

Christmas Eve

December 24, 2011

O Holy Night



CANDLE PROCESSIONAL AND ADVENT LITANY

OPENING HYMN “O Come, All Ye Faithful” (LSB 379, vs. 1, 2)

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:

Refrain: O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him,
O 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! *Refrain*

CHRISTMAS PSALM (From “Psalms Now” by L. Brandt based on Psalm 98)

P: In the name of the Father, the † Son, and the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

P: Men and women have proclaimed God’s praises throughout the ages. Now it’s our turn to worship the Lord and to announce God’s presence to all the people of the world.

C: His power is as great today as it ever was.

P: He continues to reign over His universe and to bring His salvation to all people, filling their hearts with joy.

C: Now as His children, let us express this joy.

P: With voice and musical instruments, with lovely melodies and joyful sounds, let us proclaim the glory of God.

C: Let us fill our homes and churches, our factories and marketplaces, even the streets of our city, with sounds of celebration! God is here! God is now!

P: With the angels in heaven, we lift up our voices with the sound of celebration:

HYMN "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" (Page 380, verse 1)

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!"

WE CONFESS OUR SIN AND RECEIVE GOD'S FORGIVENESS

P: Lord Jesus, into this world of sin You came to redeem us from its curse. Tonight we confess our part in bringing this curse upon You, for we deserved its punishment.

C: We confess to You on this night of beauty the ugliness of our sin. Candles may light the sanctuary, but the light of our faith is often dim. Joy fills our songs, but our hearts remain troubled by guilt. Your love shines out, but the darkness of our unloving nature invades our lives. We long for You to remove our guilt, and for Your love to fill our hearts. We repent of our sin, and ask for the sake of Jesus, who was born for us, and who lived and died for us, that You grant us forgiveness.

P: The time has come for you to cast off your guilt and pain and to rejoice in God's forgiving love. For Jesus' sake, God has forgiven all your sins, and His Spirit empowers you to new life. In the name of the Father, the † Son, and the Holy Spirit, rejoice in your forgiveness and sing for joy!

C: Amen!

HYMN OF REJOICING "Joy to the World" (Page 387, verse 1)

Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive its 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.

OPENING PRAYER

P: Heavenly Father, You gave Your Son as a gift for all mankind. Move us this night through faith to receive Your gift anew, to rejoice at His birth, and to sing His praises now and forever; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT READING Isaiah 9:2-7 (NKJV)

The promise of the Messiah given 700 years before the birth of Christ.

²The people who walked in darkness Have seen a great light; Those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, Upon them a light has shined. ³You have multiplied the nation *And* increased its joy; They rejoice before You According to the joy of harvest, As *men* rejoice when they divide the spoil. ⁴For You have broken the yoke of his burden And the staff of his shoulder, The rod of his oppressor, As in the day of Midian. ⁵For every warrior's sandal from the noisy battle, And garments rolled in blood, Will be used for burning *and* fuel of fire. ⁶For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷Of the increase of *His* government and peace *There will be* no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.

P: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God!

EPISTLE READING Titus 2:11-14 (NKJV)

With the birth of Jesus, God's greatest gift is given to man.

¹¹For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, ¹²training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, ¹³waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, ¹⁴who gave Himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession who are zealous for good works.

P: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God!

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

The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,
 But little Lord Jesus, no crying He makes.
 I love Thee, Lord Jesus! Look down from the sky,
 And stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask Thee to stay
 Close by me forever and love me, I pray.
 Bless all the dear children in Thy tender care,
 And take us to heaven to live with Thee there.

THE CHRISTMAS GOSPEL Luke 2:1-21 (NKJV)

¹ And it came to pass in those days *that* a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. ² This census first took place while Quirinius was governing Syria. ³ So all went to be registered, everyone to his own city. ⁴ Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, ⁵ to be registered with Mary, his betrothed wife, who was with child. ⁶ So it was, that while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered. ⁷ And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. ⁸ Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid. ¹⁰ Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. ¹¹ For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹² And this *will be* the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger." ¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: ¹⁴ "Glory to God in the highest,

And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!”¹⁵ So it was, when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another, “Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us.”¹⁶ And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger.¹⁷ Now when they had seen *Him*, they made widely known the saying which was told them concerning this Child.¹⁸ And all those who heard *it* marveled at those things which were told them by the shepherds.¹⁹ But Mary kept all these things and pondered *them* in her heart.²⁰ Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them.²¹ And when eight days were completed for the circumcision of the Child, His name was called JESUS, the name given by the angel before He was conceived in the womb.

P: This is the Gospel of our newborn King!

C: Thanks be to God!

SPECIAL MUSIC *A Baby Changes Everything (See back pgs.)*

MESSAGE *A Baby Really Does Change Everything!*



OFFERING

THE CHRISTMAS PRAYERS

P: Almighty God, heavenly Father, we thank You for Your unspeakable gift to mankind in the birth of the Christ Child on this holy night. Let the mystery of the Word made flesh fill our souls with awe and wonder, that like the Bethlehem shepherds, we would make haste to worship Him.

C: Change our hearts from a busy inn that has no room for your Son, to be a quiet chamber kept for Him.

P: Help us in the spirit of true repentance to rejoice in our Savior's birth. Grant that Christ be born again to us this holy night, that the truth, love, and forgiveness He brought would always abide in our hearts and lives.

C: Like Mary, let us also keep all these things and ponder them in our hearts always.

P: Almighty God, You sent Your Son to inhabit time with us, to become one with us, to be our Savior.

C: We thank You, Father, for the gift of Jesus.

P: The promises to Your people of old spoken through the prophets have now been fulfilled in the Christ Child.

C: We thank You, Father, for Your faithfulness.

P: Be with us now in this special time of joy and peace. And wherever we go, remind us that You are always with us.

C: We thank You, Father, for Your presence.

P: For those with special needs, our brothers and sisters, family and friends that we name at this time in our hearts ... (silent prayers are offered). And for all You have given us, gifts too many to count, we give You thanks.

C: We praise You, Father, for Your blessings.

P: As You have here made us the recipients of the glory of Christ, we anxiously await our sharing in His glory also forever in heaven. Now hear us as together we pray:

All: 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.

HYMN

“O Holy Night”

O Holy night; The stars are brightly shining;
It is the night of the dear Savior's birth.
Long lay the world in sin and error pining,
Till He appeared, and the soul felt its worth;
A thrill of hope, the weary world rejoices,
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn!
Fall on your knees, O hear the angel voices,
O night divine! O night when Christ was born!
O night divine! O night, O night divine!

BENEDICTION *(from 2 Thessalonians 3:16)*

P: May the Prince of Peace give you true and lasting peace this night and at all times and in every way; and may God bless you, one and all, through Jesus Christ, our newborn Savior!

C: Amen.

THE LIGHTING OF THE CHRISTMAS CANDLES

(From the Christ Candle, the Pastor will give light to the ushers. They in turn will go to each pew and light the candle of the first person there, who then passes the light to those in their row. A lit candle should remain straight up and down; the one *not* lit should be tilted.)

P: Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows Me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

(John 8:12)

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.

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!

Stille Nacht, Heilige Nacht!
Alles schläft, einsam wacht
Nur das heilige Elternpaar.
Das im stalle zu Bethlehem war,
Bei dem himmlischen Kind
Bei dem himmlischen Kind.

*(Candles are extinguished at the end of the hymn,
and placed in the box at the back of the church as you leave.)*

***A Blessed Christmas to All As We
Celebrate the Birth of Christ!***

Join us for our Christmas Morning Worship at 10:30 a.m.

