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**Christmas Day**

“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given.” *Isaiah 9:6a*

**AS WE GATHER**

Fears abound this Christmas. It is true for us today as we consider the problems in our world and the difficulties and stresses that daily life brings our way. Fears were also present that first Christmas, when the shocked shepherds were visited by the heavenly host and the glory of the Lord shone around them. “Fear not!” the angels proclaimed. The shepherds did not need to be filled with fear at God’s presence, for the purpose of the angels’ visit was to announce to them the news that would change the world: “For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord” (Luke 2:11). God’s Son has arrived in this world to make us the Father’s own dear children. Let us rejoice this morning as we sing the praises of the babe of Bethlehem and gather to receive Him as He comes to us in His body and blood. Fears be gone, for on Christmas our gracious God has given birth to His perfect plan to cancel our sin and make us His own forever!

**+ PREPARATION +**

**HOLY GOSPEL** John 1:1-5, 9-14

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 any thing 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.

The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

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.

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**People: Praise to You, O Christ.**

**INVOCATION, CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION** *Psalm 124:8; 130:3, adapt.*; *Luke 18:13*

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

**People: Amen.**

Pastor: Our help is in the name of the Lord,

**People: who made heaven and earth.**

Pastor: If You, O Lord, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand?

**People: But with You there is forgiveness; therefore You are feared.**

Pastor: Since we are gathered this Christmas morning to hear God’s Word, to marvel at the mystery of the Word becoming flesh, and to receive Him as He comes to us in His body and blood, let us first consider our unworthiness before God and confess before Him and one another that we have sinned in thought, word, and deed. We cannot free ourselves from our sinful condition; only God’s Son, Jesus Christ, has set us free from our fears and failures, our sin and death, and He enables us to live forever as God’s children. Let us then take refuge in the infinite mercy of our God and, seeking His grace for the sake of Christ, say: God, be merciful to me, a sinner.

**People: Almighty God, have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins, and lead us to everlasting life. Amen.**

Pastor: Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son, born into this world on Christmas, to live, suffer, die, and rise again for you. For Jesus’ sake, your heavenly Father forgives you all your sins. As your pastor, it is my privilege to announce this message of grace unto you and, as Christ has commanded, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the +Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**People: Amen.**

**+ SERVICE OF THE WORD +**

**CAROLS**

*“Joy to the World”* (*LSB* 387)

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

Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns! Let men their songs employ  
While fields and floods, rocks, hill, and plains repeat the sounding joy,  
repeat the sounding joy, repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

No more let sin and sorrow grow nor thorns infest the ground:  
He comes to make His blessings flow far as the curse is found,  
far as the curse is found, far as, far as the curse is found.

He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the nations prove   
The glories of His righteousness and wonders of His love,  
and wonders of His love, and wonders, wonders of His love.

*“O Come, All Ye Faithful”* (*LSB* 379)

O come, all ye faithful joyful and triumphant  
O 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

Yea, Lord we greet Thee, born this happy morning  
Jesus to Thee be glory giv’n  
Word 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.

*“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”* (*LSB* 380)

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 hosts proclaim: "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"  
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

Christ, by highest heaven 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 sun 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!"

**PRAYER**

Pastor: Let us pray. Almighty God, grant that the birth of Your only-begotten Son in the flesh may set us free from the bondage of our sin that we may rejoice in the salvation You have delivered unto us; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**People: Amen.**

**OLD TESTAMENT** Isaiah 62:10-12

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

**GRADUAL** *Isaiah 9:6; Psalm 98:1a*

Pastor: To us a child is born, to us a son is given;

**People: and the government shall be upon His shoulder.**

Pastor: And His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Sing to the Lord a new song,

**People: for He has done marvelous things!**

**EPISTLE** Titus 3:4-7

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

**CHRISTMAS GOSPEL** Luke 2:1-20

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**People: Praise to You, O Christ.**

**HYMN** *“Angels We Have Heard on High”* (*LSB* 368)

Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing over the plains,  
And the mountains in reply, echoing their joyous strains.  
Glo-ria in excelsis Deo; Glo-ria in excelsis Deo.

Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?  
What the gladsome tidings be which inspire your heav’nly song?  
Glo-ria in excelsis Deo; Glo-ria in excelsis Deo.

Come to Bethlehem and see Him whose birth the angels sing;  
Come, adore on bended knee Christ the Lord, the newborn King.  
Glo-ria in excelsis Deo; Glo-ria in excelsis Deo.

**SERMON *“Fear Not!”***

# THE NICENE CREED *(LSB*,back inside cover)

# PRAYER OF THE CHURCH and LORD’S PRAYER

*(after each petition):* Pastor: Let us pray to the Lord:

**People: We rejoice that You have come unto us to draw us unto You..**

**+ SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT +**

**WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

**Divine Service and the Close Fellowship of Holy Communion**

*Our Lord speaks and we listen. His Word bestows what it says. Faith that is born from what is heard acknowledges the gifts received with eager thankfulness and praise. The gifts include the Holy Supper in which we receive His true body and blood to eat and drink. Those welcome to the table acknowledge the real presence of the body and blood of Christ, confess their own sinfulness, and in true faith wish to receive the forgiveness and strength promised through this Holy Sacrament, as* ***instructed*** *… and* ***in unity of faith*** *… with God’s people here in this congregation. It is our sincerest desire that you join in the intimacy of this fellowship. However,* ***if you are not, yet, an instructed and confirmed member-in-good-standing of a congregation of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, please visit with the pastor about such a fellowship before communing****. If you wish to come forward for a blessing, you are welcome to join us at the rail to receive such. Please cross your arms in front of you to indicate that desire.*

**DISTRIBUTION**

*“Away in a Manger”* (*LSB* 364)

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.

*“Silent Night, Holy Night”* (*LSB* 363)

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!

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 Thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.

**POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING**

Pastor: Let us pray. We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have sent Jesus to be our good news and great joy. We implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us in this Sacrament and empower us to walk in Your light; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**People: Amen.**

### BENEDICTION

**HYMN** *“Go Tell It on the Mountain”* (*LSB* 388)

*Chorus:*

Go tell it on the mountain, over the hills and ev’rywhere;

go tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born!

While shepherds kept their watching o’er silent flocks by night,

behold, throughout the heavens there shone a holy light. *(Chorus)*

The shepherds feared and trembled when lo, above the earth

rang out the angel chorus that hailed our Savior’s birth. *(Chorus)*

Down in a lonely manger the humble Christ was born;

And God sent us salvation that blessed Christmas morn. *(Chorus)*

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**All are welcome …**

**… Christ is honored**