



Saturday December 24, 2016
Christmas Eve Candle Light Service

Trinity Lutheran Church & Academy

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Prelude - Nicholas Carlson

WELCOME & GREETINGS

INVOCATION

P What if God wrote a letter?

C **And Moses descended with two tablets written by God.**

P What if God wrote a letter?

C **And the Word of the Lord came to the prophets.**

P What if God wrote a letter to fulfill the law and the prophets?

C **Come to Bethlehem and see if such a letter comes
special delivery.**

O Come, All Ye Faithful

Oh, come, all ye faithful,
Joyful and triumphant!
Oh, come ye, oh, come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold him
Born the king of angels:

*Oh, come, let us adore him,
Oh, come, let us adore him,
Oh, 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!

*Oh, come, let us adore him,
Oh, come, let us adore him,
Oh, come, let us adore him,
Christ the Lord.*

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

*Oh, come, let us adore him,
Oh, come, let us adore him,
Oh, come, let us adore him,
Christ the Lord.*

A SPECIAL DELIVERY

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 40:3-8

A voice cries:

“In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD;
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

Every valley shall be lifted up,
and every mountain and hill be made low;
the uneven ground shall become level,
and the rough places a plain.

And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed
and all flesh shall see it together,
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.”

A voice says, “Cry!”

And I said, “What shall I cry?”

All flesh is grass,
and all its beauty is like the flower of the field.

The grass withers, the flower fades
when the breath of the LORD blows on it;
surely the people are grass.

The grass withers, the flower fades,
but the word of our God will stand forever.

Meditation - *“Neither Snow, Nor Rain.....”*

Christmas Prayer

© O Lord of Christmas, there is so much mail at Christmas as flyers, advertisements, and catalogues fill our mailboxes. The typical Christmas letter, sent or received, seldom helps us focus

on faith. Faith may be there, but it's usually hidden between the lines. Forgive us for conveniently keeping our faith out of sight. Give us the grace to keep faith in the forefront this Christmas. In the name of the Christ. Amen.

Angels From The Realms Of Glory

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:
Come and worship,
Come and worship;
Worship Christ, the new-born King.

Shepherds in the fields abiding,
Watching o'er your flocks by night,
God with man is now residing,
Yonder shines the Infant Light:
Come and worship:
Come and worship,
Worship Christ, the new-born King.

A DELIVERY IN THE 'DESERT'

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 35:1-6

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad;
the desert shall rejoice and blossom like the crocus;
it shall blossom abundantly
and rejoice with joy and singing.
The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,
the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.
They shall see the glory of the LORD,
the majesty of our God.
Strengthen the weak hands,
and make firm the feeble knees.
Say to those who have an anxious heart,
"Be strong; fear not!
Behold, your God
will come with vengeance,
with the recompense of God.
He will come and save you."

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
and the ears of the deaf unstopped;
then shall the lame man leap like a deer,
and the tongue of the mute sing for joy.
For waters break forth in the wilderness,
and streams in the desert;

Meditation -

“Christmas Letter - Rest Area”

Christmas Prayer

- ☐ **Most gracious God, we learn about giving from you. Help us to see the love behind each gift given this Christmas. Enable us to see beyond the gift to the joy of the one who gives. May that thoughtfulness and joy warm our hearts. Help us, O Lord, with all the giving and gifts to have hearts filled with childlike wonder at the gift you have given in Christ. Amen.**

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"
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 Emmanuel
Hark! The herald angels sing
"Glory to the newborn King!"

Hail the heav'n-born Prince of Peace!
Hail the Son 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
Hark! The herald angels sing
"Glory to the newborn King!"

WAITING FOR THE DELIVERY

Scripture Reading: Luke 1:26-35, 38

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."

And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?"

And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God.

And Mary said, "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

Meditation - *"A Christmas Letter to the Editor"*

Christmas Prayer

- ☐ **O Lord, we anxiously wait for Christmas to come. While it seemingly takes forever, time quickly slips by. In the hustle and bustle of preparations, it is easy not to take the time to be in**

your presence, to ponder the mystery and miracle of your coming,
or to be wrapped in the wonder of your love.
Forgive us, we ask. And give us the grace to first experience
and then share your love in the fullness of this time of
Christmas. Amen.

Choir *"The First Noel"*

THE SPECIAL DELIVERY ARRIVES

Scripture Reading: Matthew 1:18-25

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. And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. 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. She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel" (which means, God with us). When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.

