christ for the forgiveness of sins.

2. We believe that Communion is a celebration of this forgiveness which comes to us through faith as we eat and drink. In communion we remember our Lord's passion and death, His resurrection and ascension, and the promise of His coming again. Communion is truly the Gospel made visible and is offered for those who "hunger and thirst after righteousness."

3. We believe that as we eat and drink this Supper we are strengthened in our faith in Jesus Christ and in our love for one another.

Therefore, we invite to the Lord's Table all who:

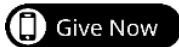
a. have been instructed in the meaning of Communion; have been baptized in the name of the Triune God; have received Jesus Christ as their own personal and living Savior and Lord, and concur in our confession;

b. are not living in open rebellion against the Word of God, and do not hold willful and persistent form of hatred, resentment or anger against any other person.

Those who have questions about communion are welcome to talk to one of the Pastors.

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You may give a special Christmas offering online using the QR code or place a gift in the offering plate at the door along with the interest sheet.



"Christ- Students- Community Coming Together"

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