


Christmas Eve Worship Plan – December 24, 2020

PROCESSIONAL HYMN


Joy to the World (ELW 267) (Ray on Trumpet)



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

WELCOME - (Shari)

Merry Christmas!! Welcome to Salem Lutheran Church. We welcome all of you to worship this evening as we celebrate the birth of our Savior, especially those of you who are worshiping with us on Big Dog radio 98.9, KHUB 1340, or viewing on Spectrum cable or joining us on Facebook Live.

Tonight we welcome Greg Johnson on the organ, and Ray Snodgrass on the trumpet. Our soloists this evening are Rev. Day Hefner and Carl Bruhn. We thank them for sharing their musical talents with us.

Tonight's service is a collaborative effort. Our service will be led by Pastor Day Hefner from St. John's Lutheran Church in Schuyler, Pastor Heidi Wallace from Bethany Evangelical Lutheran and First Presbyterian Churches in Lyons, Pastor Scott Johnson from Midland University, and Deacon Kristin Johnson from First Lutheran in Fremont, and I am Pastor Shari Schwedhelm from Salem and St. Timothy Lutheran Churches in Fremont. We have come together to celebrate the birth of our Savior this night, and we thank you for joining us.

Thank you for making worship the center of your celebration this night - may your time here draw you closer to God and the world God loves.

ANNOUNCEMENTS - (Shari)

As we prepare for worship, you are invited to gather your own items for worship at home tonight. Please create space for your advent candle to be lit near where you are watching this evening. You are also invited to gather a candle for each person in your home to light as we sing Silent Night.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS - (Scott)

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God,
who was in the beginning,
who makes a dwelling among us,
who covers us with justice and mercy.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

God of goodness and loving kindness,
we confess that we have sinned against you and our neighbors. We have turned away from your invitation to new life. We have turned away from the lowly and downtrodden. In your abundant mercy, forgive us our sins, those we know and those known only to you, for the sake of the one who came to live among us, Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.

Hear the good news of peace and salvation! God forgives us all our sins, not through our own work, but through ✝ Jesus Christ, made known to all people. With all who come to the manger, rejoice in this amazing gift of grace.

Amen.

ADVENT WREATH LITANY

(Reader 1 - Heidi Reader 2 - Day Lighter - Kristin)

Christ Candle

Reader One: Because injustice and despair threaten to overwhelm us, we pray for hope...

(Light the first candle in your Advent wreath.)

Reader Two: Because so many swords have not yet been beaten into ploughshares, we pray for peace...

(Light the second candle in your Advent wreath.)

Reader One: Because grief and loss weigh so heavily, we pray for joy...

(Light the third candle in your Advent wreath.)

Reader Two: Because hatred is still so strong, and because people all over the world are suffering, we pray for love.

(Light the fourth candle in your Advent wreath.)

Reader One: God has come to us as a child. Christ is present in our world.

(Light the Christ Candle in your Advent wreath, often a candle in the center.)

Reader Two: May the light and the fire from these candles burn away everything that is preventing the God of hope and peace and joy and love from being born among us...

Reader One: Brothers and sisters, be not afraid, even now - even now – the light of Christ is overwhelming the world!

SPECIAL MUSIC – O HOLY NIGHT SUNG BY REV. DAY HEFNER

GREETING - (Shari)

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY - (Shari)

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

FIRST READING: Isaiah 9:2-7 - (Scott)

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.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM: Psalm 96 - (Day - Cantor)

Tone 7



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Refrain



Psalm 96:1

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- ¹Sing to the Lord | a new song;
sing to the Lord, | all the earth.
- ²**Sing to the Lord, bless the name | of the Lord;
proclaim God's salvation from | day to day.**
- ³Declare God's glory a- | mong the nations
and God's wonders a- | mong all peoples.

⁴**For great is the Lord and greatly | to be praised,
more to be feared | than all gods. R**

⁵As for all the gods of the nations, they | are but idols;
but you, O Lord, have | made the heavens.

⁶**Majesty and magnificence are | in your presence;
power and splendor are in your | sanctuary.**

⁷Ascribe to the Lord, you families | of the peoples,
ascribe to the Lord hon- | or and power.

⁸**Ascribe to the Lord the honor due the | holy name;
bring offerings and enter the courts | of the Lord.**

R

⁹Worship the Lord in the beau- | ty of holiness;
tremble before the Lord, | all the earth.

¹⁰**Tell it out among the nations: "The | Lord is king!
The one who made the world so firm that it
cannot be moved will judge the peo- | ples with
equity."**

¹¹Let the heavens rejoice, and let the | earth be glad;
let the sea thunder and all that is in it; let the field be
joyful and all that | is therein.

¹²**Then shall all the trees of the wood shout for joy
at your com- | ing, O Lord,
for you come to | judge the earth.**

¹³You will judge the | world with righteousness
and the peoples | with your truth. **R**

SECOND READING: Titus 2:11-14 - (Kristin)

¹¹The 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.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Angels We Have Heard on High (ELW 289) (Ray on Trumpet)



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.



Text: French carol; tr. H. F. Hemy, *The Crown of Jesus Music*, 1864
Music: GLORIA, French carol

GOSPEL: Luke 2:1-20 - (Heidi)

The holy gospel according to Luke.

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 to you, O Christ.

SERMON - (Scott)

HYMN OF THE DAY *O Little Town of Bethlehem* (ELW 279)



O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, how still we see thee lie!
For Christ is born of Mar - y, and, gath - ered all a - bove
How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly the won - drous gift is giv'n!
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.
oh, come to us, a - bide with us, our Lord Im - man - u - el!