Meditation - *"Christmas Letter - Dear Diary"*

Christmas Prayer

- ☐ When we are far from home, O Lord, hope can seem so distant. But being far from home can be more than a matter of geography. It can be a matter of the heart. We need to find our way home, not only in terms of family but also in our relationship with you. Help us to hear your word; that through the gift of Jesus there is hope for us. May the hopes and fears of all the years be met in you this night. Amen.

LETTERS THAT GIVE

Receiving Of Christmas Offering

Choir - *"All Praise to Thee"*

- ☐ How often as children do we open the mail and shake the card to see if there is any money? You, O Lord, spared no expense in sending your Son. Bless these gifts, we pray, that others may come to know the richness of life in Christ. Amen.

A DELIVERY TO BE SHARED

Scripture Reading: John 1:1-5, 14

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Solo - *"Do You Hear What I Hear?"* Arr. C. Underwood

Christmas Prayer

- ☐ **We give you thanks, O God, for the special delivery on a Christmas so long ago. It is humbling to think that you could love us that much. A letter written on stone would not do, nor would a letter spoken through the prophets. Instead, you sent the most unusual letter: your Son. May he light up our lives, we pray. Amen.**



What Child Is This?

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.

Why lies He in such mean estate,
Where ox and donkeys are feeding?
Good Christians, fear, for sinners here
The silent Word is pleading.
Nails, spears shall pierce him through,
the cross he bore for me, for you.
Hail, hail the Word made flesh,
the Babe, the Son of Mary.

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 a song on high,
The virgin sings her lullaby
Joy, joy for Christ is born,
The babe, the Son of Mary.

Sermon: ***“A Good Ol' Fashion Love Letter”*** *Pastor Jeff Carlson*

"You yourselves are our letter of recommendation, written on our hearts, to be known and read by all. And you show that you are a letter from Christ delivered by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts." (2 Corinthians 3:2-3)

Lighting Of Congregational Candles -

P *The Christmas story begins with God sending his Son, but the story does not end there as we, too, are God's letters. Let the love of God's letter shine through you as your light comes from the Christ candle to the choir member, to you and as you pass it on;*

Silent Night

Silent night, holy night
All is calm, all is bright
Round your Virgin Mother and Child
Holy Infant so tender and mild
Sleep in heavenly peace
Sleep in heavenly peace

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

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





CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS

IN LOVING MEMORY OF PARENTS - **RON BERCHERT**

IN LOVING MEMORY OF "MOM" ALICE GALLAGHER - **CHURCH FAMILY**

IN LOVING MEMORY OF ROBERT & ALICE HOWARD; ANITA & CHARLES KELLER; BEVERLY CELONA - **JOHN & URSULA HOWARD**

IN LOVING MEMORY OF MOM & DAD - **JONNY ALTOBELL**

IN LOVING MEMORY OF STAFFORD & URSIE SWABY - **CATHERINE MURDAUGH**

IN LOVING MEMORY OF NILSEN & GOUGH FAMILIES - **JANET NILSEN**

IN LOVING MEMORY OF JEANNE JOHNSON & ALICE GAFFGLIONE - **ROGER & JACKI JOHNSON**

IN LOVING MEMORY OF MODINE BALDREE (MOMBOO) - **STEPHANIE BEENE**

IN LOVING MEMORY OF BROTHER MIKE & SISTERS PAULA & JANET

IN HONOR OF FAMILY & FRIENDS - **STEVE & DEBBIE DAY**

IN THANKSGIVING FOR BLESSINGS RECEIVED - **THE CARLSON FAMILY**

PEACE & LOVE TO ALLMERRY CHRISTMAS - **KIM, ROBERT & THOMAS**

IN LOVING MEMORY OF LOVED ONES - **BARRY & JANNES STRAUCH**

IN LOVING MEMORY OF JOHN CARLUCCI - **HAZEL CARLUCCI**

IN LOVING MEMEORY OF FRANK & ESTHER MUSUMECI, DENNIS FOGARTY, JOHN & LIBBY HAGAN - **JOHN & RITA HAGAN**

IN LOVING MEMORY OF PARENTS - **UWE & KAROLA ZEHME**

IN LOVING MEMORY OF HUSBAND & PARENTS - **DONNA IBEN**

IN LOVING MEMORY OF ERICA BROWN - **CLIFF & BETTY BERRY**

IN HONOR OF CHRISTMAS - **TERRY & FRED SCHLENDER-BALL**

IN LOVING MEMORY OF PAT KAVANAUGH - **KELLY KAVANAUGH**

IN THANKS FOR ALL GOD'S BLESSINGS - **CHRIS & JAN BABLER**

IN HONOR OF CHRISTMAS - **THE NAFZGER FAMILY**

