



St. John's Lutheran Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

Welcome to worship!



The Festival of the Incarnation – Christmas Eve–

December 24, 2021

7:00 Candlelight Communion

† GATHERING †

Prelude and Announcements

Gathering Hymn O Come, All Ye Faithful **283** (*Red Hymnal*)

Gathering Dialog (*John 1*)

P: In the beginning was the Word,

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

P: In the Word was life,

C: and the life was the light of all people.

P: The Word became flesh and lived among us,

C: and we have seen his glory, full of grace and truth.

Prayer of the Day

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.

C: Amen

† WORD †

First Reading Hebrews 1:1-4

Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, ²but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds. ³He is the reflection of God's glory and the exact imprint of God's very being, and he sustains all things by his powerful word. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, ⁴having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

After the reading the reader may say: The Word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God.

Hymn Good Christian Friends, Rejoice **288** (*Red Hymnal*)

Second Reading Jeremiah 31:31-34

The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. ³²It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the LORD. ³³But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. ³⁴No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, “Know the LORD,” for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the LORD; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

After the reading the reader may say: The Word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God.

Hymn Of the Father’s Love Begotten **295** (*Red Hymnal*)

Third Reading Isaiah 9:2-7

E: The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;

**C: those who lived in a land of deep darkness—
on them light has shined.**

E: You have multiplied the nation,
you have increased its joy;

**C: they rejoice before you
as with joy at the harvest,
as people exult when dividing plunder.**

E: For 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.

**C: For all the boots of the tramping warriors
and all the garments rolled in blood
shall be burned as fuel for the fire.**

E: For a child has been born for us,
a son given to us;

**C: authority rests upon his shoulders;
and he is named**

**Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.**

E: His authority shall grow continually,
and there shall be endless peace

**C: for the throne of David and his kingdom.
He will establish and uphold it**

E: with justice and with righteousness
from this time onward and forevermore.

C: The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

Hymn It Came upon the Midnight Clear **282** (*Red Hymnal*)

Gospel Acclamation (*Luke 2:10-11*)

C: Alleluia. I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. Alleluia.

Gospel Reading Luke 2:1-20

The gospel is announced:

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke the 2nd chapter.

C: Glory to you O Lord.

In 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 army, 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.

After the reading:

P: The Gospel of the Lord

C: Praise to you O Christ.

Hymn Angels We Have Heard on High **289** (*Red Hymnal*)

Sermon

Hymn of the Day Go Tell It on the Mountain **290** (*Red Hymnal*)

Prayer of the Church

P: Glory to God in the highest,

C: and peace to God's people on earth.

P: Blessed are you, Prince of Peace. You rule the earth with truth and justice.

C: Send your gift of peace to all nations of the world.

P: Blessed are you, Wonderful Counselor. You enlighten the heart with steadfast love.

C: Enliven your church that it might bear good tidings of great joy to all people.

P: Blessed are you, Emmanuel. You promise to be with us even to the end of the age.

C: Open our eyes to see your presence in all who are hungry, lonely, or homeless.

P: Blessed are you, Son of Mary. You share our humanity.

C: Have mercy on the sick, the dying, and all who suffer this day.

P: Blessed are you, Son of God. You dwell among us as the Word made flesh.

C: Reveal yourself to us in word and sacrament that we may bear your light to all the world. Amen

Peace

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: And also with you.

P: We share that peace with one another.

The congregation may greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace.

† MEAL †

Special Music

Offering Prayer

P: Let us pray: Gracious God,

C: your Word-made-flesh brings harmony to the earth.

As we offer ourselves and these your gifts,

prepare us to receive the grace and truth

you offer at this table

and renew in us the song of your salvation,

in Jesus Christ our Savior.

Amen.

Great Thanksgiving

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them to the Lord.

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

P: It is indeed right, our duty, and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus the Christ. You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer, though whom you will also make all things new in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join in their unending hymn:

(Isaiah 6:3, spoken)

C: Holy, holy, holy Lord,

God of power and might,

Heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

P: In the night in which he was handed over our Lord Jesus took bread, gave thanks, broke it, and gave it to his disciples saying, "Take and eat. This is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me." Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you

and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.”

Lord's Prayer

P: Lord remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

**C: 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.**

Invitation to Communion

P: In Christ's manger, at Christ's table,
come, see what God makes known for you.

Communion Distribution

Welcome to the Lord's Supper! All who are baptized are invited to receive communion. You are invited to come forward to the altar. Due to the pandemic we are using wheat wafers and individual glasses. If you need a gluten free wafer please tell the pastor. White grape juice is available in the individual glasses for those who do not wish to take wine.

Communion Blessing After all have communed the pastor will say:

P: The body and the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C: Amen.

Lighting of Candles

Candlelight Reading John 1:1-14

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴in him was life, and the life was the light of all people.

⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. ⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. ¹⁰He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. ¹²But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. ¹⁴And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

After the reading the reader may say: The Word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God.

Candlelight Hymn Silent Night, Holy Night **281** (*Red Hymnal*)

‡ SENDING ‡

Blessing

P: The God of hope
fill us with all joy and peace in believing,
so that we may abound in hope
by the power of the Holy Spirit,
through Christ Jesus, the Word made flesh.

C: Amen.

Sending Hymn Joy to the World **267** (*Red Hymnal*)

Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Rejoice in Christ our Savior.

C: Thanks be to God!

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