Text: Phillips Brooks, 1835-1893.

Music: ST. LOUIS, Lewis H. Redner, 1831-1908

NICENE CREED - (Shari)

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION - (Heidi)

Joining our voices with the song of the angels, let us pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

The shepherds sing, "Jesus Christ is born!" Let your church throughout the world proclaim this good news, over the hills and everywhere. Unite the voices of all your faithful people in songs of praise and rejoicing. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Heaven and nature sing, "Joy to the world!" Give respite to flocks, fields, and those who tend them. Come near to us in the beauty of nighttime, the shining of the stars, and the hush of a world at rest. May our wonder at your creation rouse our care for all the earth. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

The angels sing, "Peace on earth!" Come quickly to still the strife of this world. Hush the noise of war and violence in

places of unrest. Inspire leaders of nations to seek lasting peace and sustainable provision for all in their care. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Mary sings melodies of comfort to her newborn child. Bring rest and reassurance to those facing struggles this night. Shelter travelers and those without homes. Console those who lie awake due to pain or anxiety. Heal those who are sick or hurting (*especially*). Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Love sings through the sound of a new baby's cry. Bless new parents and expectant parents. Comfort those who long for children, especially those running out of hope or options. Surround families of every shape and size with your love and care. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

The heavenly chorus sings, "Glory to God in the highest!" We give you thanks for all the saints who have proclaimed your glory in word and deed. Let us join them this night in joyful praise around your eternal throne. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of mercy, come quickly to us with grace upon grace as we lift these and all our prayers to you, in the name of Jesus.

Amen.

PEACE - (Heidi)

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

HYMN - IT CAME UPON A 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 And you, be - neath life's crush - ing load, whose forms are bend - ing low,
4 For lo! The days are has - t'ning on, 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 the climb - ing way with pain - ful steps and slow;
when with the ev - er - cir - cling years shall come the time 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 now, for glad and gold - en hours come swift - ly on the wing;
when peace shall o - ver all the earth its an - cient splen - dors fling,



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,
oh, rest be - side the wea - ry road and hear the an - gels sing!
and all the world give back the song which now the an - gels sing.

Text: Edmund H. Sears, 1810-1876

Music: CAROL, Richard S. Willis, 1819-1900

OFFERING PRAYER - (Day)

Gracious God,

you came to us as one unknown, bringing joy and salvation to the earth. Nourish us at your banquet table, that with all who welcome your birth we may proclaim your peace, revealed in Jesus Christ, our Savior. **Amen.**

THANKSGIVING FOR THE WORD: CHRISTMAS -

(Kristin)

Holy God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace, Wonderful Counselor, at the birth of time your Word brought light into the world, and throughout the ages, you proclaim newness of life. For your wondrous Word, we thank you, O God.

We thank you, O God.

In the fullness of time, your Word became flesh, to shine in our world's darkness, to speak peace to all people, and to welcome us as members of your family. For your loving Word, we adore you, O God.

We adore you, O God.

Grant us now the gift of your Spirit, that held, nourished, and protected by your Word, we may live as your children, bearing your goodness throughout the world. For your powerful Word, we praise you, O God.

We praise you, O God.

LORD'S PRAYER - (Shari)

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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.**

OFFERING

OFFERTORY

***Away in a Manger* (ELW 277)**

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

Je - sus laid down his sweet head; the stars in the bright sky looked
 Je - sus, no cry - ing he makes. I love you, Lord Je - sus; look
 ev - er and love me, I pray. Bless all the dear chil - dren in

down where he lay, the lit - tle Lord Je - sus a - sleep on the hay.
 down from the sky and stay by my cra - dle till morn - ing is nigh.
 your ten - der care and fit us for heav - en, to live with you there.

Text: North American, 19th cent.

Music: AWAY IN A MANGER, James R. Murray, 1841–1905

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE - (Heidi)(include families at home)

LIGHTING OF CANDLES - (Scott)

We celebrate the entrance of Christ's light into the world by passing light from the Christ candle to all the people.

CANDLELIGHT READING (Blue - Scott, Red - Day)

In the beginning was the Word,

When God began to create the heavens and the earth

and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

the earth was without shape or form and shadows covered the face of the deep while a spirit from God swept over the face of the waters.

The Word was with God in the beginning. Everything came into being through the Word, and without the Word nothing came into being.

God said, 'Let there be light'; and there was light.

What came into being through God was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines through the shadows, and the shadows do not overcome it.

And God saw that the light was good.

The true light, which shines on all people, was coming into the world. The light came to God's own people, and God's own people didn't welcome it. But those who did welcome the light, who believed in God's name, were given power to become God's children, born not from blood or from human desire or passion, but born from God.

Then God said, 'Let us make humanity in our image to resemble us so that they may take charge of the fish of the sea, the birds in the sky, the livestock, all the earth, and all the crawling things on earth.'

So God created humanity in God's own image,
in the divine image God created them;
male and female God created them.

The Word became flesh and made a home among us. We have seen the glory of the Word, glory like that of God's only son, full of grace and truth

God saw everything God had made, and indeed it was supremely good.

From the fullness of the Word made flesh we have all received grace upon grace.

***Silent Night, Holy Night!* (ELW 281)** (Carl sings German, congregation joins for English)



Sil - 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

BLESSING - (Shari)

Grace from God's own heart,
 peace from the ✠ Child in the manger,
 and strength from the Spirit of life
 be blessings for you today and forever.
Amen.

SENDING SONG

Go Tell It on the Mountain (ELW 290)

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

DISMISSAL - (Kristin)
 Christ is born! Share the Good News!
Thanks be to God.

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