

# THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD: Christmas Eve

## Candlelight

December 24, 2020 – 11 p.m.  
St. Matthew Lutheran Church  
4101 Washington Street NE  
Columbia Heights, MN 55421

+ CONNECT +

### RINGING OF THE BELL

**CALL TO WORSHIP:** “Christmas Sanctus” – Lee Dengler

R1: From ages past no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you, who works for those who wait for him.

R2: *Because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus....you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

R3: Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together.

R4: *Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish; and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation.*

R5: The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: “Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.”

R6: *I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness.*

R7: Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

R8: *Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word. My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior."*

**ALL: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness — on them light has shined.**

*(Please rise)*

**OPENING HYMN: "On Christmas Night, All Christians Sing"**

**On Christmas night all Christians sing  
To hear the news the angels bring  
On Christmas night all Christians sing  
To hear the news the angels bring,  
News of great joy, news of great mirth  
News of our merciful King's birth.**

**When sin departs before thy grace,  
Then life and health come in its place,  
When sin departs before thy grace,  
Then life and health come in its place;  
Angels and men with joy may sing,  
All for to see the new-born King.**

**From out of darkness we have light,  
Which made the angels sing this night,  
From out of darkness we have light,  
Which made the angels sing this night:  
"Glory to God and peace to men  
Now and forevermore. Amen."**

*("On Christmas Night All Christians Sing", text, tune and setting copyright Stainer & Bell Ltd., used with permission, Lutheran Service Book Hymn License #100014518.)*

**INVOCATION:**

**L:** Our worship begins the way our lives in Christ begin in baptism: In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C:** Amen.

## **CONFESSION OF OUR SINS:**

L: Let us make confession of our sins to God, our merciful Father.

**C: Lord God, we confess that often we find darkness more comfortable than light.**

L: We confess that we find your good news frightening and unsettling, especially when we consider its demands as well as its promises.

**C: We confess that Christmas has become more to us than the birthday of the Christ, partly because we do not want a Christ-Child in our lives or in our world.**

L: Forgive us, break us, bend us, remake us.

**C: Give us the courage to lay ourselves open to the wonder and healing of your coming.**

**ALL: Be born again into our world, be born again into our hearts and lives.**

## **FORGIVENESS IS ANNOUNCED**

*(Please be seated)*

### **OLD TESTAMENT LESSON: Isaiah 9:2-7**

The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned. You have enlarged the nation and increased their joy; they rejoice before you as people rejoice at the harvest, as warriors rejoice when dividing the plunder. For as in the day of Midian's defeat, you have shattered the yoke that burdens them, the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor. Every warrior's boot used in battle and every garment rolled in blood will be destined for burning, will be fuel for the fire. For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.

**SONG OF PRAISE: "For Unto Us a Child Is Born" – Handel/Fettke**

### **PRAYER OF THE DAY:**

L: The Lord be with you.

**C: And also with you.**

L: Let us pray.

**C: Thank you, Lord, for allowing us to stop now and be in your presence this holy night. There are so many things, so many changes, so many challenges that occupy our thoughts this year. Focus us now on Jesus. Amen.**

## **GREETING TIME**

**+ NURTURE +**

### **EPISTLE LESSON:** Titus 2:11-14

For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.

L: The Word of the newborn King.

**C: Thanks be to God!**

*(Please remain seated for the gospel)*

### **HOLY GOSPEL:**

L: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, chapter two.

**C: Glory to You, O Lord!**

And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

### **RESPONSE:** “Miraculous and Wonderful” – Bryan Jeffrey Leech

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the

angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.”

**RESPONSE: “Angels We Have Heard on High”**

**Angels we have heard on high, Sweetly singing o'er the plains,  
And the mountains in reply, Echoing their joyous strains.**

***Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!***

**Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?  
What the gladsome tidings be Which inspire Your hea'nly song?**

***Gloria In excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!***

**Come to Bethlehem and see Him whose birth the angels sin;  
Come, adore on bended knee Christ the Lord, the newborn king.**

***Gloria In excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!***

And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, “Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.” And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

**L: This is the Gospel of our newborn King.**

**C: Praise to You, O Christ!**

**RESPONSE: “Go, Tell It on the Mountain” – arr. Jack Schrader**

**MESSAGE: “The Christmas that Changed” – Pastor Bill Hugo**

**HYMN OF THE DAY: “Love Came Down at Christmas”**

**Love came down at Christmas, Love all lovely, Love divine;  
Love was born at Christmas, Star and angels gave the sign.**

**Worship we the Godhead, Love incarnate, Love divine;  
Worship we our Jesus: But wherewith for sacred sign?**

**Love shall be our token, Love be yours and love be mine,  
Love to God and all men, Love for plea and gift and sign.**

*("Love Came Down at Christmas", setting copyright 1982 Concordia Publishing House, used with permission, Lutheran Service Book Hymn License #100014518.)*

### **CONFESSION OF FAITH: Apostles' Creed**

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.**

**And in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

**+ EMPOWER +**

### **PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH:**

*(Prayer response – P: Lord, in your mercy, C: Hear our 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.**

### **WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

*(Please rise)*

### **PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

*(Please tip your unlit candles towards a lit candle)*

**LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES:**

P: “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.”

**BENEDICTION:**

P: The almighty and merciful God, the Father, the + Son, and the Holy Spirit bless you now and forever.

C: **Amen! Glory to God in the highest! And peace to His people on earth!**

**CLOSING MEDLEY: “All Is Well/Silent Night” – arr. Lloyd Larson**

**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 your birth, Jesus, Lord, at your birth.**

**+ + +**

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## **WORSHIP ASSISTANTS:**

**Lay Minister:** Louise Roberts

**Ushers:** Blase Team

**Altar Guild:** Pat & Duane Rosenberg

**Power Point:** Caitlin Kyseth

**Acolyte:** Parker Kyseth

## **CANDLELIGHT CHOIR**

Bruce Blase

Brooke Edberg

Ben Hugo

Brenda Hugo

Will Hugo

Katie Landwehr

Kristen Landwehr

Kevin Lindee

Sydney Naber

Deb Santillo

Andrew Wagner

**Solo:** Will Hugo

**Flutes:** Kevin Lindee & Andrew Wagner

## ***CONTINUE THE CELEBRATION!***

- **Tomorrow, December 25, Christmas Day Service 10:00 am with Holy Communion** (in person and online)
- **Saturday, December 26, First Sunday after Christmas, 5:30 p.m. with Holy Communion** (in person only)
- **Sunday, December 27, First Sunday after Christmas, 10:00 a.m., with Holy Communion** (in person and on line)